



Peer
Education
Project



Mental Health
Foundation



HEALTHY

RELATIONSHIPS

**with
ourselves**



Lesson

Lesson plan:

- **Welcome**
Slides 1 & 2 7
- **Being in the moment**
Slide 3 9
- **Building connections**
Slide 4 10
- **Introducing the topic**
Slides 5-7 12
- **Learning through activity**
Slide 8 16
- **Reflecting on the learning**
Slides 9-13 18
- **Being in the moment**
Slide 14 21

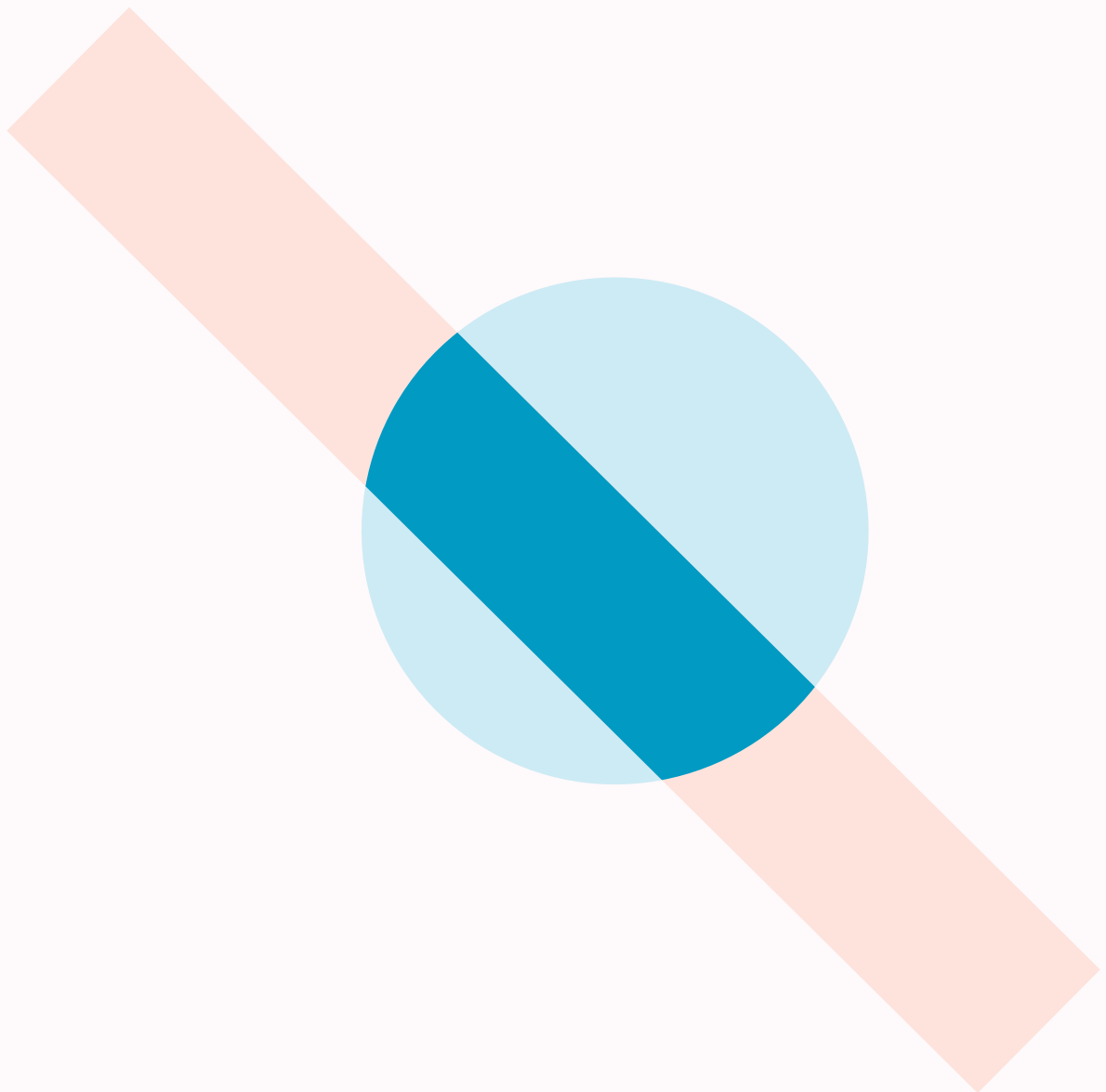
A L T E R N A T I V E A C T I V I T I E S

- **Taking action**
Slides 16-18 24
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This lesson has been developed from the Mental Health Foundation's Peer Education Project (PEP) - a secondary school-based, educational programme that aims to give young people the skills and knowledge they need to safeguard their mental health and that of their peers. PEP is a carefully researched, effective approach to mental health education whereby older pupils within school or college deliver mental health lessons to younger pupils.

