



INCULCATING INNER PEACE IN THE NEXT GENERATION

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Abstract

By taking learning activities students can face the challenges of life positively. They can control their anger. They get the instant peace of mind. They help and share others. They can learn how to release stress. Students can learn the art of soothing the mind. They learn to live with awareness and attention. Student can discover the joy within. All are the advantages of learning activities suggested in the article. Thus we can perceive of inner peace.

“We can never obtain peace in the outer world until we make inner peace with ourselves.”

– His Holiness the Dalai Lama



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His Holiness the Dalai Lama knew that the world needed to find the secret to inner peace, that's why he said the above. His statement has in it, in fact, the secret to being happy and content and finding your inner peace.

Inner peace means gaining closure and letting go of all your fears, your emotional baggage, doubts, worries, anxieties, limitations, and barriers. Inner peace means disempowering any negative attitudes and beliefs and replacing them with positive empowering qualities. With inner peace, navigating through the world becomes much easier.

Finding inner peace is like pure joy; the essence of it is bliss. Our thoughts make us, and if we can think wisely and positively, we can walk on the road to bliss. Inner peace doesn't mean staying lonely, it means being in harmony with your loneliness. If you can make loneliness your friend, then you have found the solution to the biggest problem faced in the world. The world today is in constant motion, and we have to pace up if we want to survive, but while learning to survive, we forget how to live. Inner peace is the key that unlocks that door.

Money can't buy you happiness, it can't buy you love, it can't even buy you sleep, but inner peace can bring all these things into your life.

Because we are unhappy from the inside, we are not in harmony with ourselves; our lives are spinning out of our control. Even staying in your own house, or living with your partner or family, do you feel like this is not home, like something is missing? Like you don't know where you belong? That is the feeling of unrest. We have to understand that our inner self is made up of five aggregates: Form, Feelings, Perceptions, Mental formation, Consciousness. To find our true home we must to look deeply into these aggregates.

We don't have to go to China, or Japan, or India to find our home. Our true home is right in the here and now, within us. We only need to look inside ourselves and find that inner peace which we have been trying to find outside us. We need to stop running away from ourselves and searching for something outside of us; we have to find our inner world, our inner peace.

We have to keep in mind that inner peace does not mean the absence of conflicts, but the ability to cope with them. As teachers we can inculcate inner peace through some activities :-

1. Walking Meditation

This is an activity about awareness, attention and soothing the mind

Level: Upper primary and secondary.

Curriculum concern: Religion/ when you want to do a stress-releasing exercise.

Objectives:

1. Learning the art of soothing the mind.
2. Learning to live with awareness and attention
3. Expanding consciousness
4. Experiencing inner joy of peace

Activity: Take children out to an undisturbed place and let them walk up and down freely keeping a distance from others.

Tell them: 1. Do not talk or look at others. 2. Feel you are alone by yourself. 3. Relax and be quiet and serene in mind. 4. Walk very slowly. (5 minutes)

Instruct: As you walk be completely aware of all your body movements. For instance: As you lift your foot in walking be aware that you are lifting the foot, when keeping the foot be aware that you are keeping the foot on the ground and so on. As you are moving forward, be aware that you are moving forward. In this manner be aware of all your body movements however subtle they are. (10 minutes)

Discussion - Guide Questions * Did you learn anything from the activity? * What do you mean by being aware? * Did this walking make your mind quiet? * What are the uses of being mindful and collected? (Try this walking meditation whenever you can and see it helps you to develop awareness.)

2. Watching with Silent Mind

This is an activity about awareness, attention and soothing the mind

Level: Upper primary and secondary.

Curriculum concern: Religion/ when you want to do a stress-releasing exercise **Objectives:**

1. Developing a spiritual relationship with nature, 2. Learning to observe with silent mind.

Activity:

Step 1. Take the children out to a silent natural surrounding and ask them to select an object of nature such as a tree, plant, or part of the ground or even the sky or a cloud. Instruct: Leave the group and go to the object you have selected. Observe it with a silent mind. Don't bring in thoughts. Just watch with full awareness. Observe the colours, shape, liveliness of the tree or whatever objects you have selected. Be alone with nature. Listen to the songs of the birds. Feel the freshness of the breeze. Enjoy the warmth of the sunlight. Awaken your love for the earth, trees, plants, and the sky, Feel that you are a part of the whole universe. (10 minutes)

Step 2: **Discussion:** Guide Questions . After the activity discuss in class. 1. Did you enjoy the activity? 2. Is there a difference between observing with a chattering mind and observing with a silent mind? 3. What did you learn from the activity? 4. How can you enrich your daily life from what you have just learnt?

3. Learning to Relax

This activity is a stress-releasing stress.

Level: Upper primary to upward

Curriculum concern: Religion/ Classroom management/ When you find children restless and bored, the exercise helps them to regain normalcy.

Instruct: Sit on a chair or lie on the floor. Find the most comfortable position. Do not move. Stay calm and still. When you feel well settled and relaxed, close your eyes. Focus your attention to the whole body. Stay for sometime. Say in mind: I am relaxing my body. . . . relaxing. . . relaxing. Start relaxing the body from your toes. Focus attention on the toes and tighten and tense them. . .Then at once relax and let go the tension. Focus on the muscles of the legs. . .Tighten . . .Relax. Focus on the muscles of the abdomen , . . Tighten. . . Relax. . . Focus on the muscles of the hand and chest. . . Tighten ..Relax. . . Focus on the muscles of the neck and face. . .TightenRelax. . . Focus on the muscles inside the brain. . . . TightenRelax. . . Focus on the muscles of the whole body. . . Tighten and tense. . . At once drop relaxed. . . Say in mind: I am relaxing, relaxing deeply relaxing. Be completely aware and sensitive to the sensation and feelings of the whole body...Stay calm and relaxed for some time (5 to 10 minutes)

4. Experiencing Inner Peace

This activity is about concentration of mind and turning the attention inward.

