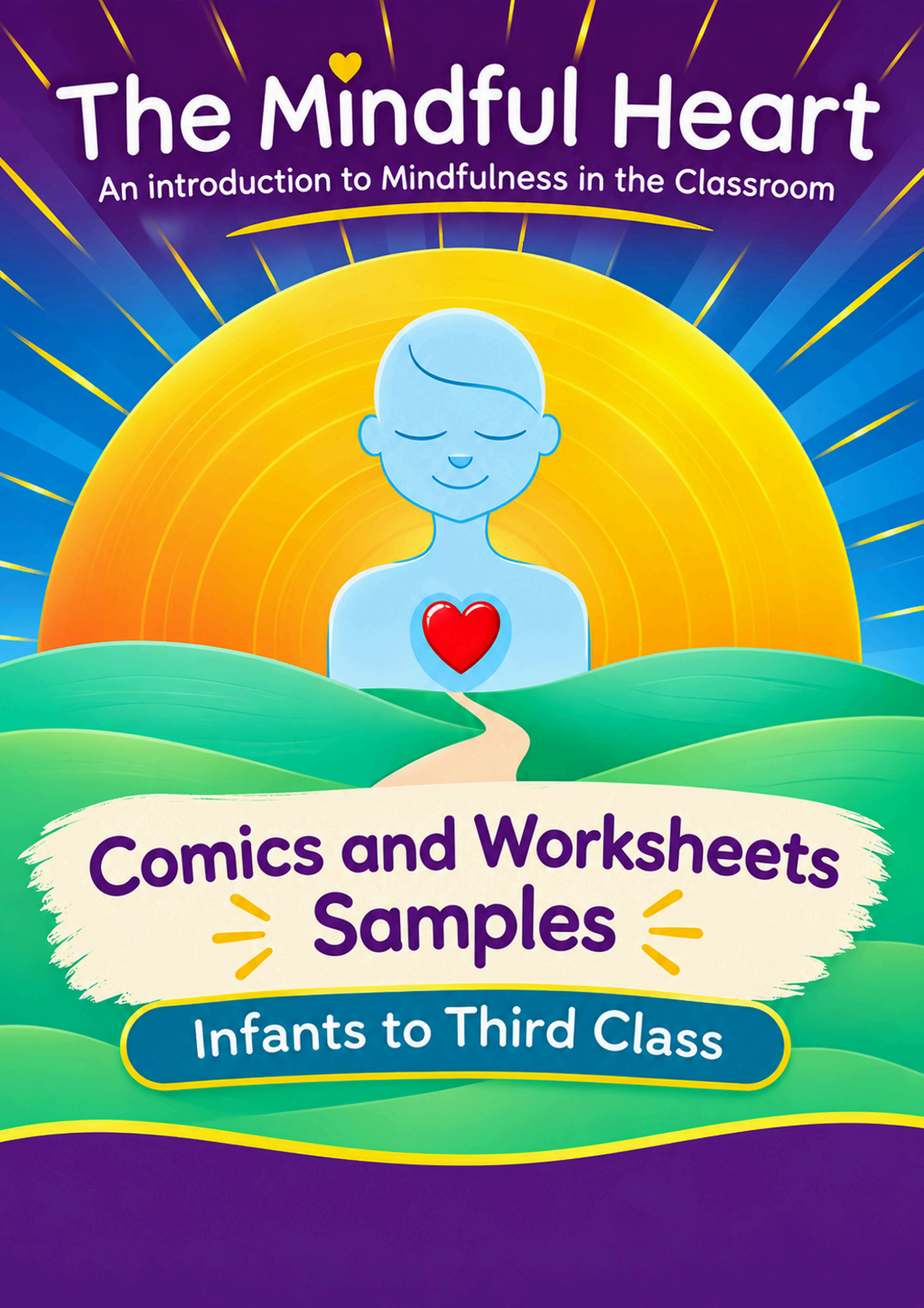
The Mindful Heart

An introduction to Mindfulness in the Classroom



Comics and Worksheets Samples

Infants to Third Class

THE MINDFUL HEART

A look inside the curriculum

These sample pages introduce the illustrated stories, worksheets and supporting resources that help children and educators explore mindfulness, emotions, kindness and self-compassion.

Illustrated stories and activities

01 The Mind Jar

02 Calming the Mind

03 Awareness of the Body

04 The Worry Monster

05 The Gratitude Tree

06 The Here and Now

07 The Everything Belongs Heart

08 Being a Friend to Our Emotions

09 Wishing Well

10 The Mountain

Where to find the complete programme

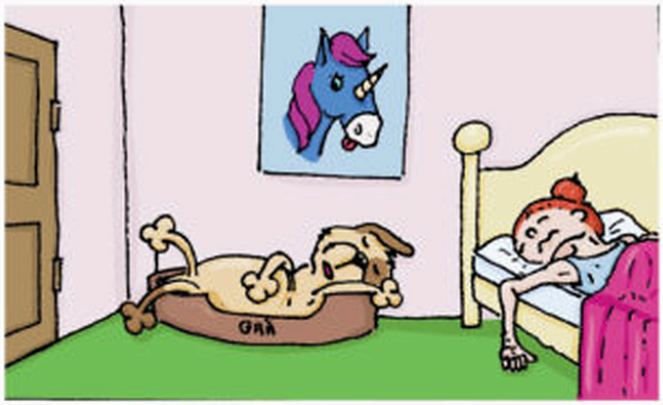
All lesson plans and additional content not included in this sample booklet are available in the published hard-copy book or The Mindful Heart Programme online course.

Buy the online programme

Explore the printed book

Activity 1: The Mind Jar

Tara's Day



Tara was very tired when Mum called her for breakfast. Her dog 'Grá' was very tired too!

When Tara was in the car, her Mum was shouting and her sister Ciara was crying. Tara didn't like all of the noise.





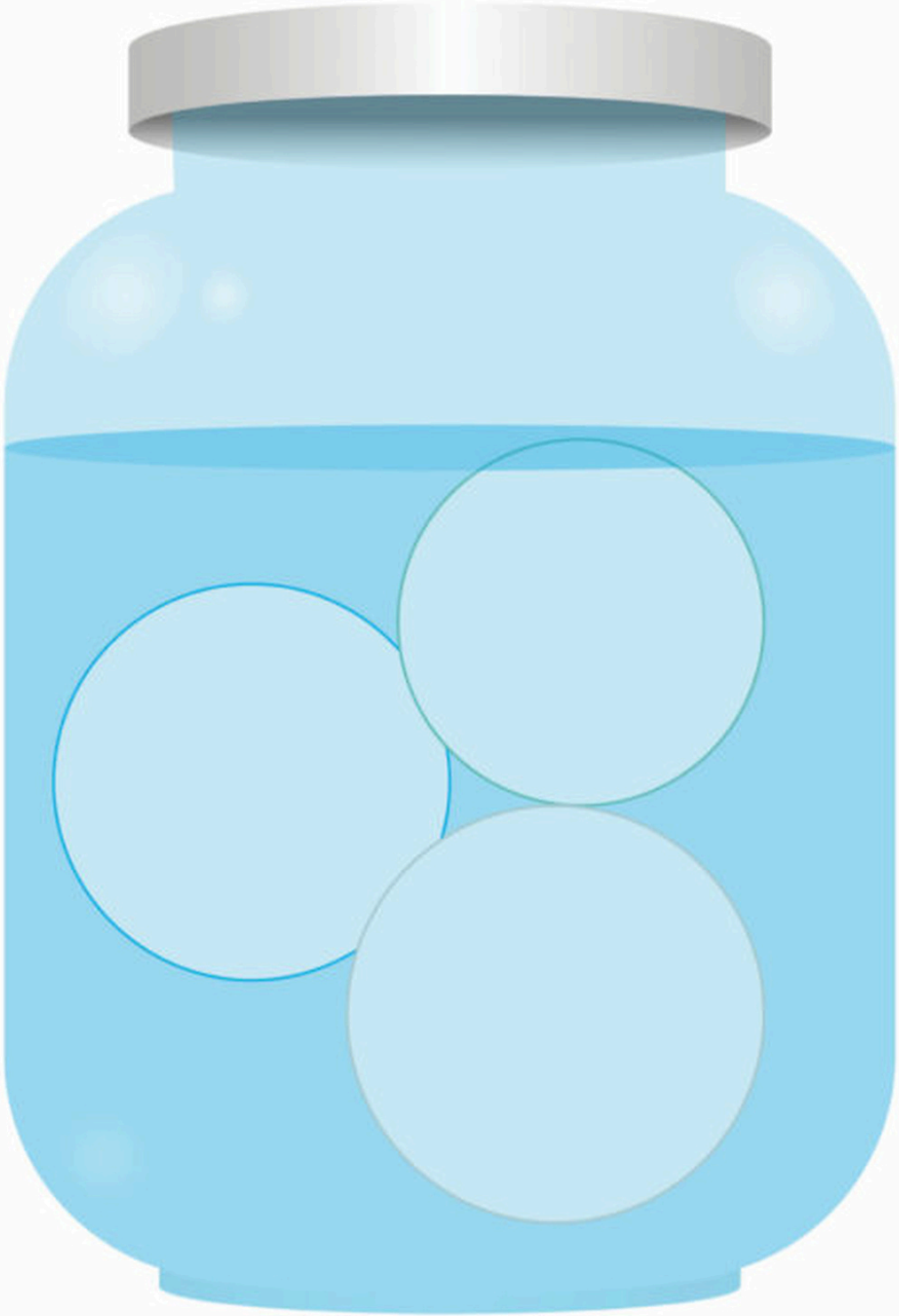
Tara had a busy day at school. She went on a nature walk with her friends, she was happy because she loved nature walks.

Then, Tara's teacher showed the class a 'Mind Jar' and talked about all the different thoughts and feelings that we have.



Infants

In the 'Mind Jar', draw or colour any thoughts and feelings that you have right now.



Activity 2: Calming the mind

Thomas' day



Thomas woke up feeling very happy because he knew Mum had bought his favourite breakfast. His cat Intinn was still a little sleepy!

When he was eating his breakfast, he was annoyed because his favourite cereal was gone and his brother Harry was teasing him.





Later at school, there was a nature walk but Thomas thought nature walks were boring.

When they came back inside, Thomas was excited to do his Maths' test. He always got full marks.



Activity 2: Calming the mind

Thomas' day



The test was very hard, Thomas had studied the wrong thing and he only got 2 out of 10. He was very worried about this.

Then, his teacher Mr Martin showed the class a jar with some water and glitter in it. He said it was a 'Mind Jar'. Mr Martin shook the 'Mind Jar' and Thomas felt like his mind was like the busy 'Mind Jar' right now!



1st/2nd

In the 'Mind Jar' write, draw or colour a time when your mind was calm.



