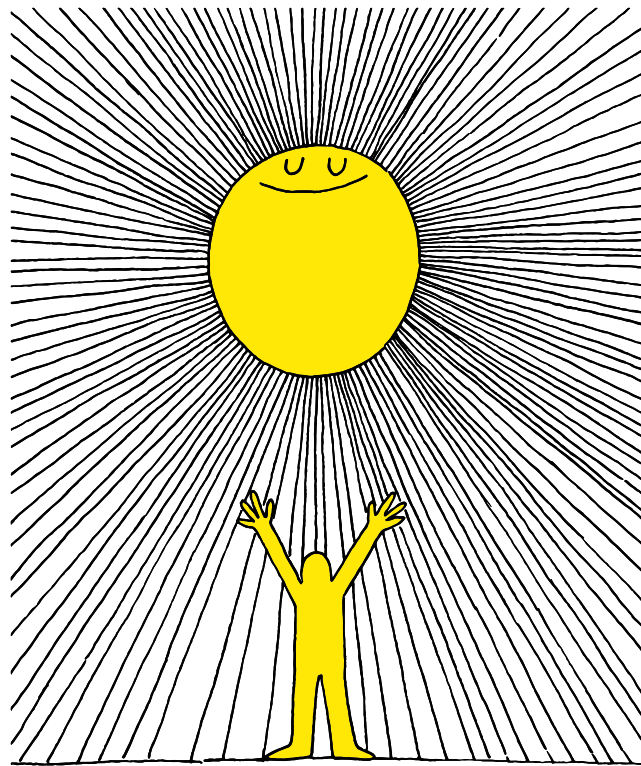


**WELL-BEING USA CURRICULUM**  
**Introduction to  
Well-being**



**GRADES 4 TO 6**

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**Lessons 1 to 4**

THE ROAD TO POSITIVE WELL-BEING IN EVERY CLASSROOM STARTS HERE



# **WELL~ BEING USA**

**Well-being USA is an educational program that uses evidence-based tools, resources and everyday actions to nurture and promote positive well-being in students of all ages.**

**This resource is focused on supporting Grades 4-6 students build the foundation of social-emotional learning and support educators in the integration of well-being into their classrooms.**

**The collection of 15 lessons is easy to use, classroom friendly and provides tools and activities to nurture well-being in your students.**

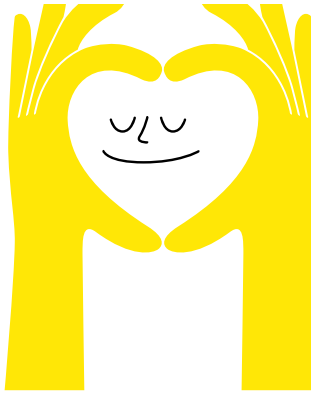
# Let's Get Started



## LESSON 1

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THE ROAD TO POSITIVE WELL-BEING IN EVERY CLASSROOM STARTS HERE



## Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce students to the Well-being USA program. During this introduction, students are engaged in an active discussion about the meaning and importance of well-being. The concepts introduced here will help develop students' interest and engagement with Well-being USA.

### Objectives:

- Students investigate and learn about well-being.
- Students consider a definition of well-being that is personally meaningful.
- Students apply their well-being learnings into their daily life and experiences.

### Skills Learned:



CRITICAL  
THINKING



COMMUNICATION  
SKILLS



REFLECTION  
SKILLS



SELF-CARE  
SKILLS



SELF-AWARENESS  
SKILLS

### Materials:

Dictionaries or computers; chart paper, markers, whiteboard/chalkboard or SMARTboard

[You may wish to give students a journal, folder or duotang to keep their reflections and related work on well-being.]

### Estimated Time:

40 minutes

Plus additional time for students to complete their Well-being and Me handout

### Differentiation by Grade Level:

#### 4th Grade:

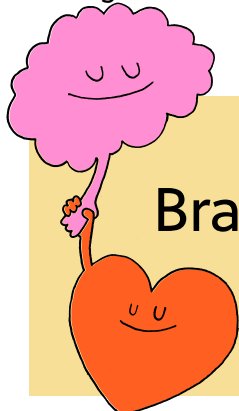
- **Part 1, Step 1:** Before defining "well-being", do a background knowledge check by discussing whether they have heard the term "well-being" before and about difficult feelings.

#### 5th Grade:

- **Part 2, Step 1:** Instead of, or in addition to the Well-Being and Me graphic organizer students may:
  - Write an essay about what well-being looks like, sounds like, and feels like to them
  - Complete a creative project, such as a Well-Being and Me collage.

#### 6th Grade:

- **Part 1, Step 2:** Have students conduct research on different types of well-being
- \*See 5th grade differentiation



## Brain Bites

What's good for the body is good for the brain. What's good for the brain is good for the body! Throughout the lessons you will find brain icons with actions and facts about the brain. It is important for students to understand the importance of the brain and how it impacts our well-being.

# Part 1: Investigate and Learn (20 minutes)

## Step 1: Introduce the Topic— What Is Well-being?

**Overview:** Using the following guiding questions, lead the class in a discussion about the concept of well-being. Invite student ideas and write them on the board.

**Note:** These questions help students access their previous knowledge about the subject.

- Welcome to Well-being USA! Today, we're going to begin by talking about well-being. Take a moment to think about or write down any questions you might have.
- Use the following guiding questions to engage students' curiosity about well-being:
  - Have you heard the term "well-being" before?
  - What do you think it is?
  - Where have you heard about it?
  - What questions do you have about well-being?

As a group, invite students to share their thoughts about well-being. Write their ideas and questions on the board.

## Step 2: Learn

Now, provide the following definition:

The Oxford Dictionary describes well-being as: *The state of being comfortable, healthy or happy.*

Write the definition on the board or display it digitally.

Next, invite student ideas (popcorn style):

- How does this definition relate to your thoughts about well-being?
- What does well-being look like, sound like, and feel like to you?

Lastly, unpack the definition a little more to ensure comprehension.

