



Learning at JIS – from Cath Wan, Deputy Principal/ PYP Coordinator

Mindfulness, Gratitude Attitude and Creativity

You may have noticed that our Friday challenges often contain activities which involve mindfulness, gratitude and creativity. This is not by chance. As we face challenging times, these 3 activities help us build our resilience and help us to take control of our own happiness. Here are some examples.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness, contrary to some beliefs, mindfulness is not all about sitting cross legged, chanting and listening to pan-pipes. It is actually ‘training the brain’. I think we all have times when we have a hundred different things going on in our mind and it’s almost like our brain is constantly flicking between channels. Mindfulness trains the mind on one thing – whether it be the breath, or listening to sounds, or careful observation. As well as supporting academic focus, this helps to alleviate stress as we learn to stop the mind worrying and ruminating – states of mind which are damaging to well-being.

Here is an example of one of our JIS students documenting a ‘mindfulness safari’ – an exercise where we mindfully focus in and notice things around us.

Challenge 5: MINDFULNESS SAFARI

INDOORS

- Birds chirping
- Dogs barking
- Hear the boats in the marina
- Cars going down the street
- People playing tennis in the courts
- Helicopter flying over Gold Coast area
- Ceiling fan making a purring noise
- Our noisy neighbours upstairs banging

OUTDOORS

- Ants and bugs crawling
- Bees and wasps
- Birds flying above
- Butterflies
- Dogs walking with owners
- Cats wandering around
- People out walking
- People driving their cars
- Fish swimming in the sea

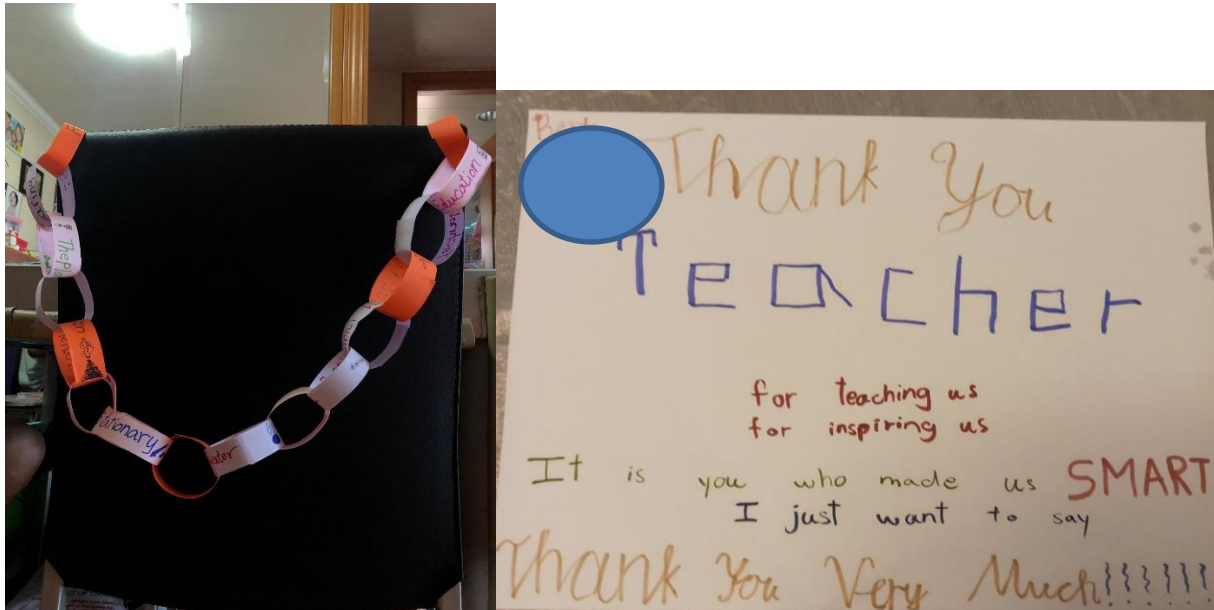
Some useful resources on mindfulness:

<https://www.happify.com/hd/skeptics-guide-to-meditation-infographic-dan-harris/>

<https://www.nytimes.com/guides/well/mindfulness-for-children>

Gratitude Attitude

Similar to mindfulness, a 'gratitude attitude' focuses in on the positive things in our life and helps us become in charge of our own happiness. Ways to focus in on gratitude range from keeping a journal, creating a 'gratitude chain' or 'gratitude jar' to simply pausing to notice a beautiful view or noticing someone's kindness and appreciating it.



Useful resources:

<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/gratitude.html>

https://biglifejournal.com/blogs/blog/grateful-children-printable-challenge?_pos=2&_sid=cb9dc9383&_ss=r

Creativity

As well as creativity being identified as a key skill for our future workers, many studies have shown a direct correlation between engaging in creative activities and well-being. Creativity also improves resilience as children learn to approach challenges from multiple angles and become flexible in their thinking. Art work is a great way of developing children's creativity; they are playing with possibilities and making decisions for themselves. Some people reach a state of 'flow' whilst engaging in artwork - an energized feeling where they are completely immersed and time seems to pass by quickly.



Further reading:

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/arts-and-health/201612/creativity-and-emotional-well-being-recent-research>

<https://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/article?contentid=627&language=english>

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323202190> The relationship between children's creativity and well-being at school

As always, if you have any questions about learning at JIS, feel free to contact me at

