



L4. COPING SKILLS

Y5



LAUGHOLGY
HAPPY-CENTRED
SCHOOL PROGRAMME

LAUGHOLGY

LESSON 4 QUESTION:

What is the importance of having good coping skills?



YOU WILL NEED:

Picture of the 3 brains; a device on which to show

Youtube clip: www.youtube.com/watch?v=hew3z2FlbME; art materials.



DIRECT TEACHING INPUT:

- > Tell the children that, in today's session, they are going to learn about the brain. Ask them what they think they know about the brain already. Collect all of the answers and write them on the board.
- > Share the picture of the Triune three brain model. Explain to the children that, over many years, our brains have evolved as we have needed to adapt and get smarter. The Triune brain model represents the stages in which the brain grew.
- > Go through the details of each of the brain parts and their 'functions' (given below) while pointing to the picture.
- > The reptilian brain has 3 survival functions. Ask the children what they think they are.
- > Answers: Food / drink, Sleep, Reproduction.
- > Ask the children why they think it's called the **reptilian brain**.
- > Answer: It's the oldest brain we have. It was the first part of the brain that developed. This part of the brain is quite basic, but we still need it.
- > Next introduce the **emotional brain**.
- > Explain to the children that this part of the brain developed next. It is also called the limbic system. Explain that this part of the brain makes us feel happy, sad, nervous, excited, anxious etc.
- > At this point ask the children to share special / memorable moments from their past, e.g. best holidays from years ago (avoid recent experiences).
- > When they share the experiences ask them how they feel. If they are talking about positive memories, they should start to feel positive
- > Explain that we link feelings to different experiences.
- > Explain that sometimes the emotional brain takes over when we have experiences. The emotional brain isn't always right and sometimes it can overreact and want all the attention. When it does this, it releases chemicals that can make us forget things.
- > Introduce the four effects of the emotional brain when overreacting and have fun physicalising these. When it overreacts it makes us want to:
 - > Fight (fists up)
 - > Flight (flapping arms)
 - > Flock (gathering friends)
 - > Freeze (statues)
- > Play the film clip. Re-cap briefly with the children the two brains so far. Explain that knowing how the brain works helps us cope with our emotions.
- > Next is the **neocortex** (the big bit!)
- > Explain to the children that this part of the brain is the biggest and most powerful. It can talk to the reptilian brain and the emotional brain and tell it to stop overreacting, as shown in the film clip.
- > Ask the children to suggest what this part of the brain could say to the emotional brain when it starts trying to take over. Look for answers like: I am in control; I am safe; I can do this; I am strong; I am confident. Explain that these are good coping skills. A person with good coping skills can tell when the naughty emotional brain is overreacting and tell it to calm down. Think of examples where this might happen.
- > Ask which brain tries to take over when they are going into their assessments. What does it do to us?
- > Explain whilst all three parts of the brain are important and they do important things to help us develop as human beings, sometimes different parts overreact. When they do this, even though they think they're helping us, they're not. With our big thinking brain, we can tell them to calm down and gain back control.



REFLECTION/BRINGING THE SESSION TOGETHER:

- > In groups, children should make a brain with the three parts. Can they write good, positive statements to help challenge the overreactive emotional brain when it gets worried, scared or stressed? Share these coping statements and brain models
- > Give out award leaves for coping skills.



TEACHER NOTES:

> POSSIBLE RELATED VOCABULARY TO TEACH:

Coping, Strengths, Success, Co-operation, Friendships, Aid, Guide, Listen, Model, Together, Teamwork, Community, Compassion, Reassurance, Giving, Comfort, Thoughtfulness, Grit, Determination, Can-do, Attitude, Together, Standing tall, Breathing, Relaxation

> DIFFERENTIATION AND EXTENSION:

Practise saying the coping statements in a strong and meaningful voice. Get children to say these statements together and ask them how they feel afterwards.

> TEACHER'S ANNOTATIONS:

> WHAT WENT WELL?

> WHAT MAY BE EVEN BETTER NEXT TIME?

> OTHER IDEAS...