- Having mental well-being means that you are able to manage stress and disappointments. Stress is a common feeling we get when we feel under pressure. When stress feels out of control, it can affect our mood and our relationships. When we are able to manage our stress and disappointments, we are able to do our best and help others.
- What does managing stress and disappointments look like for you?
  - Why is it important?

Next, have students think about how their actions impact their well-being.

- Do you think there are ways to increase well-being?
- Invite student ideas.
- Select from the following list to offer some concrete examples:
  - Getting enough sleep so that you are rested and energized each day.
  - Eating healthy food so that your body feels good, grows and has energy.
  - Friendships that help you feel happy and cared for, and being a good friend to others to help them feel cared for!
  - Knowing who you can go to when you have a big problem to solve; important adults in your life who you know will help you when you need it.
  - Being active! Exercising helps make your body stronger and your brain feel calmer and happier.

### Step 3: Make Connections

Invite students to do a Think-Pair-Share activity with the following prompt:

- What does well-being look like for you?

Provide each pair of students with a blank Well-being Word Web (page 9) to complete in partners.

Alternatively, work on a large Word Web (on the board or chart paper) with the whole class.

Word Web Example:

### Step 4: Summary

- Invite students to share their ideas from the Think-Pair-Share.
- Is there anything I missed?
- What questions do you have?



## Part 2: Application (20–25 minutes)

**Note:** Part 2 can be implemented at a later time.

### Step 1: My Well-being

**Overview:** Invite students to write their own definition of well-being based on their participation in Investigate and Learn About Well-being. Alternatively, come up with a shared class definition of well-being. For example, "Well-being is feeling calm, being a good friend and taking care of yourself."

Provide each student with a copy of the Well-being and Me worksheet (page 10) and invite them to complete it. Students may **write or draw** about what well-being means for them, based on the following prompts.

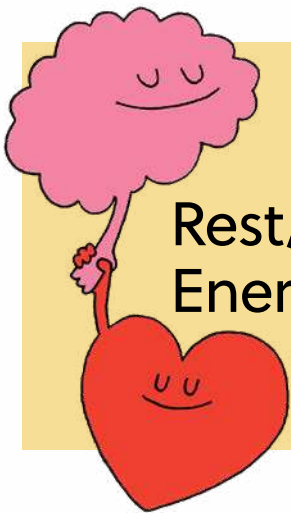
For you, what does well-being:

- Look like?
- Sound like?
- Feel like?

### Step 2: Share Out

As a group, invite students to share their thoughts about what well-being looks like, sounds like and feels like.

**Optional:** Create a gallery walk so that students can view one another's Well-being and Me worksheet.



### Rest/Recharge Energy

Downtime refuels your brain and its ability to focus. It also boosts your ability to get up and go! Research shows that resting, taking breaks and enjoying some downtime fuels productivity, creativity and our highest levels of performance. A recent study using brain imaging technology revealed that a great deal of meaningful activity occurs in the brain when the mind is at rest.

## Well-being Book List

*Little You*, Richard Van Camp

(also supports the message of love and honoring the child in everyone for ages up to 2)

*You Hold Me UP*, Monique Gray Smith

(also supports empathy, compassion and resilience for ages 3-5)

*Zen Shorts*, Jon J. Muth

(also supports mindfulness for ages 3-8)

*A Pebble for Your Pocket: Mindful Stories for Children and Grown-ups*, Thich Nhat Hanh

(also supports mindfulness for ages 8-12)

*Just Breathe*, Mallika Chopra

(also supports setting intentions and mindfulness for ages 8-12)

*Fatty Legs*, Christy Jordon-Fenton

(also supports resilience for ages 9-11)

*Number the Stars*, Lois Lowry

(also supports empathy and compassion for ages 10-12)

*You Hold Me UP*, Monique Gray Smith

(also supports empathy, compassion and resilience)

*A Long Walk to Water*, Linda Sue Park

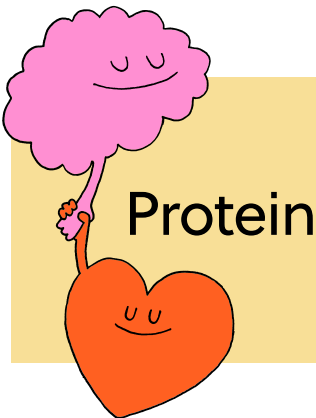
(also supports empathy and resilience for ages 10-12)

*Refugee*, Alan Gratz

(also supports resilience for ages 9-12)

*George*, Alex Gino

(also supports empathy, compassion and resilience for ages 8-12)



The body does not store protein, so everyone should eat protein at breakfast, lunch and dinner for a steady supply throughout the day. Protein sources often have calcium and iron, which are key for growing bodies and brain health!



## Well-being Word Web



## Well-being and Me

**Write or draw your ideas about what well-being means for you in each square.**

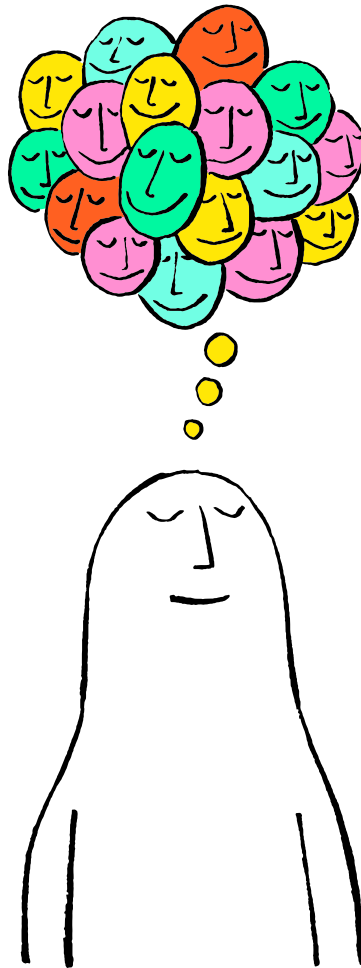
Well-being IS:

Well-being LOOKS Like:

Well-being SOUNDS Like:

Well-being FEELS Like:

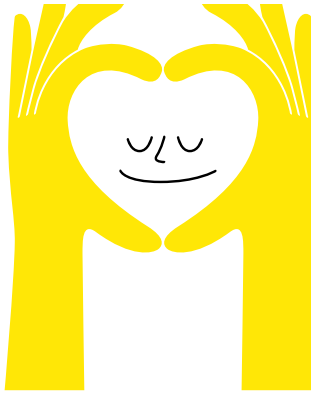
# The Road to Mindfulness



## LESSON 2

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THE ROAD TO POSITIVE WELL-BEING IN EVERY CLASSROOM STARTS HERE



## Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce students to the practice of mindfulness, a tool to promote well-being. Understanding and practicing mindfulness will help support students with setting their own positive intentions and participation in experiential learning in the forthcoming lessons.