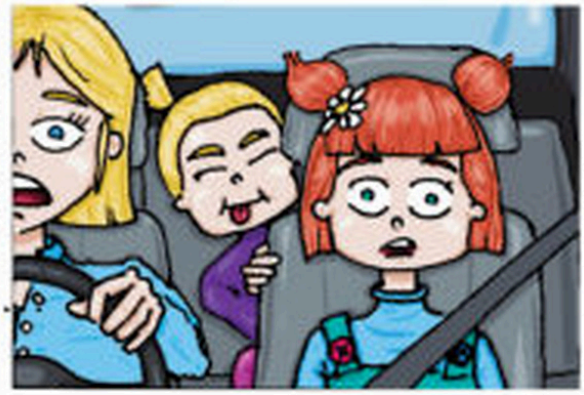
Activity 3: Awareness of the Body

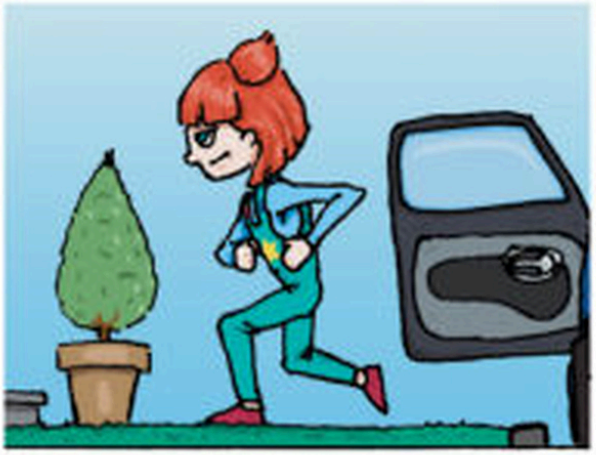
Tara's Thoughts and Feelings

On the way home from school, Tara was thinking about all the things that had happened. She realised that you can have a lot of feelings in one day!



Then, her Mum said she was not allowed to go swimming that evening because Ciara had dancing lessons. Tara felt so shocked and angry!





When they got home Tara ran to her room, she was feeling so angry!

Activity 3: Awareness of the Body

Tara's Thoughts and Feelings

Her mind was so busy and her breathing was getting faster and faster! Then, Grá nudged the 'Mind Jar' over to Tara. She picked it up and shook it. She thought that her mind was just like the busy 'Mind Jar'.



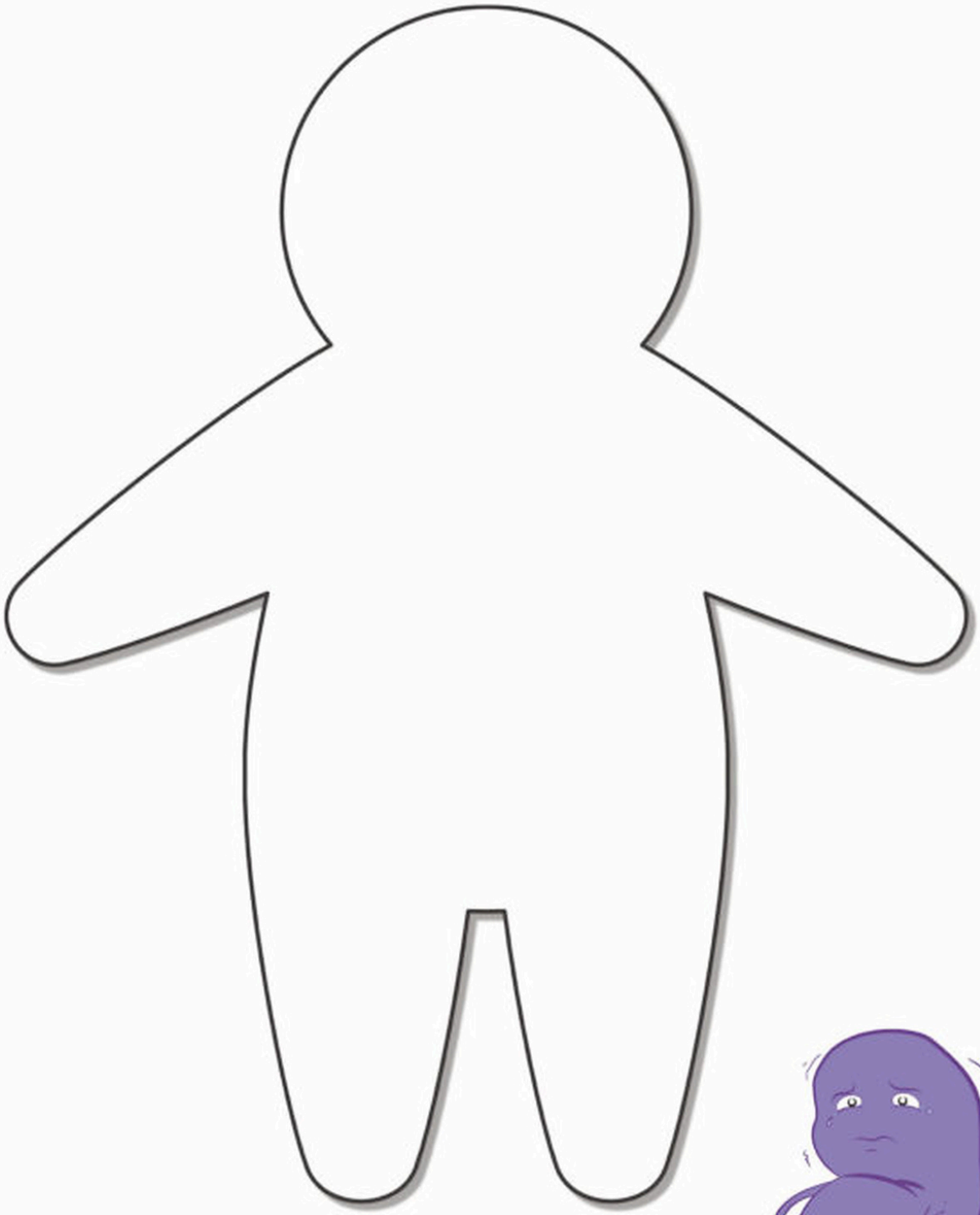
Tara closed her eyes and put her hand on her belly and took five deep breaths. After, she could see that the glitter was calm at the bottom of the jar and the water was clear again.





She also felt that her mind was calmer and clearer just like the jar! This breathing really works she thought to herself!

When you feel sad, where in your body do you feel it? Can you colour these parts of the body in blue?



Activity 4: The Worry Monster

Thomas' Worry

Thomas was lying on his bed with Intinn. He was thinking about all the things that happened and feeling very worried about his maths test. He could feel his chest getting tighter and tighter.





Intinn started making a lot of noise and spinning around. Thomas saw his 'Mind Jar' and shook it. The glitter was spinning around and it felt like his mind was just like the busy 'Mind Jar' with so many thoughts and feelings swirling round and round.

Thomas put his hand on his chest where it felt tight and practised his mindful breathing.





Activity 4: The Worry Monster

Thomas' Worry



When he opened his eyes and checked the 'Mind Jar' the water was calm and clear again. Even Intinn calmed down and came to sit in his lap. His mind felt much calmer too, but he still felt a little worried!

The next day at school, Mr Martin took out a funny looking box. It had googly eyes, spots and a big mouth. Mr Martin said that this was a 'Worry Monster' and that it was here to help the children let go of their worries. Thomas was so happy, it was just what he needed.



3rd/4th

In the comic book, draw or write about a time when you had a worry. Include your thoughts, feelings and how you felt in your body.

Activity 5: The Gratitude Tree

Finding Gratitude

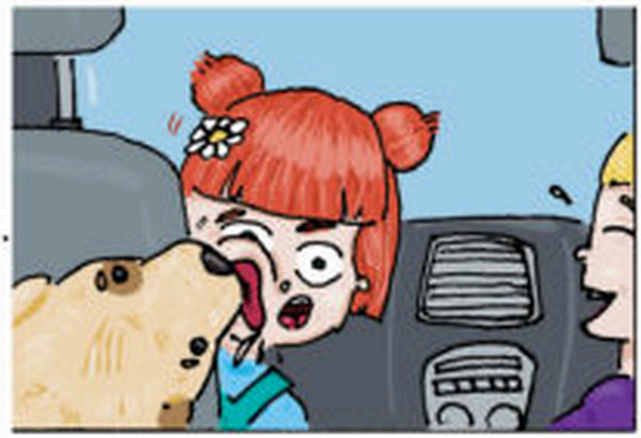
Tara was in the car with Ciara and her Mum on her way to school and she was in a very bad mood. She just wanted to be quiet but her Mum kept asking her too many questions!





Her mum asked her if she wanted to go to the cinema with her friends at the weekend. Then Ciara said she wanted to go too! Tara was so annoyed. She felt Ciara was always copying her!

Then Grá licked her face with his smelly breath! She just felt like everyone was annoying her today!





Later on in school, Tara was feeling sad and she was thinking about how everything was going wrong for her.

Then, Mr Martin asked the class to draw the things that make them happy.



Activity 5: The Gratitude Tree

Finding Gratitude



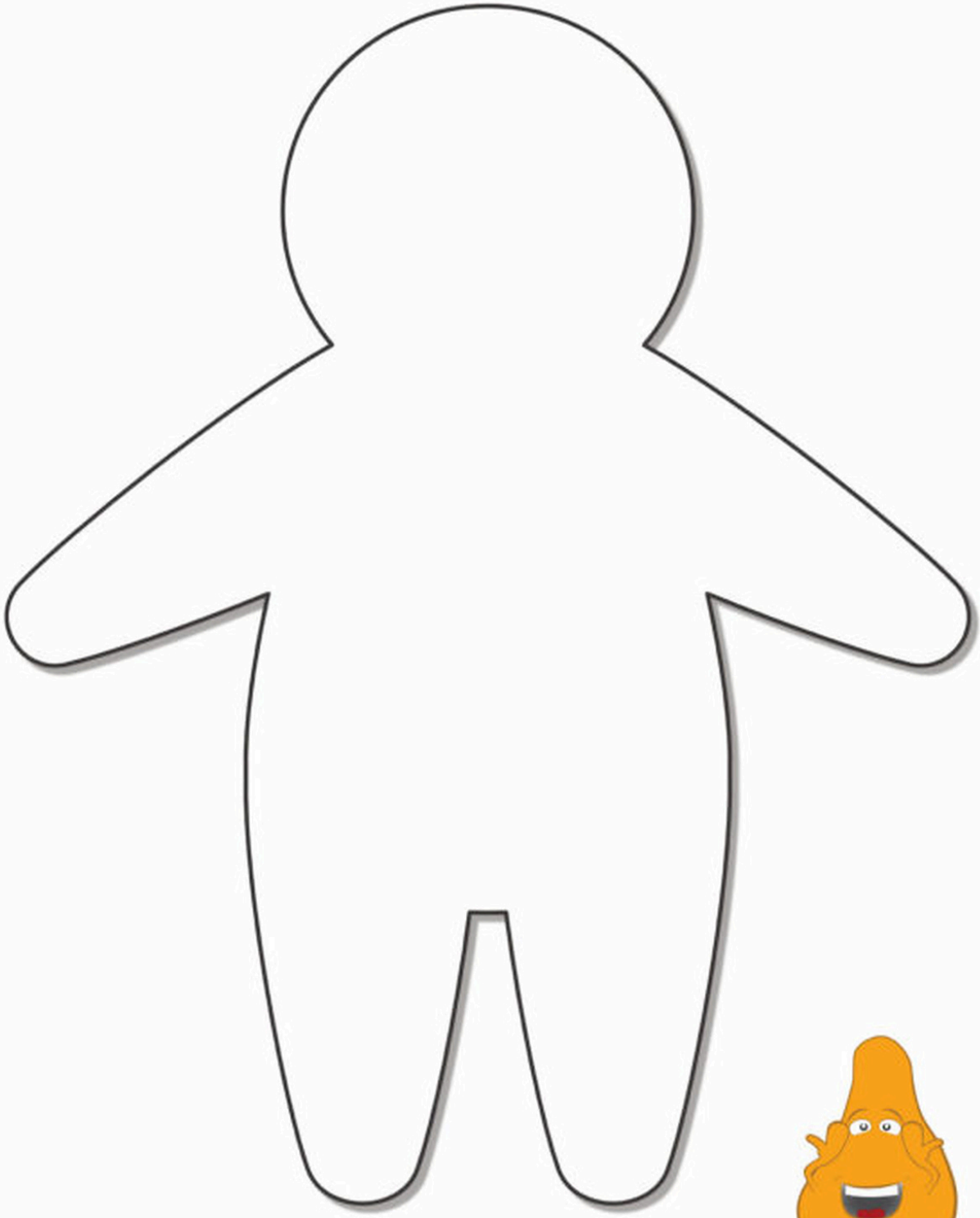
Tara thought about all the things that made her happy. She thought about cuddling with Grá, her Mum looking after her and playing with Ciara. Soon, she had a warm feeling in her heart and tummy.



