Good News

Objectives

To have children appreciate and imagine themselves as being unique and special. To reinforce the key words calm and relax.

Script

Sit comfortably with your feet on the floor and your eyes closed. Take three long, deep breaths. (pause) Feel yourself relaxing more and more with each breath. Let the rhythm of the music calm you. Feel your muscles relax and your heart and breathing slow. Say to yourself, “I am calm and relaxed.”

The room is quiet, as you slow your breathing. Your seat now transforms into your favorite soft lounging chair. On your lap is today’s newspaper. On page one, in big, bold print, it says, “You are CALM and RELAXED.” When you see or hear these words, you feel calm and relaxed. Below these almost magic words, there is a picture of a young person who has done something special. Look closer at the picture, and find that this person is you! You are the news today. You have done something unique.

You have used a special talent that you have to achieve a goal, a dream. You are a winner, a heroine or hero, a hard worker, who has earned recognition in the newspaper. Breathe slowly and read the good things about you. (pause) How are you feeling? (pause) Repeat to yourself three times, “I am good news…” (pause) Close the newspaper. You have many talents and with patience and hard work you can make some of your dreams come true. Next time you see a newspaper, think of your good news.

Take a deep breath and return to your room. Open your eyes and stretch. (pause) Take a few moments to appreciate the good feelings that come with relaxation.

Discussion

How did it feel to read the good news about yourself? What was the good news about yourself? Share something good you imagine yourself doing this year.

Activities

- Make your own newspaper with an article about a Very Important Person - YOU! Include articles that talk about your special interests and talents.
- Find five words in a newspaper that describe you.
- Find each letter in your name and write a word that describes you for each letter.
Pillar Of Strength

Objective

To link a visual image with the feelings and self-statement of being important to oneself and others.

Script

Sit comfortably with your feet on the floor and your eyes closed. Take three long, deep breaths. (pause) Feel yourself relaxing more and more with each breath. Let the rhythm of the music calm you. Feel your muscles relax and your heart and breathing slow. Say to yourself, “I am calm and relaxed.”

Imagine that you are a telephone pole. You are high off the ground. As your breathing slows you start to feel calm and relaxed. The breeze rocks you gently back and forth, back and forth, back and forth. Look up and see the soft white clouds moving ever so slowly across the clear blue sky. Feel the top of a tree tickle you as it brushes against your wood. It is a beautiful day and you are calm and relaxed. Listen to the birds as they fly around you. One has chosen to land on you and rest. Once you were home to a nest of birds. You feel secure when you look forward and backward and see the many telephone lines you help to hold up. The wires are like your arms connecting you to others many miles away. You reach out and touch someone. You feel proud knowing how important you are. Many people appreciate and depend on you.

Breathing slowly, you sway in the breeze feeling calm and relaxed. You are tall, you are strong, you are relaxed. Repeat to yourself slowly three times, “I am important to myself and others.” . . . (pause) Next time you see a telephone pole, stand tall knowing how important YOU are.

Take a deep breath and return to your room. Open your eyes and stretch. (pause) Take a few moments to appreciate the good feelings that come with relaxation.

Discussion

How do telephone poles depend on other telephone poles? If telephone poles had feelings, why might one pole feel like it is not important? In what ways can you be important to others?

Activities

• Read The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein. Discuss the similarities to the script above.
Pumpkin Patch

Objective

To help children appreciate and accept differences in people.

Script

Sit comfortably with your feet on the floor and your eyes closed. Take three long, deep breaths. (pause) Feel yourself relaxing more and more with each breath. Let the rhythm of the music calm you. Feel your muscles relax and your heart and breathing slow. Say to yourself, “I am calm and relaxed.”

