

Title: **Taking Mindful Action into the World**

Jennifer Uhlman	Healthy Living 8
Lesson Goals:	Students will work together to select, plan, and execute acts of kindness for the school, community, or world. Students will see their role as active participants in building a community that fosters a sense of comfort, belonging, and optimism, and thus will increase their desire to make more thoughtful, ethical decisions both independently and with others.
Outcomes Targeted:	HL 3.11: demonstrate an understanding that there are many factors that contribute to our health status 2.8: practice the ability to listen to a peer to understand another's needs and circumstances, express understanding, and support them in getting help in relation to physical, mental, and social health concerns
I Can Statement:	I can take all of the skills regarding mindfulness out into my world (school, home, community) and not only face personal challenges with more ease, but I can also help others cultivate happiness by sharing kindness.
Key Vocabulary and Skills:	Mirror Neurons
Material Needed:	iPads, paper, pens, Happiness Challenge Workbook (can be accessed with the following link: http://msuhlman.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/8/2/24828726/the_happiness_challenge_workbook_updated.pdf

Lesson:

I. Introduction (Teacher organized)

1. Start the class by having a discussion about all of the tricks that we've used so far over the course of the lessons on mindfulness. Ex: breathing, mindful tasting/seeing/listening, choosing happiness, recalling happy memories, and striving for optimism. Also ask students to remember the parts of the brain and how to keep the brain in optimum focus by quieting the Amygdala so the Prefrontal Cortex can do its job properly.

2. Ask students: How can we take what we have learned and use it in, or share it with, the world around us? Maybe start a brainstorm web on the board to gather ideas.

3. Discuss Mirror Neurons. These notes can be projected on the board. There is no need for students to take notes, just a teachable moment.

Research on mirror neurons is helping us understand the power of social interactions and connections. Mirror neurons are a kind of brain nerve cell that allows the brain to imitate the actions of others, and also to feel the emotions experienced by others. Ex:- our pain receptors flinch when we see someone get hurt, or our amygdala relaxes when we see a baby being rocked. Our neural pathways are activated when we see a face expressing that emotion. When a group works together in a positive way, feelings of kindness, levels of dopamine, and opportunities for activating the neural pathways of pleasure and reward multiply. This is what makes kindness “contagious”. As we engage in acts of kindness and are emotionally rewarded for it, our need to be kind becomes a deciding factor in our choice of words and actions.

Time Allotted: 20 minutes

II. Guided Learning (Teacher/student collaboration) with some independent Student Focused work

Let students know that in order to make others happy, one has to be happy themselves in order to truly support or make change. Be Mindful, Be Grateful, Be Kind.

Give students the Happiness Challenge Booklet.

http://msuhlman.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/8/2/24828726/the_happiness_challenge_workbook_updated.pdf

Walk through the booklet with the students, having them answer the questions, or share as needed.

Time Allotted: This may take more than one class to complete. Depends on the students.

IV. Grand Finale

As students leave on day one- ask them to perform a random act of kindness and write a short journal reflection about it. What did you do? Who was it for? Why did you do that? How did you make the other person feel? How did you feel?

Assessment and Evaluation: Assessment will be the completion of the happiness challenge workbook and participation.

Adaptations and IPPs: Noted students are able to work in a different space if required (resource room)