Mr Martin said that the things that make us happy are the things that we feel grateful for and took out a 'Gratitude Tree'. He said that now the class was going to make some gratitude leaves for the 'Gratitude Tree'. Tara was excited. She really liked art and this practising gratitude was helping her feel much better.

1st/2nd

When you feel grateful, where in your body do you feel it? Can you colour these parts of the body in orange?



Activity 6: The 'Here and Now'

What's happening inside?

It was another day at school and Mr Martin was telling the class about the 'Here and Now'. He said the 'Here and Now' was what was happening in this moment, right now!
Mr Martin said that one way we can bring our mind into the 'Here and Now' is to notice what we can see, hear, touch, smell and taste in this moment.
Mr Martin asked the class to get into pairs and to notice what they could see, hear and feel in the 'Here and Now'.





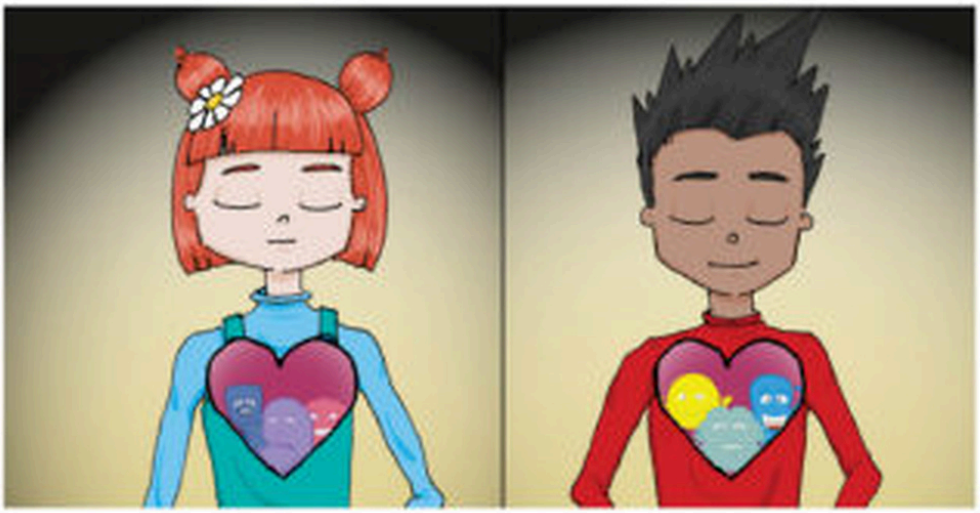
Thomas and Tara decided to work together. Tara said she could hear the birds singing outside and she could see the sun shining and feel the chair underneath her. Thomas said that he could hear his friends playing that he could see Tara in front of him and feel his chest moving.

Then, Mr Martin asked the children to close their eyes and to notice their thoughts and feelings.



Activity 6: The 'Here and Now'

WHAT'S HAPPENING INSIDE?



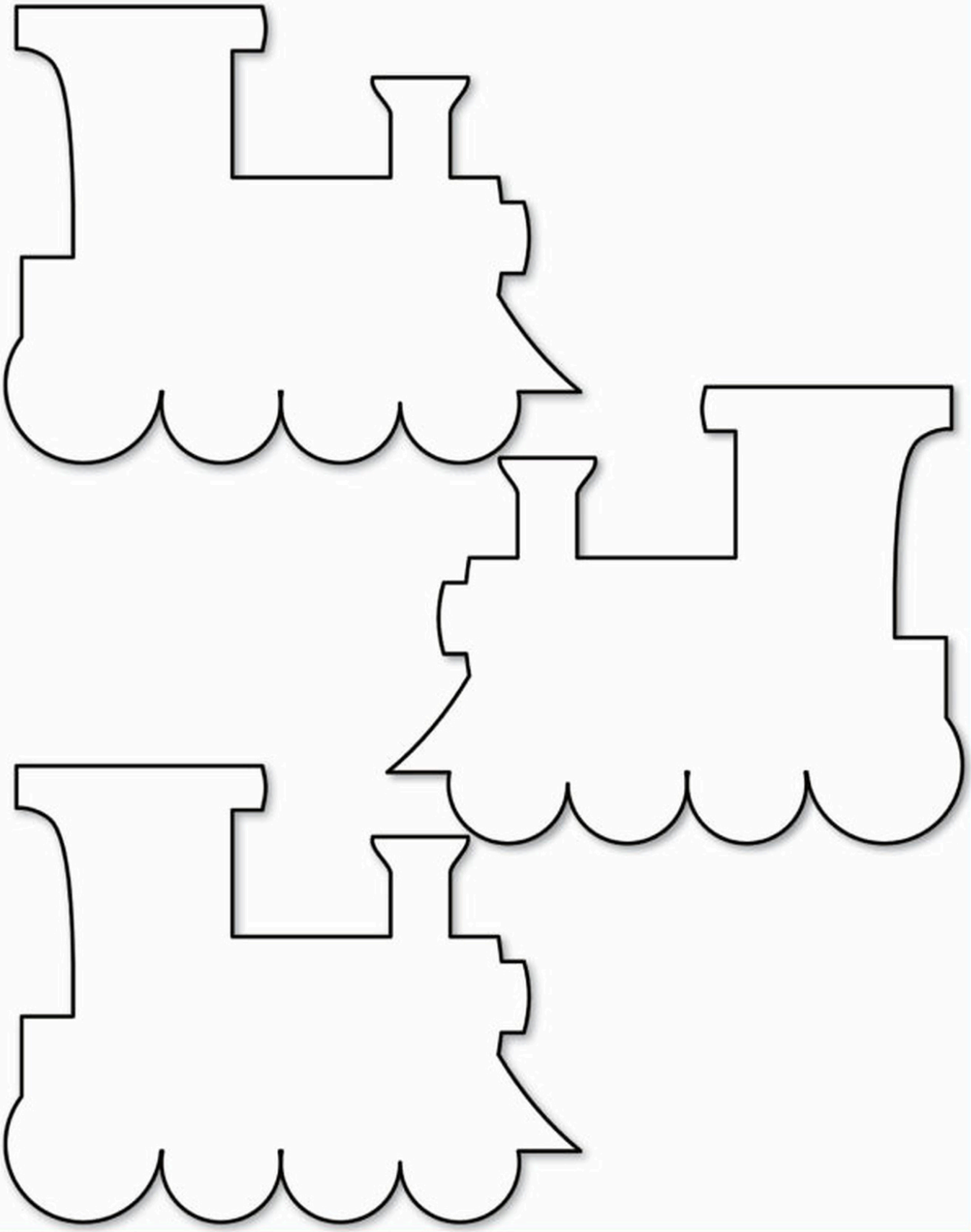
Tara noticed that she felt a bit sad and angry today and Thomas noticed that he felt excited but also a bit worried.



Mr Martin asked the class to share about what they were thinking and feeling. As Tara listened to the others share how they felt, she was surprised to know she wasn't the only one who was feeling a bit sad today.

1st/2nd

In the trains draw, write or colour any thoughts that you have right now.



Activity 7: The Everything Belongs Heart

Everything Belongs Heart



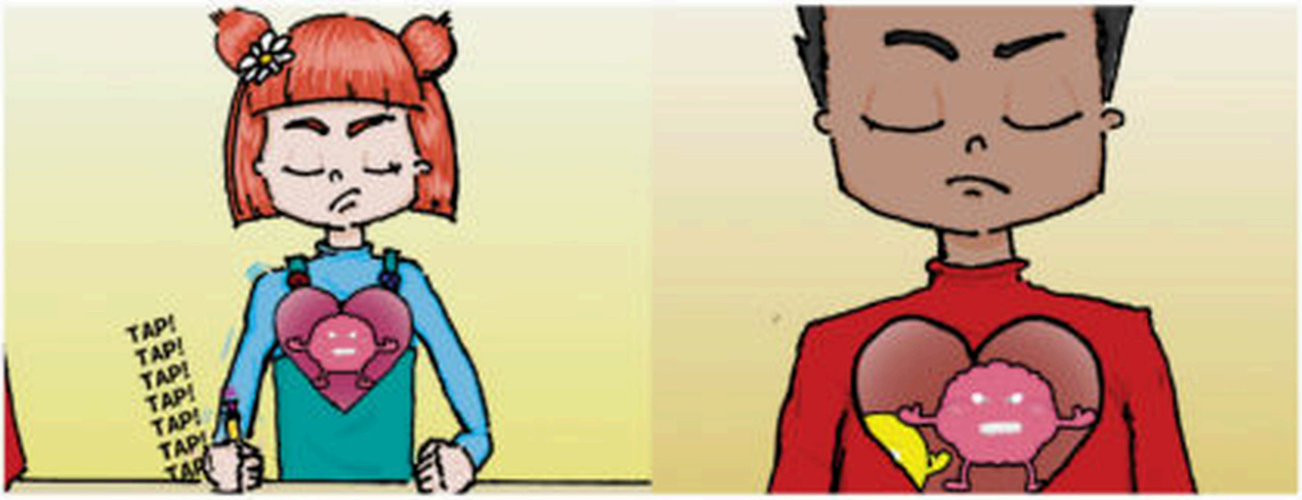
It was another day at school and Mr Martin asked the children to close their eyes and to notice what feeling was visiting them right now.



Thomas was feeling really happy. Tara had a bad day and she was feeling angry. She didn't like the feeling at all and wished that it would go away. She started to tap the pencil on the desk.

