

U Got This



Building Empowerment

Module 2 : Mindset Matters

Investigating the power of mindset on our mind, body, and behavior.

Lesson Overview

Through the exploration of self-talk, mantras, and positive affirmations, students will come to understand the power of mindset. Students will run an experiment testing the influence of mindset.

Objectives

- Students understand the influence of mindset on motivation, feelings, actions, and outcomes.
- Students know how to make and use mantras to support their well-being.
- Students know how to reframe negative and self-limiting beliefs into positive affirmations.
- Students learn and practice mindset tools that support them through difficult or stressful circumstances.

Skills

- Self Reflection
- Critical Thinking
- Self Regulation
- Positive Coping and Stress Management
- Positive Motivation and Perseverance

Materials

- Worksheets (Provided)
- Ice
- Towels
- Technology with stopwatch capabilities.

References

Álvarez-Pérez, Y., Rivero-Santana, A., Perestelo-Pérez, L., Duarte-Díaz, A., Ramos-García, V., Toledo-Chávarri, A., ... & Serrano-Aguilar, P. (2022). Effectiveness of Mantra-Based Meditation on Mental Health: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(6), 3380.

Cohen, G. L., & Sherman, D. K. (2014). The psychology of change: Self-affirmation and social psychological intervention. *Annual review of psychology*, 65, 333-371.

Part 1. Discuss and Build a Foundation (10 minutes)

Invite your students into a discussion by considering the following:

- What is a mantra? What is an affirmation? Are they different?
- Have you used mantras or affirmations? When and for what?
- When and why would we use mantras or affirmations? How do you think they influence our mindset and behaviour/performance?

What the experts say:

- The word mantra originates from the Sanskrit language. It can be broken down into man: mind and tra: transport or vehicle. Mantra: a vehicle of the mind. It is a sound, word, or short phrase repeated over and over, and often used in meditation as a tool or vehicle to bring your mind inward to a place of focus and presence.
Examples - OM, calm, you are enough
- Our thoughts, influence our feelings which in turn influence our behaviour. This means that the thoughts we have about ourselves are powerful, as they influence our self-concept, self-belief, and sense of self-efficacy, all of which strongly influence how we behave and interact with the world. Affirmations are statements that affirm a personal quality, ability or identity. They can be both negative and positive i.e. I am strong and capable of overcoming my fears, vs. I am scared and will not get through this. Like a mantra it can direct the mind, however, affirmations can create positive or negative momentum, rather than a mantra's goal of instilling stillness and focus.
- Positive affirmations are positive statements about the self that can be intentionally made and utilized to challenge and shift existing self-limiting concepts, beliefs, or behaviours into more desirable ones.
- Consistent and regular use of mantras and positive affirmations are critical for efficacy in shifting self-belief and behaviour. They can be written, read or said aloud.

How to Build a Positive Affirmation:

- Utilize "I statements".
- Use positive outcomes and positive language. Do not include avoidant language or words like "not" "can't" or "won't".
- Use the present tense (A word ending in "ing" is helpful.)
- Use an adverb when possible i.e. I work diligently towards my goals.
- If you are trying to challenge a negative affirmation, be a scientist and evaluate the data. Where did you get that information from? Is that negative statement about yourself true? Is there a different explanation for that negative thought? Room for alternate interpretations?
- If the negative thought is objectively true, turn it into a positive affirmation, by adding a conjunction. i.e. and, but, however. Two thoughts can be true at the same time i.e. I am scared, however, I know I can get through this.

Part 2: Diving Deeper, A Mindset Experiment (20 minutes)

- Share with students that in pairs, they will be running an experiment in which they will put mindset tools like mantras and affirmations to the test. Students will be challenged with the task of holding ice cubes for as long as they possibly can over three different mindset conditions; negative self-talk, a mantra, and a positive affirmation. The goal is to explore how various mindsets may affect our motivation, self-belief, behavior, and performance. Experimental procedures are provided in the accompanying handout.
Don't have access to ice cubes? Try holding a balancing position, or submerge your hands in cold water.
- Using the mindset worksheet, each student will create and write out the three mindset conditions they will use for their experiment. Examples of each mindset include:
Negative: This is so difficult, I'll never be able to do this.
Mantra: strength
Positive Affirmation = I am strong and can do hard things.
- Students will repeatedly say the phrases they developed out loud or in their heads while holding the ice.
Encourage students to warm up in between each mindset condition, so that they are back to baseline temperature.
- Using a timer, student pairs can go back and forth, timing each other's performance and ability to withstand the cold under each experimental condition; making note of outcomes in the handout.
- Once everyone has completed their experiment and handouts, have students come together to discuss their results as well as debrief their experience.

Discuss and Debrief Your Findings (20 minutes)

- What happened in your experiment? What were your results? Were there any outcomes or results that surprised you?
- What was it like to try out the different mindsets? What happened when you held the negative thoughts, the neutral mantra, and the positive affirmations?
- Did you notice anything in how your body and mind felt amongst the different mindsets?
- Are there activities or goals that you have in your own life where you have noticed negative self-talk or mindset has altered outcomes or experiences?
- After completing this experiment. Do you have any thoughts on how self-talk and mindset may be affecting your day-to-day life? Are there areas that need a shift in mindset?
- How can you use mindset to your advantage? How could you use mantras or affirmations moving forward in your school life or personal life?

Extension/Assignment opportunity

- Extension Opportunity: Students demonstrate their findings in a visual format and share their results via presentation.
- Assignment: In a Journal format, have students reflect on and identify an area of their school or personal life where they notice themselves engaging in limiting or negative self-talk and mindset. Using the journal worksheet provided, have students transition this into a positive affirmation. Students are to practice this affirmation daily, and complete reflections regarding the experience.

Mindset Worksheet: Experiment

Experiment Title: _____

Question: Is there a relationship between our mindset and our ability to do challenging tasks?

Materials:

- Ice & water
- Towel
- Worksheet
- Timer
- Pen or Pencil

Procedure:

1. Each group member should:
 - think up and write down a negative, limiting thought about their ability to do something challenging.
 - Think up and write down a mantra.
 - Think up a positive affirmation about your ability to complete a challenging task.
2. Starting with the first person in your group, hold the ice cube as long as possible. Have your partner time you. While you complete the task continually repeat the first mindset phrase. You can do this out loud, or in your head.
3. Switch with your partner. Have them complete the first round, while you warm up your hand.
4. Go back and forth with your partner, moving through the different mindsets and making notes of your performance for each condition.
 - In addition to time, you can observe and make note of your partner's facial expressions and body language, as well as your own bodily feelings and emotions during each mindset condition.
5. Come together to discuss your results and observations with the class.

Hypothesis: _____

Negative Mindset: _____

Mantra: _____

Positive Affirmation: _____

	Negative Mindset	Mantra	Positive Affirmation
Time			
Body Language			
Other Observations			

Results: _____

Conclusions _____

Mindset Journal

What is a common thought about yourself or your abilities that is unkind, negative or limiting?

How do those thoughts make you feel and how do you think it affects your behaviour and/or outcomes?

Challenge yourself to reframe that mindset. Create a mantra or positive affirmation to help replace the negative/limiting thought.

Remember:

Throughout the week, challenge yourself to swap out the old mindset for your new and improved one. Repeat it as often as possible!

Need help remembering? Write it on a sticky note and place it on your mirror, write it out ten times after school, and make it your screen saver.

Take time each day to reflect on the experience of using the new mindset and reflect on how you are feeling and behaving.

Monday _____

Tuesday _____

Wednesday _____

Thursday _____

Friday _____

Saturday _____

Sunday _____