### Objectives:

- Students investigate and learn about mindfulness.
- Students are invited to participate in experiential learning via short guided mindful awareness practices.

### Skills Learned:



CRITICAL  
THINKING



COMMUNICATION  
SKILLS



REFLECTION  
SKILLS



SELF-CARE  
SKILLS



SELF-AWARENESS  
SKILLS

### Differentiation by Grade Level:

#### 4th Grade:

- **Part 2, Step 2:** Add an open discussion about a time students were mindful to check for understanding.

#### 5th Grade:

- **Part 2, Step 2:** Have students respond to this prompt:
  - Write or draw about a time you were mindful to a point where time flew by or you didn't notice anything else around you.

#### 6th Grade:

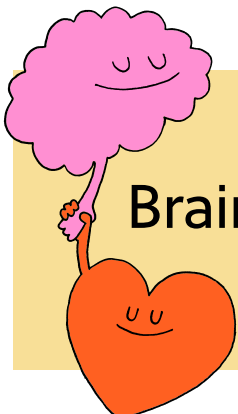
- **Part 2, Step 2:** Have students create a Venn Diagram with "Mindful" on one side and "Not Mindful" on the other. Then, have students respond to this prompt:
  - Choose one side of your Venn Diagram. Write about a time you were either mindful, or not mindful. How were you able to be mindful, or what kept you from being mindful? How did you feel?

### Estimated Time:

40 minutes

### Materials:

Dictionaries or computers; small pieces of food (for example, raisins, grapes, berries, chocolate pieces); chart paper, markers, whiteboard/chalkboard or SMARTboard



## Brain Bites

What's good for the body is good for the brain. What's good for the brain is good for the body! Throughout the lessons you will find brain icons with actions and facts about the brain. It is important for students to understand the importance of the brain and how it impacts our well-being.

## Part 1: Investigate and Learn (20 minutes)

### Step 1: Introduce the Topic— What Is Mindfulness?

**Overview:** Introduce students to the concept of mindfulness. Use the following points as a guideline. Invite student ideas and write them on the board. Note: These questions help students access their previous knowledge about the subject.

- Now we are going to learn about something that can help our well-being ...
  - It's called mindfulness.
- Has anyone heard of that word before?

#### Invite student ideas.

Write the definition on the board:

- Mindfulness means to pay attention to what is happening in the moment, without judgment.
- What do you think that means?

Invite students to Think-Pair-Share for a few minutes. Then, invite students to share their thoughts.

- Next, unpack the definition of mindfulness.
- What does it mean to pay attention to what is happening in the moment?
  - It simply means to notice what is happening here and now. What do you notice—what do you hear, see, feel?
- What do you think “without judgment” means?

#### Invite student ideas.

- Without judgment, or sometimes it's called non-judgment, means that you are not deciding whether something is good or bad, you are just noticing that it is present.

#### What would that look like?

- Provide examples like: Someone gives you something to taste that you have not tried before. What would it look like to taste this unfamiliar food without judgment?

#### Invite student ideas.

- It would mean keeping an open mind, and not deciding whether you will like it based upon how it looks.
- Being mindful is a bit like being a scientist. Scientists are interested and curious about learning and understanding. In order to understand something, scientists focus their attention on what they are studying.
  - Could you be curious like a scientist?
- Why might it be helpful to notice the “here and now” without judgment? How might that be helpful in your life?

#### Invite student ideas.

- When we're mindful we can help our well-being. How and why?
- Offer an opportunity for students to share mindfulness practices they or people they know have participated in.

#### Then...

- Invite students to participate in the mindful tasting activity on the next page, or choose from the list of additional mindful awareness practices found on page 15 of this lesson.

## Part 2: Application (20–25 minutes)

### Step 1: Tasting with Mindfulness

**Objective:** *This is an experiential activity that serves to introduce students to mindfulness. Note that this is an optional activity, and should be presented as an invitation to students, not a requirement. You may also select an alternative mindful awareness activity to try (see page 15).*

Lead the activity with the following script:

- Take your small item of food into your hand.
- Just begin by observing it ... take in all of its features.
- Notice if you find yourself thinking you like or don't like something about it.
- If you notice judgment creeping in, likes or dislikes, just notice that and try to suspend that judgment for now.
- Can you simply notice this small piece of food; can you be curious about it?
- Now, bring the food to your nose and smell.
- Again, simply bring curiosity to the smell, not deciding if you like or dislike it.
- Next, place the food in your mouth.
- Don't bite it just yet.
- Bring all your attention to the texture ... is it rough? Smooth?
- Notice if you can taste anything now without biting it.
- Now, gently bite your piece of food.
- Notice the taste and texture.
- Slowly eat your small piece of food.
- Before we move on, think about all of the people who might have been involved in bringing this small piece of food to you—from farmers and food delivery truck drivers to grocery store workers....

To close the activity, ask for students' reactions to the activity.

- What was it about this activity that promoted mindfulness?

**Optional:** Invite students to do a three- to four-minute free write about the smell, texture and flavor of their food.

### Step 2: Introduce Deep Belly Breathing

**Overview:** *The purpose of the following activity is to introduce students to a breathing practice that can help foster mindfulness, attention and stress management.*

**Note:** It is important that this is presented as an invitation (optional). Students who have experienced trauma may be resistant; in these cases, offer modifications such as not closing eyes, standing or not participating and doing an alternative quiet activity.