Activity 7: The Everything Belongs Heart

Everything Belongs Heart

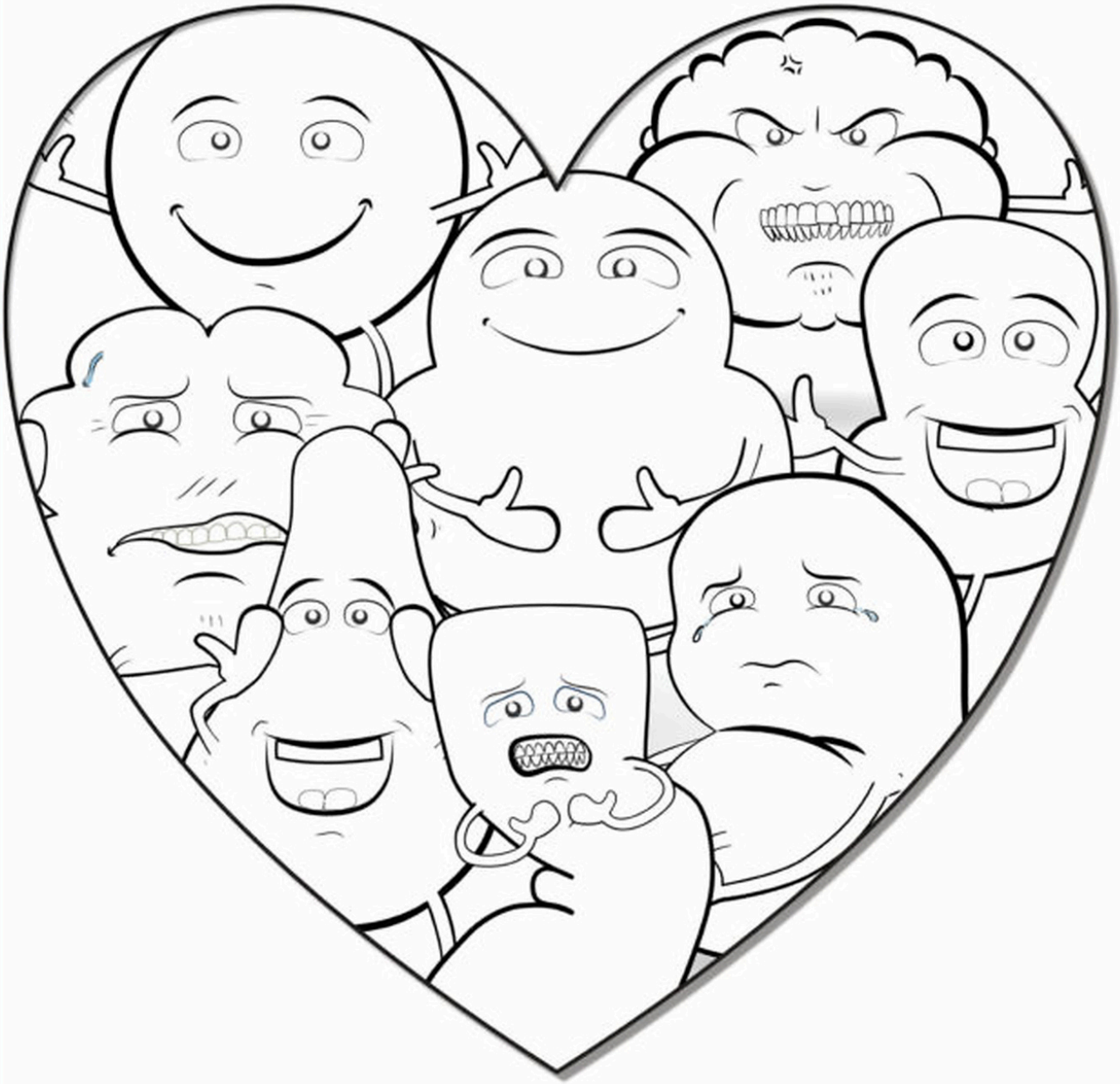


Thomas was angry when he heard the tap, tap, tap of Tara's pencil. It really annoyed him. Tara kept on tapping and Thomas' angry feeling kept on getting bigger.



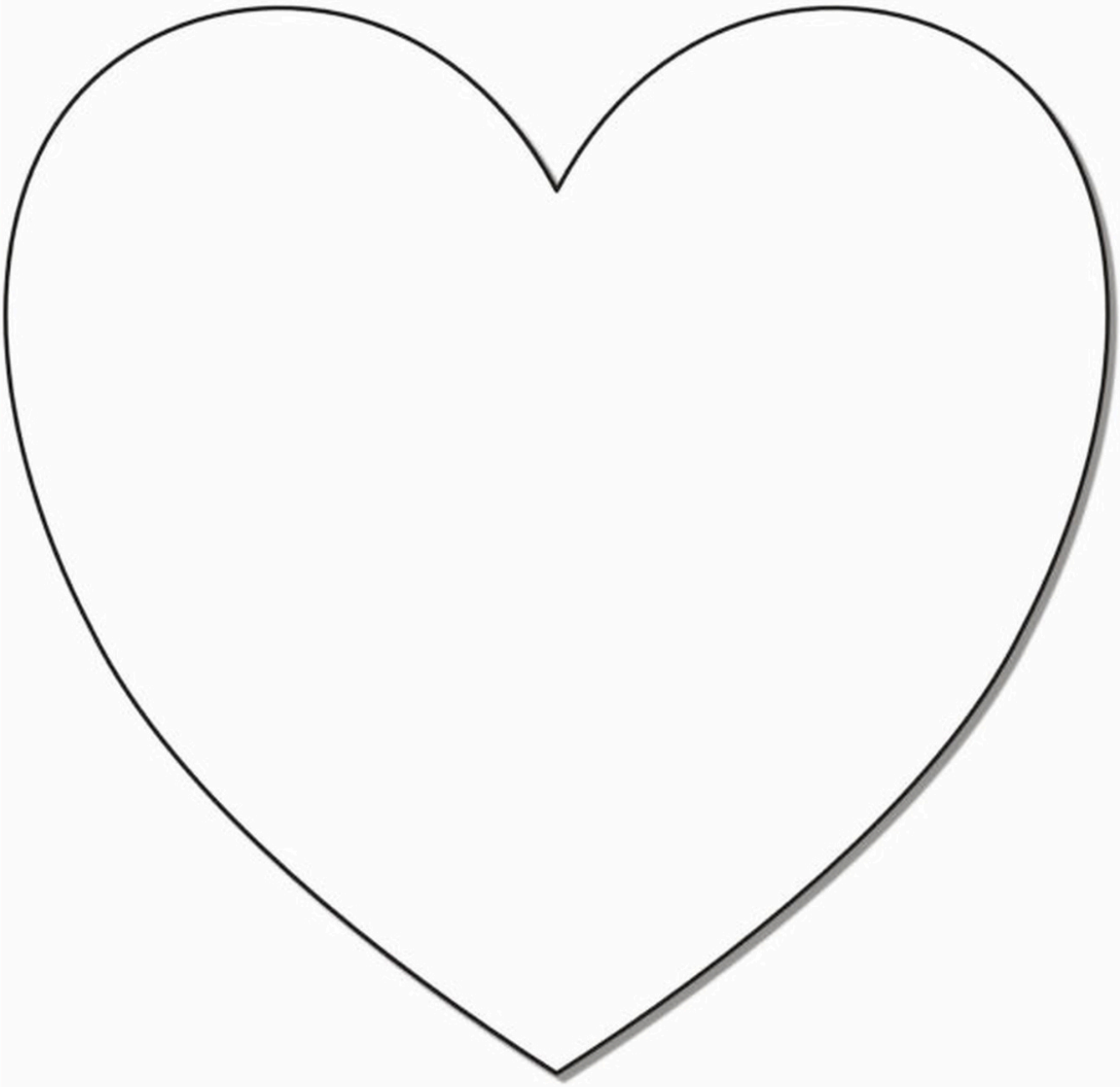
Mr Martin rang the bell and the two children opened their eyes. Mr Martin was holding the 'Everything Belongs Heart'. He asked the class whether anyone had felt any difficult emotions. Both Thomas and Tara raised their hands.

In the 'Everything Belongs Heart', colour the feeling or feelings that are in your heart right now. Remember that all your feelings are OK.



1st/2nd

In the 'Everything Belongs Heart' write, draw or colour the feeling or feelings that are in your heart right now. Remember that all your feelings are OK.

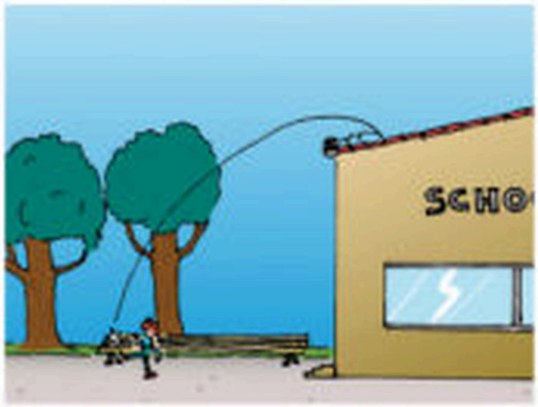


Activity 8: Being a Friend to our Emotions

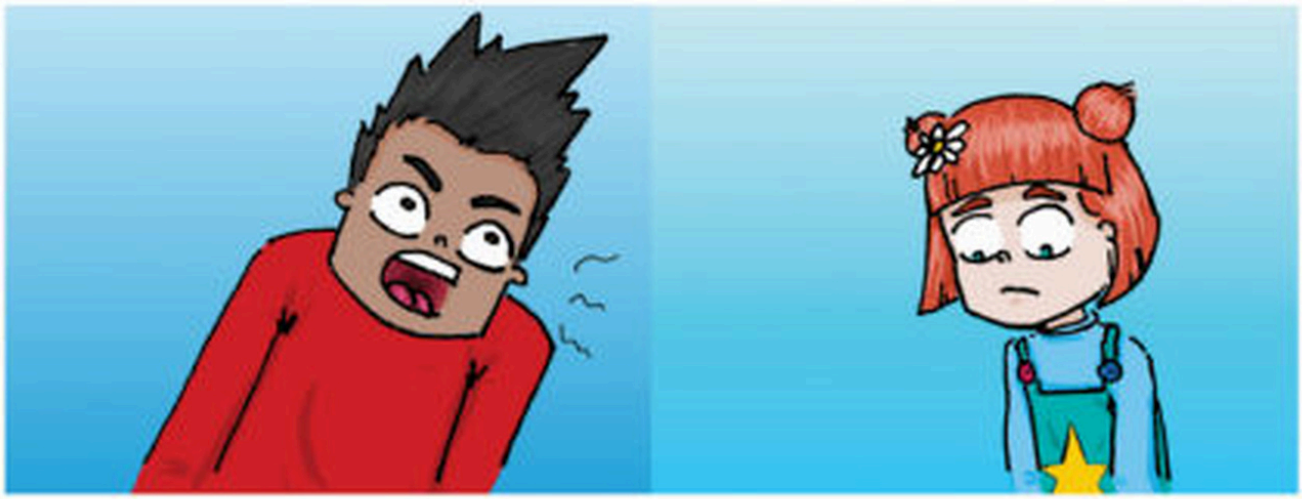
Difficult Feelings



It was lunchtime at school, Thomas kicked the ball too hard and it rolled over near Tara.



Tara picked up the ball and tried to kick it back to the football pitch but it went in the wrong direction and got stuck on the roof of the school.



Thomas was sure Tara had done it on purpose! He felt so angry and he shouted at Tara!

Activity 8: Being a Friend to our Emotions

Difficult Feelings



Tara felt sad, she was only trying to help...