For more information about PEP and how your school can get involved, [click here](#).





Lesson aims:

- To understand that, as well as the relationships we have with others, we also have a relationship with ourselves.
- To explore the ways we can have a healthy relationship with ourselves.
- To understand how we speak and act towards ourselves can impact our mental health.

Resources checklist:

- PowerPoint slides
- Pens and paper
- OPTIONAL: Thought swaps worksheet
- OPTIONAL: Reflection worksheet
- OPTIONAL: Pens and paper

Preparation checklist:

- Plan two 'Being in the moment' activities, referring to the [Mindfulness Activities Pack](#).
- Plan a 'Building connections' activity, referring to the [Ice Breaker Activities Pack](#).



How to use the lesson plan:

This lesson plan is designed to be delivered by pupils aged 15 and upwards (known as Peer Educators) to pupils aged 11 to 14 (known as Peer Learners).

The recommended lesson plan is primarily suited for pupils aged 11 or 12 and can be delivered as a 50-minute lesson or two 30-minute lessons.

The revised lesson plan offers alternative activities related to taking social action or challenging mental health information. The revised lesson plan provides pupils, particularly those who are older or who already have basic mental health awareness, an opportunity to explore the topics in more depth.

| Recommended lesson plan 50 Minutes | Recommended lesson structure 2x 30 Minutes | | Revised lesson plan 50 Minutes |
|--|--|--|---|
| | Lesson 1 | Lesson 2 | |
| Welcome 5 Minutes | Welcome 5 Minutes | | Welcome 5 Minutes |
| Being in the moment 5 Minutes | Being in the moment 5 Minutes | Being in the moment 5 Minutes | Being in the moment 5 Minutes |
| Building connections 5 Minutes | Building connections 5 Minutes | | Select either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the 'Taking action' section; or • the 'Challenging thinking' section. 25 Minutes |
| Introducing the topic 10 Minutes | Introducing the topic 10 Minutes | | |
| Learning through activity 10 Minutes | | Learning through activity 10 Minutes | Reflecting on the learning 10 Minutes |
| Reflecting on the learning 10 Minutes | | Reflecting on the learning 10 Minutes | |
| Being in the moment 5 Minutes | Being in the moment 5 Minutes | Being in the moment 5 Minutes | Being in the moment 5 Minutes |

If the lesson is being delivered by Peer Educators, as per the Peer Education Project model, each activity is recommended to be delivered either by Peer Educators or School Staff.

How to do it:

The instructions for each activity are split into these steps:



Actions required such as presenting slides or handing resources out.

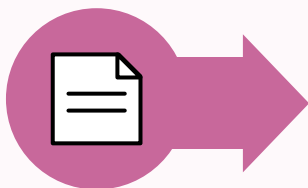


Key messages and activity instructions to be said.



Questions to be asked to extend the discussion or gauge understanding.

Notes and troubleshooting:



There is additional information to support lesson delivery such as activity adaptations, considerations for classroom management, and key preparations for the lesson.

It's not a script:

The lesson plan is not a word-for-word script. Prior to delivery, preparation time should be allocated to make key notes and plan how each activity will run.

Welcome 5 mins

Resources needed: • Slides 1 & 2



Slide 1



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HEALTHY

RELATIONSHIPS

with ourselves

Lesson



Do:

Present Slide 1.

Welcome the class and the Peer Educators to the lesson. Explain that the Peer Educators will be leading some of the activities during the lesson – an opportunity for Peer Learners to get to know them and learn from those who are similar in age.



Say:

"In this lesson, we are going to think about the relationship that we have with ourselves and how we can look after our mental health."



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Ways of working



SLIDE 2

We will:

1. Respect and listen to each other, giving space for everyone to be heard.
2. Value everyone's opinion, even if it's different to yours.
3. Ask questions, especially if you are unsure about the information or activities.
4. Be kind to yourself and others, reaching out for support if you need it.

Any others? _____

Click to add text



Do:

Present Slide 2.



Say:

"It is important for us all to feel safe and confident to share our thoughts, ideas and questions in this lesson."



Do:

Read out the slide and ask the Peer Learners and the Peer Educators for any other points they would like to add. Write them directly on the slide.



Notes and troubleshooting

Variations: It can be useful to have the 'Ways of Working' list visible throughout the lesson. You could write these on a board or poster paper to display in each lesson.



Being in the moment 5 mins



Resources needed: • Slide 3
• A mindfulness activity

Slide 3

Being in the moment



SLIDE 3



Do: Present Slide 3.



Say: "We're going to start with a short exercise to bring our focus to this lesson."



Do: Read out the mindfulness activity you have chosen.



Notes and troubleshooting

Prepare: Select a mindfulness exercise from the [Mindfulness Activities Pack](#). You may want to explain what mindfulness is to the pupils.