Use the following script to lead the breathing practice:

- Now, we're going to try a very short exercise that will help us to be mindful, and also can be helpful in calming our bodies and minds.
- First, find a comfortable seat in your chair. Place your feet flat on the ground. Rest your hands on your lap.
- If it feels comfortable, you can close your eyes. If not, just look softly down toward your desk (or table).
- Now, just begin by noticing any sounds that are here in this room now.
- No need to do anything but notice what you hear.
- Now, see if you can turn your attention to your breath. Notice that you're breathing now.
- Feel the air moving in and out of your nose.

- Next, we're going to try taking slow breaths in and out...
- Now, take a slow breath in...
- And, then, slowly let your breath out through your mouth.
- Let's try that again.
- At your own pace, take two more deep breaths in through your nose, and slowly breathe out through your mouth.
- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

**Next, debrief the breathing activity.**

- What did you notice?

**Give students the key message:**

- By focusing our attention, we can calm our mind and body. With a calm mind and body, we can make better choices. This begins with setting intentions.

## Additional Mindful Awareness Practices

### Mindful Movement

Invite students to take a few moments for a mindful stretch. This is a very good transition activity or gentle energizer after periods of sitting.

Invite students to stand with enough room to stretch their arms out wide without touching another student.

- Stretch tall as a tree! Notice the sensations in your arms and sides as you reach for the sky!
- Reach for your toes!
- Arms out wide!
- Arms overhead, and gently bring your arms over to your right side; notice the sensations on your left

side; next switch and bring your arms over to your left side; notice the sensations on your right side.

- Mountain: Stand still like a mountain. Notice your feet rooted to the ground and your body standing tall and still like a mountain.

### Mindful Walking

Invite students to walk around the outside of the classroom (space permitting), in the gym or take them outside.

- Invite students to focus their attention on the sensations of walking.
- Can you notice the sensation of your feet touching the ground?
- Can you notice the sensation of your legs moving?
- Try walking very slowly; then try speeding up the pace!
- What do you notice about the sensations of different speeds?

### Mindful in Nature

Invite students to go on a guided nature walk. What do you see, hear and smell?

### Mindful Art

During art, invite students to take a mindful approach. What do you see and feel as you focus your attention on your artistic creation.

### Mindful Communication

During class discussions, group and partner work, invite students to practice mindful listening and speaking.

- When listening, try to focus all of your attention on those who are speaking.
- When speaking, focus your attention on the listener (eye contact), so that you make a connection each moment that you share your ideas and thoughts. Then, check that your listener understands what you wanted to share.

## Optional

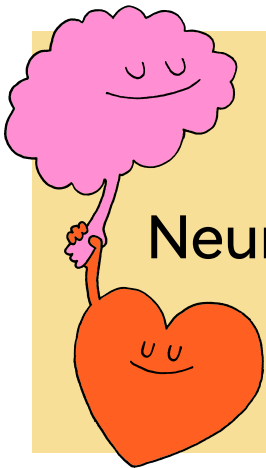
### Movie Scenario

In this scene, Cinderella is locked in her room and sings to ease her pain. Her stepsisters are downstairs trying on the lost shoe and hoping to fit into it so the prince can marry one of them. The scene ends with Cinderella smiling and graciously leaving her home with the prince. This is a powerful scene of courage and bravery.

After explaining the background of the movie clip, play the following video for students: **Cinderella** (this video is from the movie *Cinderella* and is appropriate for ages 6+)

As a class reflect on the following questions:

1. What could Cinderella be feeling and thinking while she is locked away in her room?
2. What does her stepmother do or say to negatively affect her?
3. Why do you think Cinderella forgave her stepmother despite everything her stepfamily did to her?
4. How does forgiveness help people move on positively and in a healthy manner?
5. How can we use mindfulness to forgive ourselves or others?



## Neuroplasticity

Pathways in the brain are always changing in response to experience. This is called neuroplasticity, and it gives us the power to influence the wiring and circuits in the brain. This means that the brain can constantly learn new skills and change! When learning something new, the more we practice, the stronger neural connections become. This is why new skills become easier over time.



## Mindfulness Book List

*Zen Shorts*, Jon J. Muth  
(also supports mindfulness for ages 3-8)

*Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda*, Laura Alderfer  
(also supports mindfulness for ages 4-8)

*What Does It Mean to Be Present?* Rana Di Orio (also supports mindfulness and empathy for ages 4-8)

*Breathe Like A Bear*, Kira Willey  
(also supports mindfulness for ages 4-8)

*Shi-shi-etko*, Nicola I. Campbell  
(also supports resiliency for ages 4-7)

*A Handful of Quiet: Happiness in Four Pebbles*, Thich Nhat Hanh  
(also supports meditation, mindfulness and connecting with nature for ages 5-9)

*Timmy's Monster Diary: Screen Time Stress*, Raul Melmed and Anette Sexton  
(also supports mindfulness towards screen for ages 7-11)

*A Pebble for Your Pocket: Mindful Stories for Children and Grown-ups*, Thich Nhat Hanh  
(also supports mindfulness for ages 8-12)

*Listening to My Body*, Gabi Garcia  
(also supports resilience through mindfulness, self-regulation and building emotional strength for ages 8-12)

*Just Breathe*, Mallika Chopra  
(also supports setting intentions and mindfulness for ages 8-12)

*The Universe Versus Alex Woods*, Gavin Extence  
(also supports resiliency and empathy ages 17+)



### Serotonin

Serotonin is a neurotransmitter in the brain that helps regulate sleep, mood, appetite and digestion. Studies show that eating nutritious foods like salmon, eggs, greens and nuts helps to maintain serotonin production.

# **The Road to Setting Intentions**



## **LESSON 3**

---

THE ROAD TO POSITIVE WELL-BEING IN EVERY CLASSROOM STARTS HERE



## Purpose

Students are introduced to the concept of setting intentions. Students are invited to think critically about how intentions are distinguished from goals.

### Objectives:

- Students participate in a short mindful awareness practice.
- Students investigate and learn about setting intentions.
- Students reflect on how setting intentions is different from setting goals.