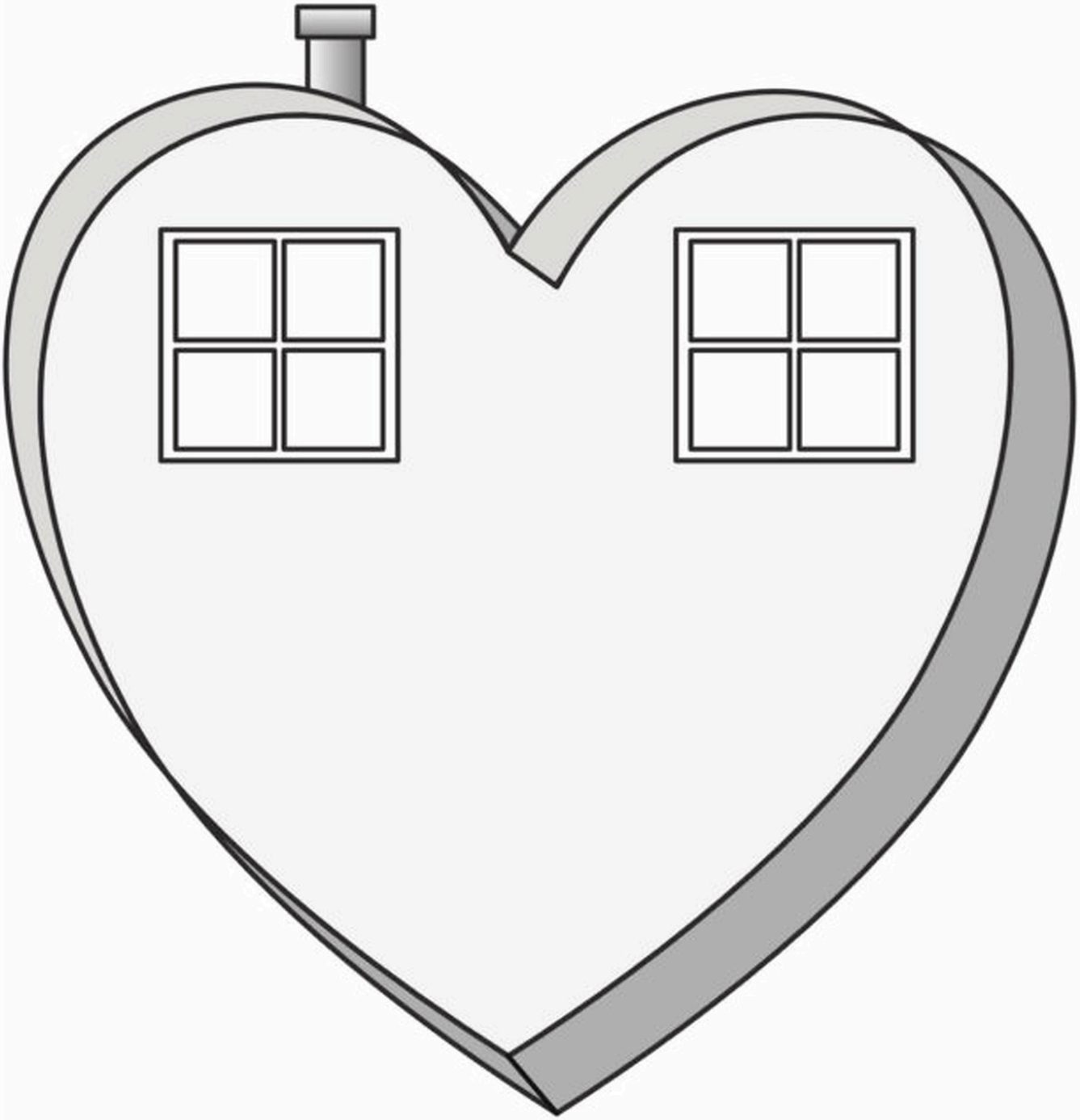


Back at class, Tara visited the 'Mindfulness Space'. She saw the sadness feeling character and held it in her hand. Thomas saw her and went over to the corner too! He was still feeling so angry! Then, he picked up the anger character from the table.



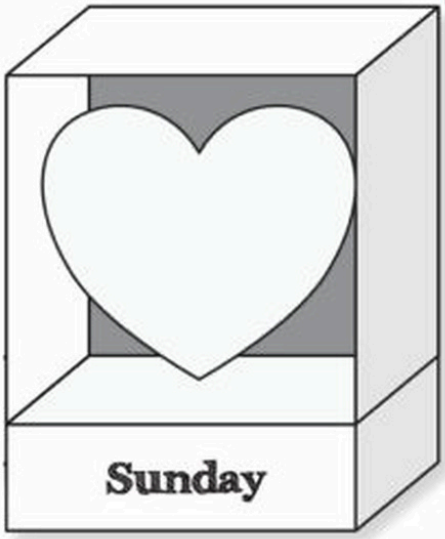
Then, Mr Martin said that today the class was going to learn about what to do when they felt a difficult feeling. Tara was happy to hear this, she felt like she really needed some help with her sad feeling!

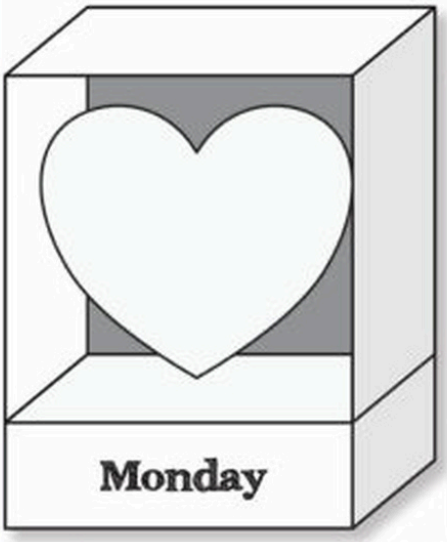
In the 'Heart House', draw the feeling or feelings that are visiting you now. Remember, all your feelings are OK to have.

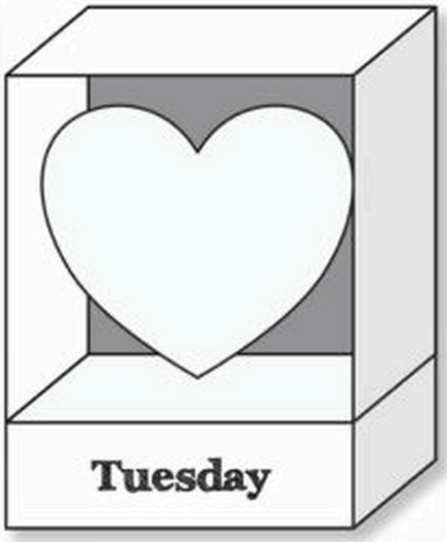


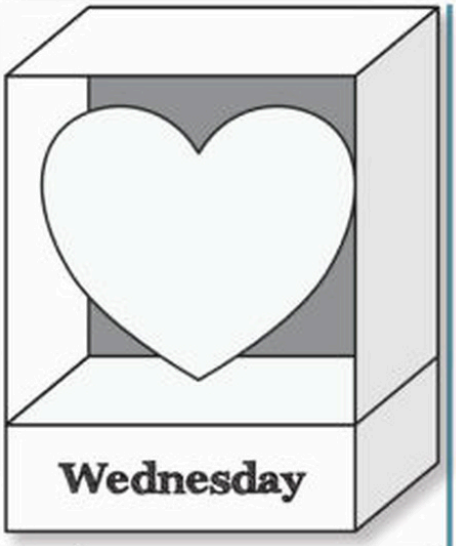
On the worksheet, record the feelings that visited you each day for one week. At the end of the week notice if your feelings change each day or stay the same.

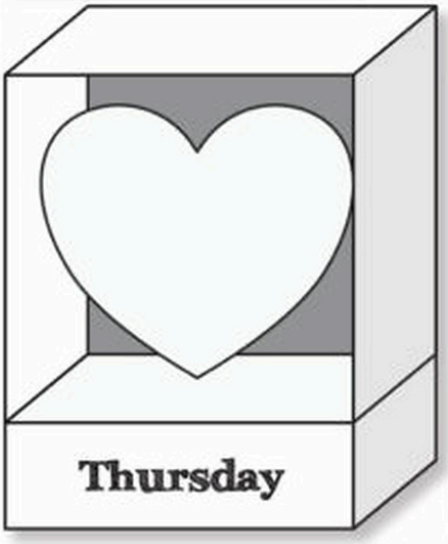


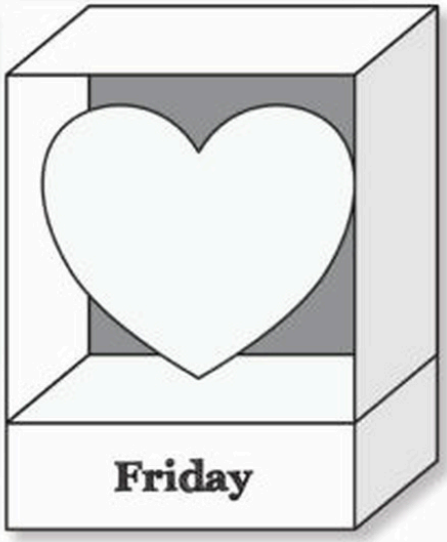


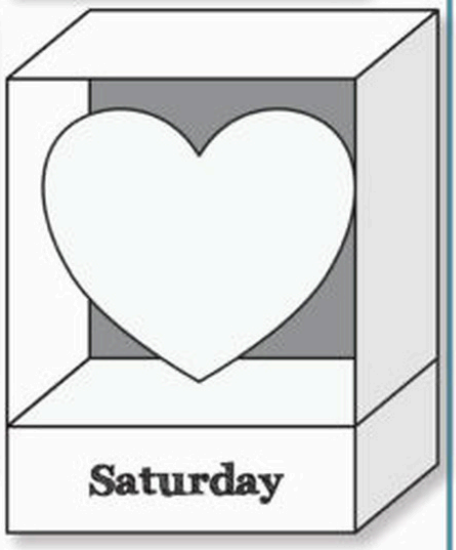












Activity 9: Wishing Well

Seeing Our Hearts



Tara was at the 'Mindfulness Space' feeding a worry to the 'Worry Monster'. Thomas asked Tara what she was worried about. She said that she was still sad about him being mean to her yesterday. Tara asked Thomas why he was feeling angry.

He said he was angry with her because she had tried to make a lot of noise when he was practising mindfulness and then she kicked his ball on to the roof!





Tara was surprised, she told Thomas that she was only trying to help yesterday by kicking the ball back to him and it had got stuck on the roof by accident. Thomas was surprised too, he realised he was wrong when he thought Tara had done it on purpose.

Now, Thomas knew how Tara was feeling. He could see she was feeling sad and Tara knew how Thomas was feeling she could see he had been feeling angry. It was lucky that they talked about it!