Picture yourself alone in the countryside. The trees are green and yellow—some have magnificent patches of red. The leaves rustle around you. The autumn breeze makes some leaves dance at your feet. It is chilly, but your jacket gives you warmth and security. Breathe slowly and enjoy the good feeling that comes with peace and relaxation. Your eyes, nose—all your senses are enjoying this country walk so much that you lose track of time. You see yourself in the middle of a huge pumpkin field. There is orange as far as you can see.

Feel yourself becoming tired and sitting on a large sturdy pumpkin. You take time to notice each pumpkin around you. All the pumpkins are different. See a large round one. See a long thin pumpkin. Here is one that’s oval shaped and almost yellow. See a short fat one hugging the ground. One almost looks like the number eight. Even pumpkins from the same vine are different.

You are calm and relaxed as your mind wanders. You have always thought all pumpkins were round and orange. You too are different from other people. People are different even within the same family. Breathe slowly and say to yourself three times, “Everyone is unique. . . .” (pause) You are different and unique. There is not another person just like you.

Take a deep breath and return to your room. Open your eyes and stretch. (pause) Take a few moments to appreciate the good feelings that come with relaxation.

Discussion

What is prejudice? Why do some people dislike others who are different? What can you do to stop prejudice? Why are differences in people important?
Activities

- Think of things that might seem the same yet actually are very different—for example, pumpkins, leaves, snowflakes, twins. Each person in your group may want to design a pumpkin or a snowflake.
- Provide each student with paper to cut out a snowflake. Design a bulletin board with the heading “All Beautiful and All Unique” and attach the children’s snowflakes to the board.
- Visit a pumpkin farm. Notice the different colors, shapes, and textures of pumpkins. Write about the trip.
- Design pumpkins without stems and hang them on a wall. Using a blindfold play “tape the stem on the pumpkin.”

Books To Share

King, Elizabeth. *The Pumpkin Patch*
Steptoe, John. *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters*
Dahlov, Ipcar. *Bring In the Pumpkins*
Attic Visit

Objective

To help children appreciate the value of memories.

Script

Sit comfortably with your feet on the floor and your eyes closed. Take three long, deep breaths. (pause) Feel yourself relaxing more and more with each breath. Let the rhythm of the music calm you. Feel your muscles relax and your heart and breathing slow. Say to yourself, “I am calm and relaxed.”

Breathe slowly and evenly, and imagine you are standing in your attic. Sit down on an old chair in the corner. It is perfectly quiet and you feel calm and relaxed. It is dim but not dark. Notice the minute dust particles as they dance across the rays of sunlight. Breath in the old but sweet air.

Look around the room. See some of your favorite old toys propped up against the posts. Clothes are hung from the rafters. Seeing these old things relaxes you. Enjoy this feeling. Enjoy the quiet time by yourself. Now go over to a dusty old trunk in the corner. The hinges creak as you slowly pull open the top. What is inside makes you feel very good.

Take a relaxing breath and enjoy your favorite old toy or outfit which is contained in the trunk. Pick it up and hold it close to you. This object has many beautiful memories attached to it. Relax and enjoy your time alone with your memories. Think of how good this object makes you feel (pause). Now carefully put your special item back into the trunk. Breathing slowly, repeat to yourself three times... I have many good memories... (pause) Remember that you can visit your attic whenever you want and hold onto your special memories.

Take a deep breath and return to your room. Open your eyes and stretch. (pause) Take a few moments to appreciate the good feelings that come with relaxation.

Discussion

What are some of your good memories? Why do good memories help us relax when we are upset? Why is it important to remember the past? If you could travel into the past what year would you choose to visit? What would you take with you? What would you bring back?
Activities

• Share a personal memory with a child about something that was special to you when you were younger.
• Introduce historical fiction books that include stories about children.
• Draw a picture of a favorite toy from your past. Where is it now? How far back in your life can you remember?

Books To Share

Flournoy, Valerie. *Patchwork Quilt*
Lund, Doris Herold. *Attic of the Wind*
Williams, Margery. *The Velveteen Rabbit*
Bahr, Mary. *Memory Box*