### Skills Learned:



CRITICAL  
THINKING



COMMUNICATION  
SKILLS



REFLECTION  
SKILLS



SELF-CARE  
SKILLS



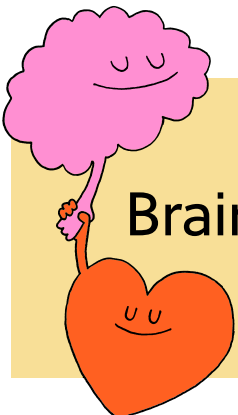
SELF-AWARENESS  
SKILLS

### Estimated Time:

40 minutes

### Materials:

Dictionaries or computers; chart paper, markers, whiteboard/chalkboard or SMARTboard



## Brain Bites

What's good for the body is good for the brain. What's good for the brain is good for the body! Throughout the lessons you will find brain icons with actions and facts about the brain. It is important for students to understand the importance of the brain and how it impacts our well-being.

### Differentiation by Grade Level:

#### 4th Grade:

- Keep this lesson as is, differentiating as needed for your unique group of students.

#### 5th Grade:

- **Part 2, Step 3:** Have students independently reflect and list their own goals and intentions that they have set. Have them use these examples to help them create and explain their definitions of goals and intentions.

#### 6th Grade:

- **Part 2, Step 5:** Have students think of an area in their life that is within their control to improve upon and respond to this prompt:
  - Think about an area in your life that is within your control to improve upon. How can setting an intention help? What are your hopes for the future in setting this intention?

## Part 1: Review (5 minutes)

### Step 1: Review and Introduction— What Is Well-being and What Is Mindfulness?

**Overview:** Review the concepts and practices discussed in Lesson 2 in order to lay the foundation for reflecting on our emotions.

- “Today, we’re going to begin by reviewing what we discussed and learned about well-being and mindfulness in the last lesson.”

Pair students together and have them re-tell their definitions of well-being and mindfulness to each other.

- Also have them share if they have participated in a mindfulness activity since Lesson 2, and if so, ask them to describe it.

Have them write down agreed-upon definitions. As students are finishing up their paired work time, write down or display the definitions from Lesson 1 (this can be done in advance and covered with a piece of paper or, if being done electronically, can be prepped with the screen off) and review all together.

- Offer an opportunity for students to share their definitions and mindfulness practices, if desired.

Recap Points:

- Well-being is the state of being comfortable, healthy or happy.
- Well-being focuses on all parts of the self, such as emotional, physical, social, spiritual, mental, even financial, environmental and work. When we take care of our energy levels and different parts of well-being, we can be content, healthy and positive.
- Mindfulness means to pay attention to what is happening in the moment, without judgment.
- We can practice mindfulness by being present with the here and now, through our breathing and by focusing on our senses.

- Mindfulness can help with focusing, relaxing, managing emotions and thoughts, and with our well-being.

### Step 2: Mindfulness Practice (optional)

Use the following script to lead the breathing practice.

- Now, we’re going practice mindful breathing, as we learned in our last lesson.
- First, find a comfortable seat in your chair. Place your feet flat on the ground. Rest your hands on your lap.
- If it feels comfortable, you can close your eyes. If not, just look softly down toward your desk (or table).
- Now, just begin by noticing any sounds that are here in this room.
- No need to do anything but notice what you hear.
- Now, see if you can turn your attention to your breath. Notice that you’re breathing now.
- Feel the air moving in and out of your nose.
- Next, we’re going to try taking slow breaths in and out...
- Now, take a slow breath in...
- And then, slowly let your breath out through your mouth.
- Let’s try that again.
- At your own pace, take two more deep breaths in through your nose and slowly breathe out through your mouth.
- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

### Step 3: Today’s Topic

Introduce today’s topic of understanding our feelings and let students know that this is another practice that contributes to well-being.

## Part 2: Investigate and Learn (30 minutes)

**Overview:** This portion of the lesson introduces students to the idea of setting intentions and differentiates intentions from goals.

### Step 1: What Are Intentions?

- First, ask students what they know about setting goals.
- Then, ask students what they know about setting intentions.
  - How might these two things be different?
- Next, write the definitions on the board:
  - Goal: Something that you are trying to do or achieve. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)
  - Intention: A determination to act in a certain way. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)

### Step 2: Share Out

- Now, ask the class:
  - What is similar and different about these two ideas?
- Popcorn style, invite student ideas.
  - A goal is more about a final achievement or destination. A goal is “external” and is something you want to attain in the future. What would be an example of that?
- Examples: Getting an A in math, getting to school on time, learning a new skateboard trick.
- An intention is something you plan to do regardless of the outcome; it’s more about the type of attitude to bring to an activity. Intention is the “process,” the “how” you will do something and is focused on the present.

- It can be helpful to think about how you would like to be, and then create an “I” statement.

Some examples—you can set an intention to:

- Keep an open mind when trying something.
  - I have an open mind.
- Be kind to others.
  - I am kind.
- Listen to others’ points of view.
  - I listen and try to understand what others are saying.
- Be patient with your sibling.
  - I am patient.
- Try to be flexible when working with others.
  - I am flexible.

### Step 3: Creating a Definition

As a class, decide on a shared definition of “setting intentions.” The class may decide to use the dictionary definition provided in this lesson or come up with their own ideas of how they want to define setting intentions.

**Optional:** Have students work in pairs or small groups to come up with an agreed-upon definition to share out to the class.

## Step 4: Intention or Goal Matching Game (optional)

In pairs, invite students to complete the "Intention or Goal Matching" sheet found at the end of this lesson (pg. 24). The objective is to engage students in thinking critically about what constitutes a goal versus an intention. This will prepare them for the next lesson around making a personal plan for intention setting.