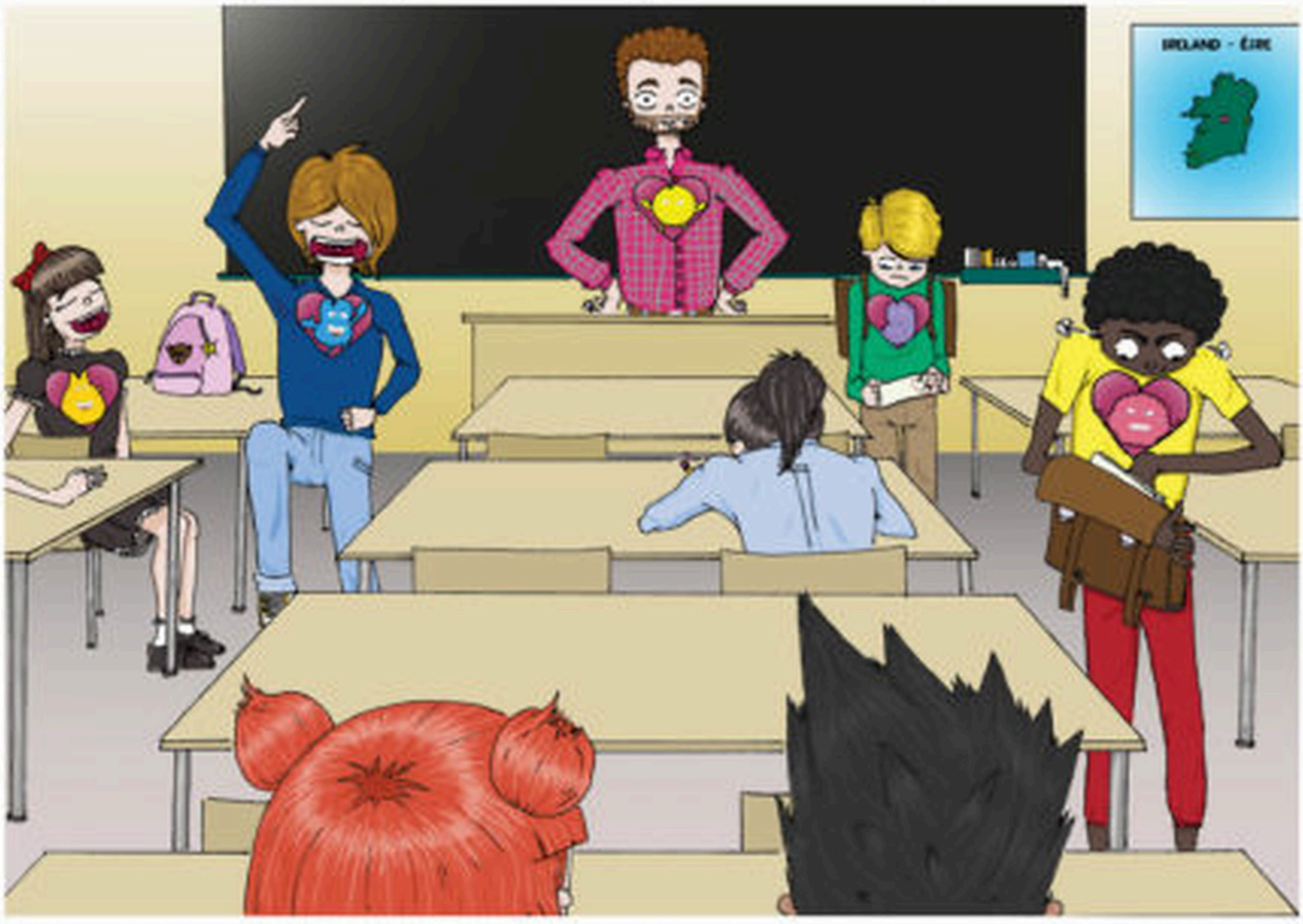
Activity 9: Wishing Well

Seeing Our Hearts



Then Mr Martin asked the children to begin a kind wishes meditation. Tara and Thomas thought of all the children in their class and then they realised...

Maybe everyone has feelings in their hearts just like us!



They want to be happy just like we do. 'I hope everyone can be happy' said Tara 'I hope everyone can be happy' said Thomas. They both felt happy and peaceful in their hearts.

1st/2nd

In the stars, draw some kind wishes for yourself and others.

MY FAMILY



MY FRIENDS



MYSELF



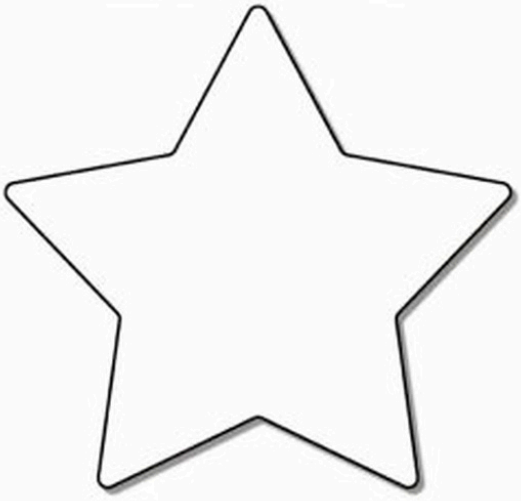
MY TEACHER



MY NEIGHBOUR



SOMEONE I DON'T KNOW



1st/2nd

Draw yourself before you learnt how to practise mindfulness and draw yourself after learning how to practise mindfulness.

Before

After

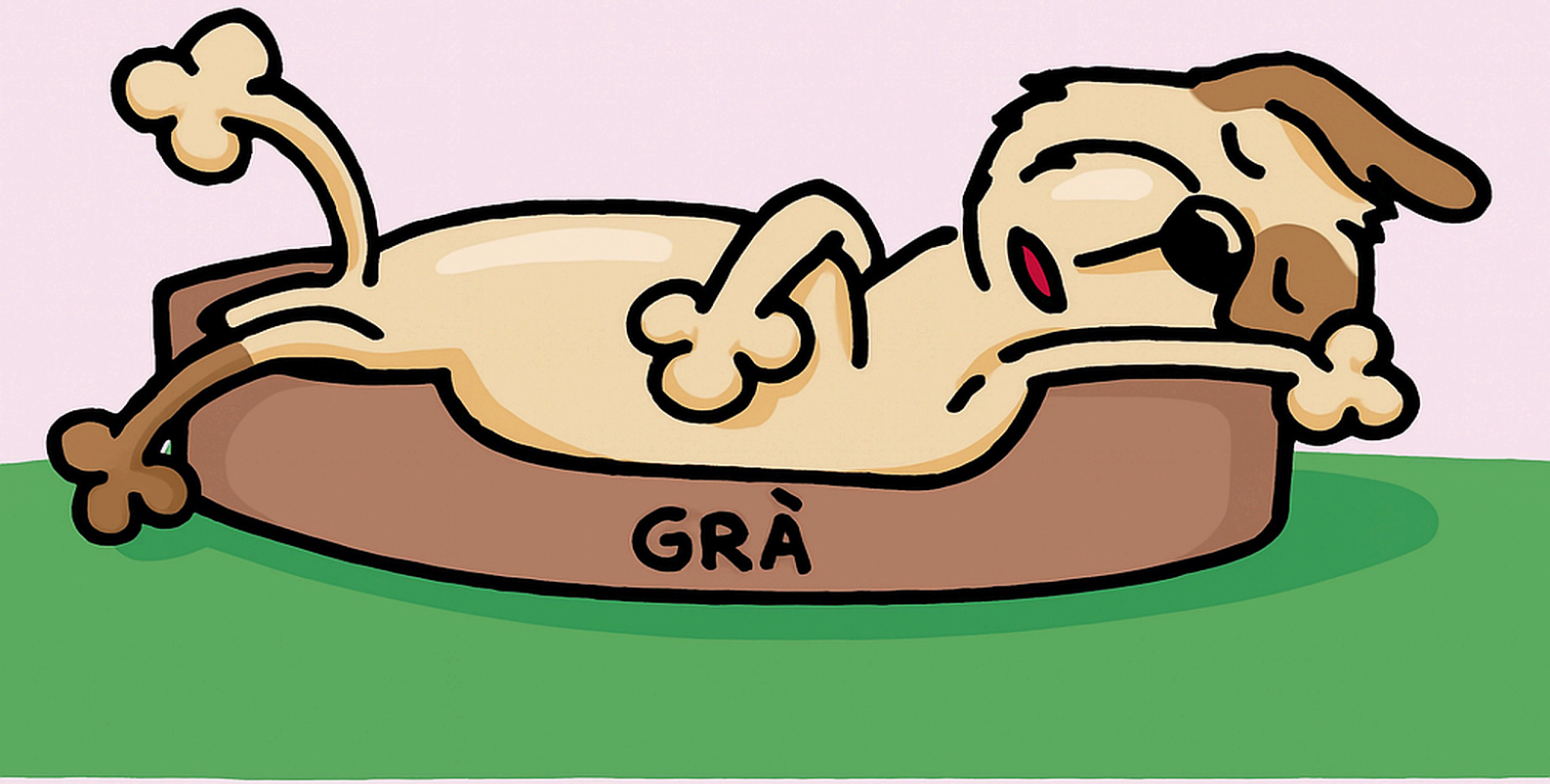
ALSO INCLUDED

More from The Mindful Heart Programme

Explore additional sample resources from the online programme, including the Grá stories, emotion characters, teacher reflective practices, classroom mindfulness-space guidance and examples of links with SPHE.

These are selected resources only. Full lesson plans and remaining materials are available in the printed curriculum or through the online programme.

Buy the full online programme



It’s okay to rest.



My Furry Little Worry

My furry little worry,
Have you come to play?
Come inside and have some tea,
You're welcome here today.

There's no need to fix what isn't even real,
I'll give you a hug and let myself feel
The emotions and swirls that tumble inside—
They've just come to visit, no need to hide.

When the time feels right they'll get on the road,
Their just stopping by to lighten their load
My heart glows bright like a star in the sky,
There's plenty of room to let feelings pass by.

My love only grows when I see how I care,
When I notice the wanting, the longing to share
All that I have and all that I am—
And yet, I still worry: "What if I can't?"

What if I'm small and it's all just too much?
But then I remember the power of love

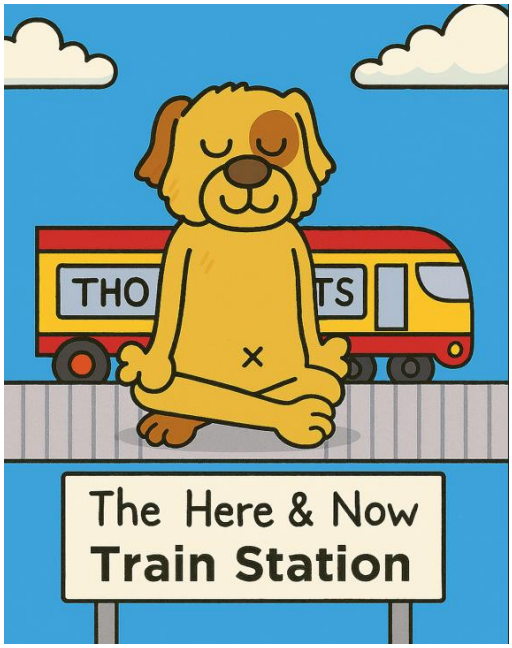
Of those who love me, who help me feel known,
That I am supported, that I'm not alone.

So come on in, Mr. Worry

My home is your home

My heart is your heart

You're not alone



The Here and Now Station

At first, whenever thoughts would come,
I'd jump aboard each train,
They'd carry me around the world
And sometimes end in pain.

I used to think they spoke of me,
That what they said was true,
I used to feel their every word
Was something I must do.

But now I see they're habits—
Old passengers passing through,
They travel through my mind each day—
Don't they for you too?

And that's not something shameful,
They're actually okay,
So long as I don't believe
In everything they say.

If I can see them passing by
While I remain right here,
Then I am at the station,
And the moment's fresh and clear.