Level: Upper primary to upward

Curriculum concern: Religion/ Classroom management/ when you want children to quieten down and feel peace within.

Objectives:

1. Learning to turn attention inward.
2. Understanding the process of soothing one's mind.
3. Discovering the joy within.

Activity: Sit comfortably on your chairs. Don't lean against them. Keep your back straight and well composed. Relax in body and mind. Calm down. Let your body settle down gradually in stillness and silence. Close your eyes. Focus your attention and awareness on the whole body. Feel all the sensations arising from the body. Now, slowly focus your awareness on the breathing. Let breathing take place naturally, effortlessly. Concentrate on breathing in and out. Do not allow your mind to be distracted with other thoughts and memories. Stay in concentrated on the breathing in and out. Concentrate on the start, middle and the end of each breath. If you find it difficult to concentrate at the beginning, you can start counting breathing in and out up to 20 and go back. When the mind is tamed, then come back to concentration. Practise concentration for at least 10 minutes and then open your eyes and stay relaxed for another few minutes..

Discussion - Guide Questions: * How do you feel about the activity? * Did you feel a sense of peace within? * Was it easy to concentrate on breathing? * Why do some find it difficult to concentrate? * What did you learn about your self through the activity? **Note:** Instruct students to practise this mind soothing exercise, daily in the morning soon after getting up and in the evening so that they experience inner peace and develop awareness and concentration.

5. Letting Go

This is an activity about stress-releasing.

Level: Upper secondary

Curriculum concern: When you want children to introduce a method of stress releasing.

Instruct: Sit on a chair or lie on the floor comfortably. Relax deeply for some time. Once you feel relaxed say in mind: I am letting go the entire burden on my mind. Recall all the worries, problems, fears and anxieties you have in mind one after the other. Feel it. Accept it. Stay with it briefly and then say: I let go this worry completely and the mind is now released and

free. Do it until your mind is completely empty and free. Enjoy and experience the sense of release and the freshness.

6. Instant Peace of Mind

This is an instant meditation you can use to bring back your mind to peace when you find yourself disturbed or enraged with anger.

Level: Upper primary and upward.

Curriculum concern: Religion/Whenever you feel that children are in an emotionally disturbed and confused state of mind.

Objective: Coming back to one's peace of mind. Instruct: Concentrate on breathing in and out and repeat mentally: Breathing in I calm. Breathing out I smile Dwelling in the present moment I know this is a wonderful moment

7. Meditation on the Present Moment

This is an activity about living in the present moment.

Level: Secondary

Curriculum concern: Religion/ when you want children to settle down before starting a lesson.

Objective: Discover the joy of living in the present. Activity. Sit comfortably. Relax and calm down Realize that (by repeating the following sentences mentally) I This is the present. I focus my whole attention on the present moment. Living is always in the present This moment is new and fresh. It never comes again. Therefore it is precious. Living in the present is so good. There is great beauty in living in the present moment. Living in this present moment is joyous. This is a moment of happiness, contentment and peace. When you have come into complete touch with the present moment stop repeating. Enjoy living in the present moment. You can practise this meditation sitting in the classroom, travelling in a vehicle or while relaxing on a chair

8. Meditation on Goodness

This activity is about discovering goodness.

Level: Upper primary to upward

Curriculum concern: Religion/ Classroom management/ when you want children to quieten down and feel good within.

Objective: Experiencing inner goodness.

Activity. You may practise this meditation while sitting or walking. You can do it lying down on bed just as soon as being awake in the morning or before sleeping at night. Repeat calmly in mind until you really feel good. Living is good! Nature is good. Everybody is good

at heart. Everywhere is good! a Every moment is good! Every day is in eternity! I I love life; I love all beings; I love the whole universe.

9. Meditation on Sharing

This activity is about feeling for human brotherhood.

Level: Upper primary to upward

Curriculum concern: Religion/ Classroom management/ when you want children to feel empathy with the whole of mankind.

Level: Upper Primary and Secondary

Objectives: Experiencing empathy Activity: Learn the following verse by heart and repeat it with loving kindness to all. Share in the suffering of others. Delight in the joy of others. Delight in the good fortune of others. View the losses of others as your own loss.

10. Meditation on Being Awake

This activity is about sharing.

Level: Upper primary to upward

Curriculum concern: Religion/ when you are discussing compassion

Objective: Helping to start the day with compassion.

Activity: Learn the following verse by heart and repeat it with loving-kindness soon after you awake in the morning. Waking up this morning, I smile. Twenty-four new hours are before me. I vow to live fully in each moment and To look at all beings with eyes of compassion.

11. Controlling Your Anger

This activity is about controlling anger..

Level: Upper primary to upward

Curriculum concern: Religion/ /When you are discussing the need for controlling anger

Activity: Learn the following verse by heart and repeat it when you find you are angry until it goes away. Breathing in, I know that anger makes me ugly Breathing out I do not want to be contorted by anger Breathing in I know I must take care of myself Breathing out I know loving kindness is the only answer.

Inner peace is a very vast concept through many ways we can teach about inner peace .By peace education, curriculum. Thus we can inculcate inner peace among students by taking such type of learning activities.

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