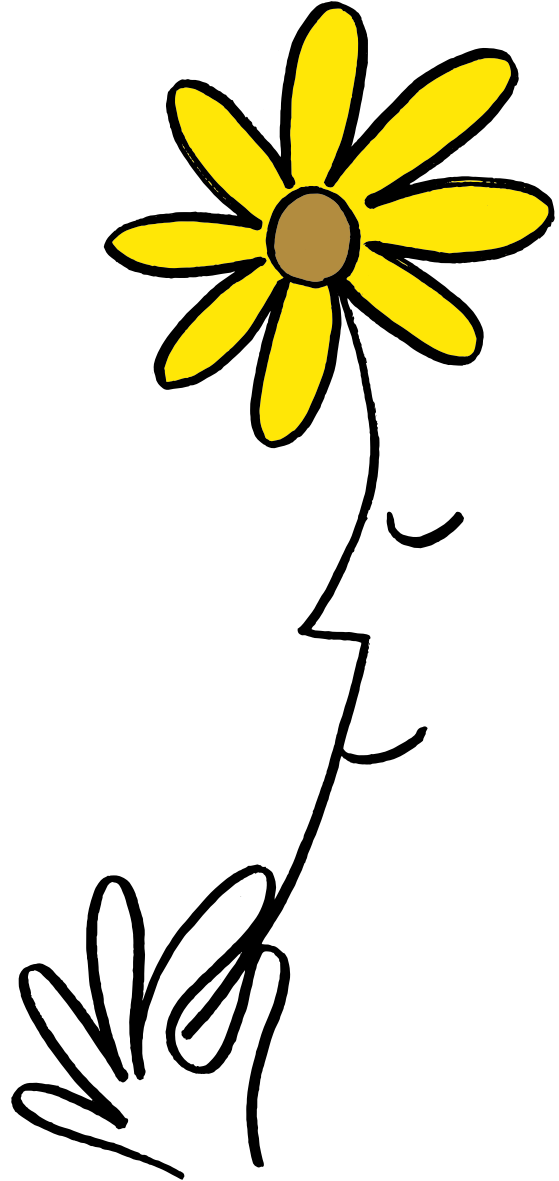
## Step 5: Summarize the Key Points

As a class, review the matching game (if implemented). Were there any items that were difficult to classify?

End the lesson with a short discussion.

Invite student questions.

- Why might setting intentions be helpful?
  - Note to teacher: Lead a scaffolded discussion to help students get to: Intentions help us to be our best selves and act in a way that we wish to be.
- When might we set intentions?
  - Hint: Intentions can be set any time. It can be helpful to set an intention at the beginning of your day or when you try something new.
- Tell the class that next time, they will make a plan around the types of intentions they might like to try setting.



## Bright Ideas

Did you know that your brain produces enough electricity to power a light bulb? Can you think of a time that your brain felt like it was buzzing with electricity and bright ideas?

## Setting Intentions Book List

*The Little Engine That Could*, Watty Piper  
(also supports resiliency and the power of positive thinking for ages 3-7)

*What Matters*, by Alison Hughes  
(also supports altruism and empathy for ages 3-5)

*The Wolf Who Learned Self-control*, Oriane Lallemand  
(also supports resiliency and emotion management for ages 4-7)

*I Can Do Hard Things*, Gabi Garcia  
(also supports resiliency for ages 5-10)

*Out of My Mind*, Sharon M. Draper  
(also supports resiliency for ages 10+)

*Matilda*, Roald Dahl  
(also supports altruism and empathy for ages 7-12)

*Just Breathe*, Mallika Chopra  
(also supports setting intentions and mindfulness for ages 8-12)

*Braced*, Alyson Gerber  
(also supports resiliency for ages 8-12)

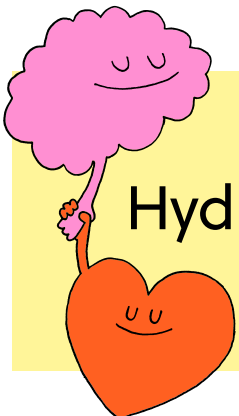
*Charlotte's Web*, E.B. White  
(also supports resilience and empathy for ages 8-12)

*Hatchet*, Gary Paulson  
(also supports resilience for ages 10-14)

## Educator Resources

*Intention Setting*: Melanie Richards at TEDxMontrealWomen,  
(In this video Melanie takes her audience on a guided meditation,  
explores Buddha's philosophy and explains the power of setting intentions.)

[Watch video here](#)



### Hydration

About 75 per cent of your brain is water. Dehydrated, it struggles to focus, solve problems and coordinate motor skills. Drinking water improves sleep quality, thinking and mood. It also regulates body temperature and delivers nutrients to cells!

## Setting Intentions or Goals

Draw a line for each statement in the right column to their match.  
Is it a "Goal" or an "Intention"?