I am that which watches,
In the here and now I stay,
I'm not doing something wrong
Or to blame in any way.

So let the thoughts go drifting—
That one, and then the next.
And if I hop aboard again,
That's fine—I wont be vexed!

Because the breath will bring me back
Each time I float away,
To the station of the here and now—
My grounded, quiet way.

Lots of Space



To have a heart that feels so much
you need a lot of care and patience.
Feelings are not your fault;
they are one of life's creations,
like bones and skin and teeth,
a mind that thinks, a heart beneath.

Feelings are part of living—
everything belongs, you see:
thought, feeling, sensation,
flowing through and moving on.
Why would you think they do not fit?

When I listen and I feel,
and notice each small moment's glory,
I know that here and now is where I can be,
part of this unfolding story.
I am Grá, I am love, I belong here too,
and just like me, so are you.

And like all that passes through,
this great heart has room and space
for everything that is real and true:
lots of room for all of me,
lots of room for all of you.

Activity 3: The Emotion Characters



ANGRY

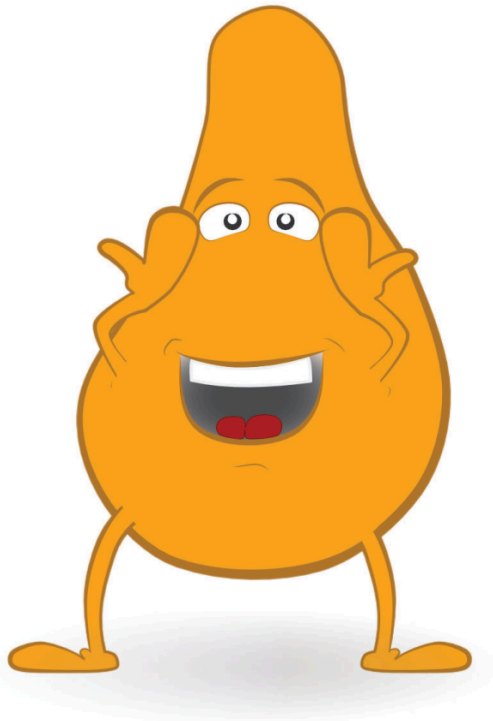


EXCITED

Activity 3: The Emotion Characters

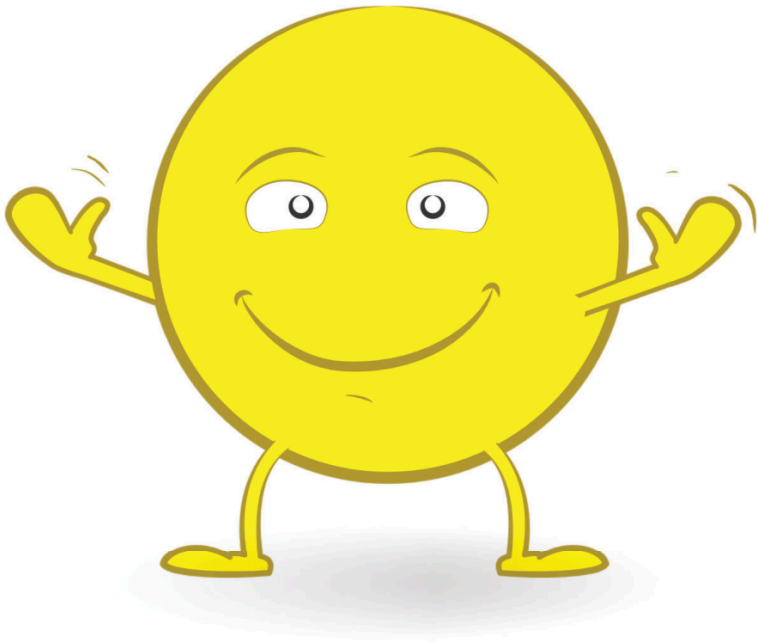


FEARFUL



GRATEFUL

Activity 3: The Emotion Characters

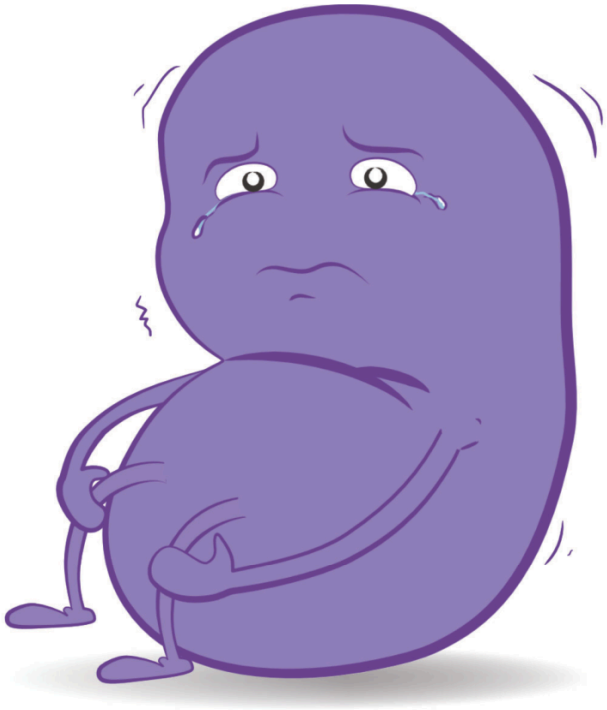


JOYFUL

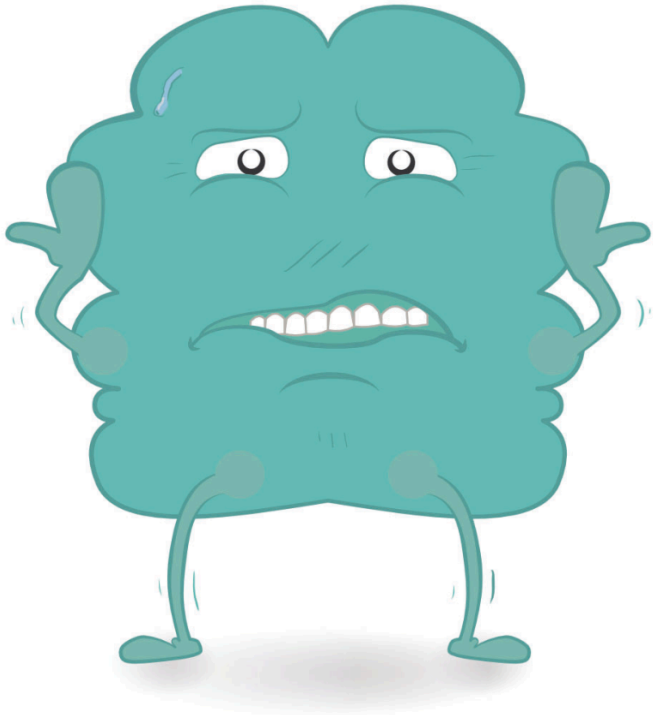


PEACEFUL

Activity 3: The Emotion Characters



SAD

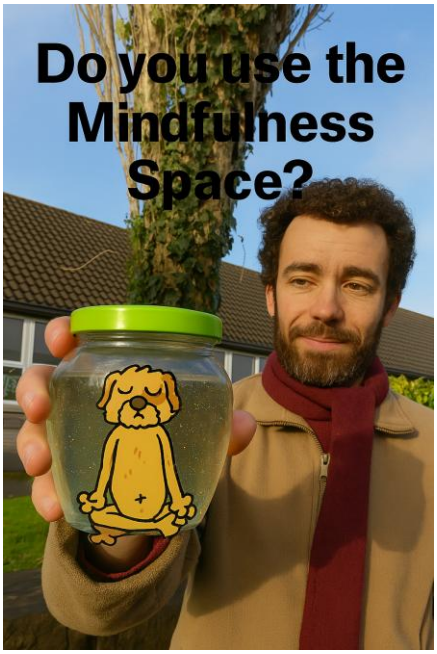


WORRIED

A Mindfulness Space for Everyone

By now the "Mindfulness Space" in your classroom should be beginning to take shape, it doesn't need to be a lot of space—a soft corner with a cushion, a glitter jar, perhaps a poster with calming words or images. It may seem small or simple, but the invitation it offers is quietly powerful. It reminds us that stillness, awareness, and care are not add-ons or extras, but part of the learning environment itself.

For children, these spaces can become a refuge—a place to reset, to notice, to breathe. But what about the adults?



Often, when we talk about mindfulness in schools, we speak about how it benefits children. But the truth is, children look to us. They don't just hear what we say about emotions, regulation, or calm—they sense how we are. If we rush from one thing to the next, if our minds are full, our words and energy carry that. If, instead, we pause, breathe, and gently steady ourselves, even for a moment, that communicates something very different.



So what if the mindfulness space wasn't just for the children? What if, in a quiet moment between lessons, you shook the glitter jar, watched the swirl, and took five breaths—not as a performance, not to be seen modelling something, but simply because your mind felt busy, and this was a way to come back to centre?

It doesn't need to be long. It doesn't need to be perfect. It just needs to be real.

Taking that moment is not a sign of weakness or indulgence. It's an act of attunement. And when we tune in to our own state, we become more able to meet the needs of others with steadiness and warmth.

The Mindfulness Space is for everyone in the school—not just in theory, but in lived experience. When we allow ourselves to use it, even briefly, we open up the possibility of real, shared wellbeing. Not as a programme or performance, but as a quiet practice of care.



How to Introduce Mindfulness in the Classroom

Environment Matters
The atmosphere of the room has a subtle but powerful effect on how we meet each moment. Before beginning a mindfulness activity, take a moment to sense the space: is it busy, rushed, distracted? If possible, introduce a small gesture that signals this is a different kind of time—time for stillness, rest, and no particular goal. You might dim the lights, light a candle, allow students to sit on cushions or the floor, or simply lower your voice. These small cues help students (and teachers) step gently out of doing mode and into simply being.

Authenticity Over Perfection
The most valuable thing you bring to a mindfulness activity is not expertise, but presence. The more you approach the session as a chance to practise for yourself—to notice your breath, your mood, the sensations in your body—the more your students will feel supported to do the same. You don't need to be perfectly calm or fully focused. Mindfulness is about returning, again and again, with gentleness and curiosity. What you model is not mastery, but honesty and kindness.

Try to let go of expectations—of how the activity should go or how the children should respond. Some will be distracted. You might be too. That's okay. Each time you notice, you've already returned.

Mindfulness in the classroom is not something to deliver—it's a space we hold together.

Modelling Self-Reflection
Each activity invites you to share a small, age-appropriate reflection from your own experience: perhaps a moment you felt worried, distracted, happy, or confused. When students see you speak simply and openly about your inner life, they begin to understand that emotions are part of being human—and that the classroom is a safe place to meet them. Before each lesson, take a moment to reflect on what you're feeling, where it shows up in the body, and how you're relating to it. This small pause will deepen your presence and help you guide the practice more naturally.

Welcoming Student Sharing
When students share, listen in a way that is open and unhurried. Avoid problem-solving or giving advice. You don't need to fix or frame their experience—just receive it. A simple "thank you for sharing" is enough. Try not to praise the content of what is said, but show interest with your tone and body language. Your presence, more than your words, tells the student: *it's okay to be you here*.

Of course, if a child shares something that raises a concern, follow your school's child protection procedures.

