Attention, Breath, and Body

Transcript

- Megan Peterson (Classroom Teacher): We're gonna start with the bell. Here we go. Let's see what we hear after the bell.

- Lisa Thomas Prince (Kindness Curriculum Trainer): Attention really is a foundational skill, and requires a lot of rehearsal, a lot of practice, and you can imagine how stability of attention could be beneficial for kids in school environments.

[rings bell]

- Lisa Thomas Prince (Kindness Curriculum Trainer): So, the bell practice is the way we start almost every Kindness Curriculum lesson.

- Lori Gustafson (Kindness Curriculum Trainer): It's really good to start with an external sensory experience, so sound, and then, bring it inside. This is paying attention. This is mindfulness here.

[rings bell]

- Lisa Thomas Prince (Kindness Curriculum Trainer): What we usually ask kids to do is sit with their hands up as soon as they start to hear the sound. And once
they are no longer hearing the sound in the room, then they bring their hand down and put it just right on their belly and feel their belly moving with the breath.

- Lori Gustafson (Kindness Curriculum Trainer): The simple act of paying attention to the breath can help calm the whole nervous system. And we call it an anchor for the attention, and it's always here.

- Marci Speich (Classroom Teacher): When you get your belly buddy, get cozy on your back.

- Lisa Thomas Prince (Kindness Curriculum Trainer): Belly Buddies is a sweet practice that gives kids a chance to pay attention to their whole body, and maybe bring about a moment or two of relaxation. Once their body is in a still position, we bring a Belly Buddy to them and allow the weight to help enhance that sensation of the abdomen expanding and contracting with their breath.

- Lori Gustafson (Kindness Curriculum Trainer): Notice 'how does it feel on the outside? and 'how does it feel on the inside?' and 'can we make a connection?' And that can lead to when we jump to emotions. So, if I'm feeling angry, 'How does anger feel?' 'How does sadness feel?' So, they have a sense of what's happening inside of them. And then they're able to see what's happening outside of them.

- Marci Speich (Classroom Teacher): Flying up, breathe in. You can even use your imagination of where you're going to fly to.

[exhales slowly]

- Lori Gustafson (Kindness Curriculum Trainer): The animal movements. It's a lot
of fun. It allows children to be more aware of their bodies.

- Lisa Thomas Prince (Kindness Curriculum Trainer): We're using the animals for movement practice which is getting them to move their bodies which helps them to engage with their breathing which helps them to feel sensation in the body and again, anchor themselves in the present moment. I've found it's helpful to have, like, a little visual of each animal that you're introducing. Then, I would ask the students to do a few repetitions of the movements so they can feel their body moving. And maybe ask, 'What did you notice when you were flying like an eagle?' or 'What did you notice when you were slithering like a snake?' You know, bringing in that curiosity again.

- Lori Gustafson (Kindness Curriculum Trainer): It's so often easy to start thinking about so many other things or getting really distracted and then, slowly, with these other practices we can learn to just bring the attention back to what's happening right here.