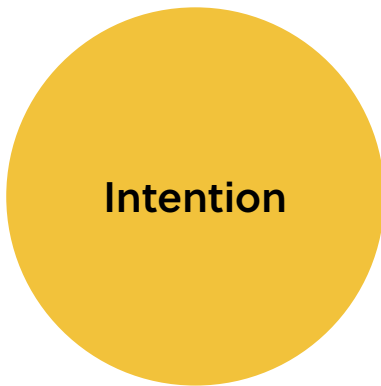


Get a top score on a test

I am kind to others

Get to school on time

Finish homework before dinner



I am patient with others

I am flexible when working with others

I am curious about learning something new

Score the most points in a game



## **Setting Intentions or Goals**

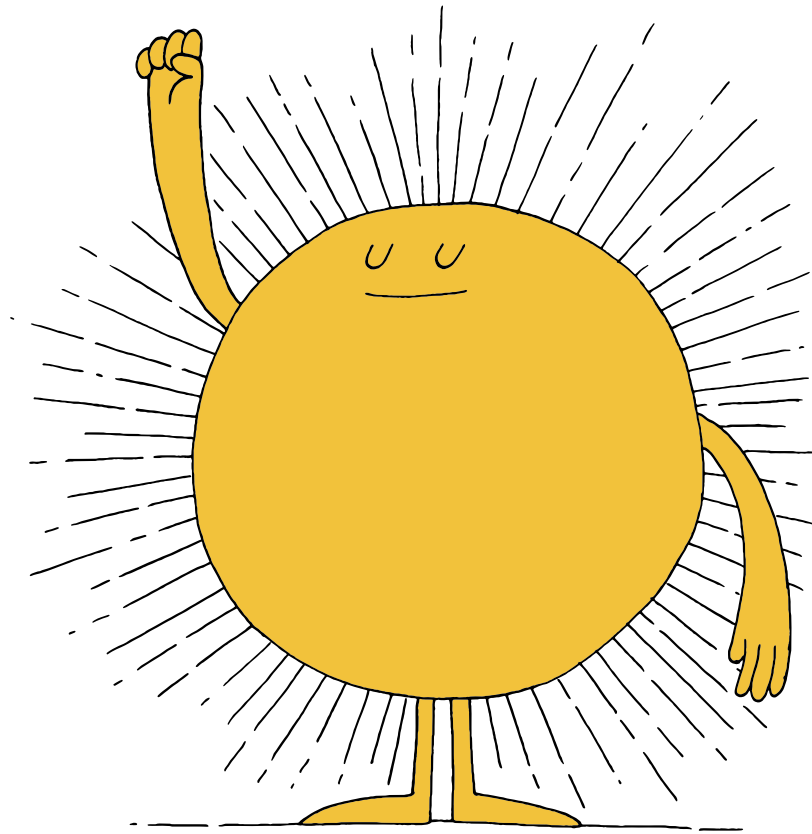
### **Goals**

Get a top score on a test; Get to school on time; Finish homework before dinner;  
Score the most points in a game

### **Intentions**

I am kind to others; I am patient with others; I am flexible when working with others;  
I am curious about learning something new

# Acting With Intention



## LESSON 4

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THE ROAD TO POSITIVE WELL-BEING IN EVERY CLASSROOM STARTS HERE



## Purpose

Students continue to explore setting intentions and develop a plan for setting their own intentions that are personally meaningful.

### Objectives:

- Students try a short intention-setting practice.
- Students consider what intentions are personally meaningful.
- Students create a personal plan for intention setting.

### Skills Learned:



CRITICAL  
THINKING



COMMUNICATION  
SKILLS



REFLECTION  
SKILLS



SELF-CARE  
SKILLS



SELF-AWARENESS  
SKILLS

### Estimated Time:

40 minutes

### Materials:

Chart paper, markers, whiteboard/chalkboard or SMARTboard

### Differentiation by Grade Level:

#### 4th Grade:

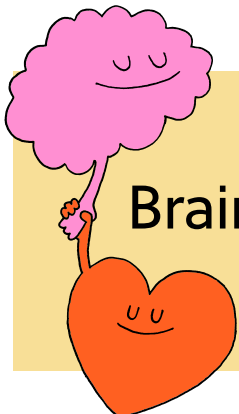
- Keep this lesson as is, differentiating as needed for your unique group of students.

#### 5th Grade:

- **Part 2, Step 2 extension:** Have students consider times when they are not feeling their best self.
  - Set a few intentions that may help you feel better when you are not your best self.
  - For example: I am calm when things get hard, I am okay when I don't win, or I am open to other's ideas.

#### 6th Grade:

- **\*See 5th grade differentiation**
- **Step 2, Step 4:** Have students write in response to this prompt:
  - Think back to a day that didn't go well (within your control). How could setting an intention have changed how you felt that day? Rewrite the ending of that day if you had set an intention.



## Brain Bites

What's good for the body is good for the brain. What's good for the brain is good for the body! Throughout the lessons you will find brain icons with actions and facts about the brain. It is important for students to understand the importance of the brain and how it impacts our well-being.

## Part 1: Review (20 minutes)

### Step 1: Intention-Setting Visualization

Use the following script to lead a mindful moment and visualization.

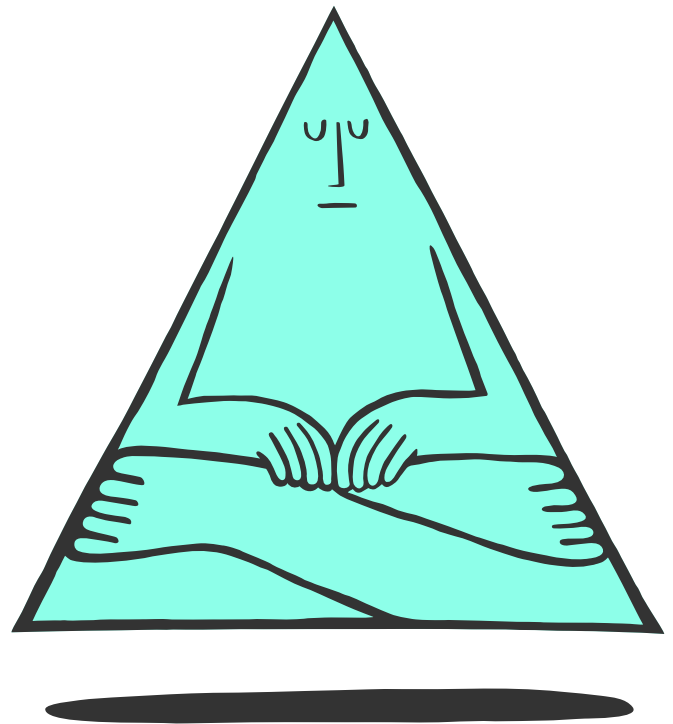
- We'll begin with a short mindful moment.
- We will also take a few moments to reflect on what is most important to you.
- First, find a comfortable seat in your chair. Place your feet flat on the ground. Rest your hands on your lap.
- If it feels comfortable, you can close your eyes. If not, just look softly down toward your desk (or table).
- Let's take a few mindful breaths together.
- Feel the air moving in and out of your nose.
- Next, we're going to try taking slow breaths in and out...
- Now, take a slow breath in...
- And then, slowly, let your breath out through your mouth.
- Let's try that again.
- Now, I want you to picture the school year ahead ...
- Think about what matters most to you ...
- What brings you joy ...
- Is it friends? Family?
- Is it being active in sport or learning new things?
- Take a moment and imagine yourself as you wish to see yourself this school year.
- What are you doing when you are your truest, best self?

