4th Grade PATHS Home Lesson 2

Objective:
To learn strategies for how to **calm** down, **cope** and **manage stress** and **tense** feelings

Activities / Lesson:
Last week, we reviewed the feelings of **calm** or **relaxed** and **tense**.
We all feel **stressed** or **tense** at times. It is important to remember that **all feelings are OK**, but what one does with those feelings will make the difference.

If we can learn to manage our **stress**, it will help us be better problem solvers, ultimately helping us to feel better.
Try these steps:
1. Notice and identify your feelings.
   - How does my body feel (remember the body diagram from last week)- **tense**, tired, fidgety, or some other way?
   - What feeling is this- mad, sad, angry, **stressed**, anxious, or some other feeling?
2. Take a deep breath to try to begin your **calm** down process.
3. Decide if breathing has helped and you can continue about your day as planned, or if you need another **calm** down strategy, like the more detailed strategies below:

Two Relaxation Ideas:

1.) **Box Breathing** is a technique used to breathe slowly and deeply in order to improve concentration and decrease **stress**. Try this:
   - First, sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor and your hands relaxed on your lap.
   - Use your finger to follow along with the picture below: (https://www.theliferaft.org/blog/box-breathing)

**Box Breathing** steps:
Start at any of the corners and trace with your fingers.
   - Slowly exhale, letting all the air out of your lungs
   - Inhale slowly and deeply through your nose, counting to 4 slowly in your head
   - Hold your breath for another slow count of 4
   - Exhale through your mouth for the same slow count of 4
   - Hold your breath for the same small count of 4
   - Repeat

Questions? Ask your School Counselors: Mrs. Beckel Kendall: jbeckel@mtbaker.wednet.edu
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2.) **Muscle Relaxation:**

- Sit in a chair with your feet flat on the floor and your hands relaxed on your lap.
- Take a minute and try thinking about a situation in which you felt tense: maybe taking a test, speaking in front of a group or before getting a shot. Imagine you are now in that situation. Listen to your body and get a sense of where in your body you feel the tension. Is it in your face? Is it in your stomach? Your shoulders?
- If you have found a spot, like tension in your face, tense the muscles even more and then try to relax the muscles. Your body can let go of the tension. If you found a spot in your shoulders, tense the muscles more. Then try to release your muscles and let go. Sometimes doing deep belly breathing can help you to relax that tense spot.
- Are you feeling more calm? If not, try taking some more deep breaths.

**Challenge:** Teach someone in your home the box breathing steps. Read it out loud to them, and trace the box with your finger in the air, for him/her to try.

**Parent or caregiver support:**

- Talk to your son and daughter about what you do to help yourself calm down
- Relaxation exercise: put on some soft relaxing music during a work activity. Or, try practicing deep breathing with your child.
- Mention to children that if they feel calm while working, they are likely to do better work

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