Facilitating Practice
You don't need special knowledge to guide mindfulness activities. What matters is that you stay in touch with your own experience as you lead—perhaps noticing the breath, feeling your feet on the ground, or observing how your body responds as you speak. If a student fidgets or there's a noise in the corridor, see if you can allow that to be part of the experience rather than a disruption. What we're practising is not silence or stillness, but a kind attention to whatever is present.

There's a balance to be found between effort and ease. Trying too hard can lead to frustration. Giving up completely leads to sleepiness or drift. Somewhere in the middle is a quiet attentiveness—one that allows things to unfold without striving to control them.

What to Remember

- **This is shared space**: You're not performing for the class—you're joining them in practice.
- **This is about noticing**: Not achieving calm or quiet, but becoming aware of how things are.
- **This is human**: Messy, imperfect, full of distractions—and still completely worth it.
- **This is enough**: Simply showing up with sincerity is what matters most.

A Gentle Encouragement
Mindfulness in the classroom doesn't require you to be someone different or to teach something abstract. It's an invitation to be here—with yourself, with your students, just as you are. When you model presence, the children learn that their own presence is welcome too. That's the real learning. That's what stays.

Let this practice be something you enjoy—something that nourishes you as much as your students.

Activity Two Pre-Lesson Teacher Practice

Before facilitating this lesson, it's important to arrive in the space as a participant, not just a leader. This short pre-lesson reflection is designed to help you check in with yourself and become grounded in your own experience. The aim is not to get rid of anything or feel a particular way, but to meet whatever is here with mindful attention.

Take a moment to sit comfortably, perhaps with your feet resting flat on the floor and your hands gently in your lap.

Close your eyes or soften your gaze.

Begin by asking yourself:

- What's going on for me right now?
- What emotions, thoughts, or sensations are already here?
- Can I meet whatever is here with a sense of acceptance, without needing it to change?

Now bring your attention to the breath.

- Can I feel the breath as it enters and leaves the body?
- Can I rest attention on the rising and falling of the abdomen or the movement of air through the nose?





All Emotions Are Okay – Reflection Worksheet

"We don't choose our feelings – but we can choose how we relate to them."

Part 1: Noticing What We Feel

Think about your day so far.

What are you feeling right now?
☐ Happy
☐ Sad
☐ Frustrated
☐ Calm
☐ Excited
☐ Nervous
☐ Angry
☐ Grateful
☐ Confused
☐ Something else: _____

You can tick more than one – feelings often come in groups.

Part 2: The Same Event, Different Feelings

Imagine this:

Your class is told there's a surprise change of plan – the sports day is cancelled and you're doing a regular lesson instead.

How might different people feel about this?
Write down two or more *different* emotional reactions that people might have:

- _____
- _____

Now, reflect:

What would *you* most likely feel in this situation? Why?

Can someone else feel differently from you about the same event?
☐ Yes
☐ No
Why do you think that might be?

Part 3: Remembering What's True

✓ Everyone feels different emotions – that's part of being human.
✓ There are no "wrong" emotions.
✓ You don't have to feel the same as your friends, siblings, or classmates.
✓ Emotions change – and that's okay too.

Teacher Reflection (for you to fill out privately or with the group)

Before or after guiding this activity, pause to reflect on your own response.

What emotion(s) came up for you during this session?

Was there a moment when you noticed students reacting differently to the same question or example?

How do *you* relate to the idea that emotions are not right or wrong, just human?

If you feel comfortable, you might gently share a reflection with your students that shows you're also learning from this.



How the Mind Jar Lesson Supports the SPHE Curriculum (3rd and 4th Class)

The Mind Jar lesson introduces children to the concept of a "busy mind" using the story *Tara's Day* and a creative visual metaphor (a jar filled with glitter). It helps children observe, name and reflect on thoughts, feelings and memories in a calm, inclusive environment. These experiences map directly to a range of objectives in the SPHE curriculum for 3rd and 4th classes across several strands.

Strand: Myself
Strand Unit: Self-identity – Self-awareness
The use of the story, visual metaphor and group reflection supports the following outcomes:
– Recognise, describe and discuss individual personality traits, qualities, strengths, limitations, interests and abilities
– Identify personal preferences, dreams for the future, and hopes
– Realise that each person has a unique contribution to make to various groups, situations and friendships.
By inviting students to reflect on what Tara may be feeling, and then reflect on their own internal experiences, the activity strengthens self-awareness and appreciation of individuality.

Strand Unit: Self-identity – Developing self-confidence
The lesson supports children in *reflecting on their own learning and experiences* and *expressing personal opinions, feelings, thoughts and ideas with growing confidence*.
The use of creative expression, followed by optional sharing, helps children build comfort in discussing emotional experiences, recognising that everyone has complex inner lives.

Strand Unit: Growing and Changing – Feelings and Emotions
This is a central strand unit for the lesson. The following objectives are directly addressed:
– Talk about and reflect on a wide variety of feelings and emotions and the various situations where these may be experienced and how they may be expressed
– Identify strong feelings and learn how to express and cope with these feelings in a socially appropriate manner
– Explore how feelings can influence one's life
– Recognise how real feelings can sometimes be hidden from others.

The use of colour-coded glitter, sequins and beads provides a visual and tactile way to externalise and explore inner experience. Linking this with discussion and breath-based grounding builds emotional regulation skills.

Strand Unit: Taking Care of My Body – Health and Wellbeing
The breath and body awareness aspect of the activity supports children in *developing strategies to cope with various worries or difficulties*, such as school stress, interpersonal tension or emotional overwhelm.
These strategies are linked with a broader understanding of wellbeing, including quiet time, emotional awareness, and stress reduction.

Strand: Myself and Others
Strand Unit: Relating to Others – Communicating
The reflective group discussion and open-ended questions support the development of emotional language, listening, and respectful communication:
– *Express and record experiences, opinions, feelings and emotions in a variety of ways*
– *Listen, hear and respond to what is being said by others*
– *Use verbal and non-verbal communication to express understanding and appreciation*.

Strand Unit: Relating to Others – Resolving Conflict
The normalisation of complex emotions and the emphasis on not needing to "fix" feelings immediately introduces children to foundational ideas around pausing, reflecting and self-regulating—skills that support healthy conflict resolution over time.

Strand: Myself and the Wider World
Strand Unit: Developing Citizenship – My School Community
The shared experience of creating mind jars and discussing common emotional experiences fosters:
– *Appreciation for the contributions of others in the class*
– *Engagement in group activities that require sharing, co-operation, and listening*.

The lesson also supports classroom culture by reinforcing that each student's feelings and experiences are valid, important, and worthy of care and attention.

How the Wishing Well Lesson Supports SPHE Curriculum Objectives

First and Second Class

This mindfulness-based lesson, centred around the story *Seeing Our Hearts* and the classroom *Wishing Well*, directly supports key learning objectives in the SPHE Curriculum for First and Second Class. It provides developmentally appropriate support for emotional awareness, empathy, self-kindness and reflective thinking, while fostering a caring and inclusive classroom environment.

Through storytelling, discussion, embodied mindfulness and creative expression, children are guided to recognise their own emotions, understand the feelings of others, and experience the wellbeing that arises from kindness and goodwill.



Strand: Myself

Strand Unit: Self-identity – Self-awareness

This lesson supports children in developing awareness of their inner world and recognising shared human needs.

Through the story of Tara and Thomas, children are invited to notice:

- their own feelings
- the feelings of others
- the common wish that all people want to feel happy, safe and well

The reflective questions following the story support children to:

- develop an appreciation of and talk about personal feelings and experiences
- recognise and appreciate similarities between people
- become aware of their immediate world through emotional and sensory awareness

By asking children what feelings are in their hearts right now, and guiding them to notice how kindness feels inside, the lesson builds emotional self-awareness and reflective capacity.

Strand Unit: Self-identity – Developing Self-confidence

The Wishing Well activity supports children in learning to relate to themselves with kindness and care.

Through modelling and discussion, children are encouraged to:

- reflect on their own experiences
- understand that difficult feelings are part of being human
- develop confidence in talking about emotions
- practise kind self-talk

When children make kind wishes for themselves, they learn that they deserve care, safety and happiness. This reinforces positive self-worth and emotional resilience.

The story also supports children in understanding that misunderstandings and mistakes are part of learning and relationships, helping them develop flexibility and emotional confidence.

Strand: Growing and Changing

Strand Unit: Feelings and Emotions

This lesson aligns very strongly with this strand unit and directly supports its objectives.

Through story, discussion, meditation and creative expression, children are enabled to:

- name and identify a wide range of feelings
- explore feelings in different situations
- recognise how misunderstandings can lead to strong emotions
- understand that others also experience difficult feelings
- recognise that individual actions affect the feelings of others
- identify people they can talk to about their feelings
- explore healthy ways of feeling good about themselves

The story of Tara and Thomas models emotional conflict, communication, empathy and reconciliation. The loving-kindness meditation helps children develop emotional regulation, self-kindness and compassion for others. The Wishing Well allows children to practise expressing care and goodwill in a concrete and meaningful way.

Strand: Taking Care of My Body

Strand Unit: Knowing About My Body

The breath awareness and heart-based meditation support children in developing embodied awareness and self-regulation.

Children are guided to:

- notice their breathing
- place a hand on their heart
- tune into bodily sensations
- experience relaxation and quiet time

This supports the curriculum aim of helping children:

- appreciate the need for rest and relaxation
- recognise what the body can do – feel, breathe, think
- develop awareness of physical sensations linked to emotions

The heart visualisation helps children understand that emotions are felt in the body and that caring for emotions is part of caring for the body.

Strand: Myself and Others

Strand Unit: My Friends and Other People

This lesson strongly supports the development of empathy, kindness and respectful relationships.

Children are guided to:

- recognise that others have feelings just like they do
- understand that misunderstandings can cause hurt
- practise seeing situations from another person's point of view
- develop empathy through shared reflection

The moment when Tara and Thomas realise that everyone has feelings in their hearts just like them provides a strong foundation for emotional literacy and social understanding.

Children learn that:

- talking helps resolve conflict
- kindness helps relationships
- everyone wants to feel happy and safe

Strand: Myself and the Wider World

Strand Unit: Developing Citizenship – My School Community

The Wishing Well becomes a shared classroom resource that reinforces kindness, inclusion and care.

The lesson supports children in:

- recognising that everyone is important
- understanding the value of kindness and cooperation
- contributing to a caring classroom culture
- learning that their actions affect the wellbeing of others

The collective act of making kind wishes builds a sense of shared responsibility and belonging within the school community.

Summary

The *Seeing Our Hearts – Wishing Well* lesson supports the holistic aims of SPHE by helping children:

- understand their emotions
- develop empathy for others

- practise kindness towards themselves
- build emotional resilience
- feel a sense of belonging in their classroom

Through story, reflection, mindfulness and creative expression, children are supported in developing emotional literacy, compassion and self-awareness in a way that is developmentally appropriate and clearly aligned with the SPHE curriculum framework.

CONTINUE LEARNING

Bring The Mindful Heart into your classroom

This booklet offers a selection of illustrated stories, worksheets and resources. It is designed as a glimpse into the programme, not a replacement for the complete curriculum.

All lesson plans and content not included here are available through the published hard-copy book or The Mindful Heart Programme online course.

Buy the full online programme

creative-mindfulness.com/course/the-mindful-heart-course

Explore the printed curriculum