- What does it look like, sound like, feel like?
- Take one more moment and hold that image of yourself in your mind.
- When you are ready, you can open your eyes.

### Step 2:

Following the guided visualization, invite students to write and draw about their reflections their best self.

You may provide students with copies of the My Best Self outline found at the end of this lesson (pg. 31).



# Part 2: Set Your Own Intentions—Plan

(30 minutes)

## Step 1: Review Setting Intentions

**Overview:** Review the concepts and practices discussed in Lesson 3 to prepare for today's activity.

- "Today, we're going to begin by reviewing what we discussed and learned about setting intentions."
- Pair students together and have them retell their definitions of setting intentions to each other.
- Have them write down an agreed-upon definition. As students are finishing up their paired work time, write down or display the definitions from Lesson 2 (this can be done in advance and covered with a piece of paper or, if being done electronically, can be prepped with the screen off) and review all together.
  - Offer an opportunity for students to share their definitions and/or reflection from the opening visualization if desired.

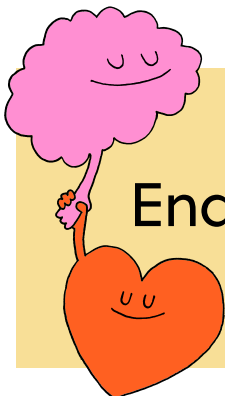
### Definitions Recap

**Well-being:** The state of being comfortable, healthy or happy.

**Mindfulness:** To pay attention to what is happening in the moment, without judgment.

**Goal:** Something that you are trying to achieve.

**Intention:** A determination to act in a certain way.



## Endorphins

Endorphins are "feel good" neurotransmitters that are released when a person gets hurt, but also during exercise or laughter. In addition to blocking pain, endorphins can make people happy. Try going for a walk or reading a funny story, and notice how it makes you feel!

## Step 2: Prepare to Plan

**Objective:** Students will apply their new learning about intentions to set their own.

First, ask students to reflect on their Best Self drawing or writing. Invite them to consider one change in thinking or an action that would help create the type of attitude or mindset that helps them to be their best self.

Work through a couple of examples on the board or chart paper with the class OR share personal stories.

### Example 1: I feel happy when I play my favorite sport.

- What would an intention look like for "playing a favorite sport"?
  - Make an effort to find time to practice.
  - Instead of watching TV, go outside and kick the soccer ball around!
- I find time to practice.
  - Notice how I feel when I play.
  - Be mindful when I play!
- I am mindful when I play my sport.

**Example 2: I'm my best self when I'm a good friend.**

- What would an intention look like for "being a good friend"?
  - Be kind—"I am kind."
  - Let go of grudges—"I forgive others."
  - Holding on to upset feelings doesn't help you or your friend.
  - Invite new friends to join you—"I include others."
  - Be kind when meeting new kids, and help them to feel a part of our community.

**Example 3: I'm my best self when I'm learning new things.**

- What would an intention look like for "learning new things"?
  - I am curious.
  - I remember that learning is a journey, not a destination!

- I read.
- I listen.
- I practice, practice, practice. (No expectation for perfection!)

**Step 3: Creating a Personal Plan**

Next, invite students to work on their intention setting in their journals with the following prompt:

- Describe an intention for today that helps you to be your best self.

**Step 4: Reflection and Closing**

If time allows, have students share their intentions. Let students know that this can be very personal, and participation is not a requirement.



## Dopamine

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter involved in the brain's pleasure-and-reward system. It helps regulate movement, emotional responses, attention and learning. Some activities that produce dopamine in the brain include movement, laughter, playing an instrument or doing something creative, taking a bath or having a good conversation!

## **My Best Self**

**When I am my best self, I look like this:**

**When I am my best self, I feel like this:**

## Word Bank

**Active Listening** – To carefully listen and focus on what someone says and also pay attention to things like their body movement, facial expressions and tone of voice.

**Adversity** – Difficulties, challenges or hardships. In other words, a very hard, stressful or sad situation, that often lasts some time. For example, living through a global pandemic, living in poverty, experiencing discrimination or experiencing challenges at home.

**Altruism** – Wanting to help or helping others because you care about them or are worried for their well-being, without needing to get something in return (a reward).

**Angry** – A strong feeling of being upset or annoyed.

**Attention** – The act of carefully listening, watching and/or doing something.

**Attitude** – A feeling or way of thinking that affects a person's behavior. For example, having a positive attitude means to expect good, be open to challenges, and to take care of your happiness and health.

**Bystander** – A person who is present at an event or incident but does not take part in it. For example, someone who watches a bully pick on or tease another child but does not get involved.

**Calm** – Feelings of peacefulness, quietness and lack of stress.

**Collaborate/Collaboration** – To work together with others to make or produce something.

**Community** – A group of people that are connected through liking the same things or having similar identities, values or cultures.

**Compassion** – Having concern for the well-being of someone in distress, and includes a need or desire to alleviate that person's suffering. In other words, a feeling of understanding or recognizing the suffering of a person and wanting to help them.

**Critical Thinking** – To analyze or think about something using logic, facts, reasoning and intellect.

**Disappointed** – To feel as if your expectations, wishes or hopes of something or someone were not met.

**Discouraged** – To lose confidence or enthusiasm about something. Feeling less willing to do something.

**Empathy** – The ability to understand and share the feelings of another person.

**Excited** – Feeling very happy and enthusiastic about something.

**Frightened** – To feel afraid, fearful or scared.

**Frustrated** – To feel annoyed and discouraged.

**Goal** – Something that you are trying to do or achieve, usually with a final achievement or destination in mind.

**Gratitude** – Feeling thankful for someone or something.

**Happy** – The emotion of feeling pleasure, enjoyment or joy for something or someone.

**Hope** – The feeling of expecting something positive to happen.

**Intention** – A determination to act in a certain way. In other words, setting your mind towards and committing to an aim or purpose that you plan to do or achieve. It is something you plan to do regardless of the outcome; it's more about the type of attitude to bring to an activity.

**Judgment** – An opinion or decision that something is good or bad.

**Kindness** – The quality of being generous, helpful and caring about other people, or an act showing this quality.



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