Building connections 5 mins



Resources needed: • Slide 4
• An ice breaker activity

Slide 4

Building connections



SLIDE 4

Guess my favourite self-care activity

10
questions

Yes or no
answers

YES!



Recommended ice breaker



Say:

"Today's welcome exercise is designed to get us thinking about how we can connect with ourselves and look after our mental health."



Do:

Present Slide 4.



Say:

"As a class, you can ask 10 questions to work out what self-care activity I am thinking of. I can only answer yes or no to your questions. You can talk to those around you before asking a question. Raise your hand if you would like to ask a question."

Continued...



Building connections (continued)



Choose pupils to ask their question. Pupils can guess at any point. If all 10 questions have been asked, and no-one has guessed correctly, share your activity with the class and why you like to do it.

Invite pupils to try the activity with the person sitting next to them, with one person asking the questions and the other answering the questions.



“Being able to look after our mental health is an important part of the relationship that we have with ourselves.”



Notes and troubleshooting

Prepare: This recommended ice breaker activity is directly relevant to the lesson content. However, you can select an alternative activity from the [Ice Breaker Activities Pack](#).



Introducing the topic 10 mins



Resources needed: • Slides 5-7

Slide 5

Introducing the topic

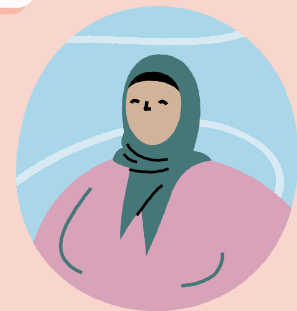


SLIDE 5



As well as our relationships with others, we also have a relationship with ourselves.

It is important that we look after ourselves and treat ourselves with the same kindness and care.



Do:

Present Slide 5.



Say:

"When we think about the relationships we have, we often think about those that involve other people, such as those we live with, partners, friends or peers.

However, even if we may not be aware of it yet, we also have a relationship with ourselves. Where we may dip in and out of seeing others, we are 'spending time with' ourselves all the time. Therefore, it is important that we look after ourselves and treat ourselves with the same kindness and care that we would in any of our other relationships."



Introducing the topic (continued)

Slide 6

Introducing the topic



How can we show ourselves kindness?

Click to add text

SLIDE 6



Do:

Present Slide 6.

Ask the Peer Learners to share their ideas on ways to show kindness and care to ourselves, adding the suggestions to the slide.

Time to discuss: 5 minutes.



Introducing the topic (continued)

Slide 7

Introducing the topic



SLIDE 7

Be your own friend:

Check in with
how our mind and
body is feeling.



Touch base
with our thoughts,
feelings and
emotions.



Recognise how
our words and actions
towards ourselves
make us feel.



Do:

Present Slide 7.



Say:

"Building a healthy relationship with ourselves is like being our own friend.

- Check in with our minds and bodies regularly to see how we are feeling and if there is anything we could do to support ourselves. For example, if a friend came up to you and said that they were feeling tired as they've been struggling to sleep, you might suggest they listen to a relaxation podcast before bed. Just as we would support a friend in this way, we can give ourselves the same support."

Continued...



Introducing the topic (continued)



- Keep an eye on how we are feeling emotionally, although this can sometimes be hard to do. Throughout the day we are likely to experience many different emotions. It can be helpful to note down how we are feeling, for example in a journal or using voice notes. When we recognise how we are feeling we can begin to understand what we need in that moment and afterwards. We may notice patterns in how we feel. When we start to notice patterns like this it is really important to speak to a trusted adult about how we are feeling.
- Recognise the ways in which we speak and act towards ourselves and how these affect the way we feel. For example, when a friend or peer says something to us that is unkind, this may upset us. However, when we say unkind comments to ourselves, it can be more difficult to recognise that this was a hurtful thing to say. It's important that we challenge the way we speak and act towards ourselves as negative self-talk can affect our self-esteem and confidence."



Learning through activity 10 mins



- Resources needed:
- Slide 8
 - Pens and paper (optional)
 - Thought swaps worksheet (optional)

Slide 8

Learning through activity



SLIDE 8

Thought swaps



I'm not good enough



I am enough as I am

I can't



I'm trying

I've failed



"From time-to-time we have unkind thoughts about ourselves. We may all have thoughts like this and sometimes it can be difficult to change how we think about and treat ourselves. However, how we manage these thoughts and respond to them when they happen can be an important step in helping us to have a healthy relationship with ourselves."



Present Slide 8.

Ask pupils to share any other unkind statements someone might say to themselves. Write them on the left-hand side.

Then ask pupils to discuss in pairs kind words that someone could say instead of the unkind thoughts.

Time to discuss: 5 minutes.

Continued...



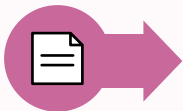
Learning through activity (continued)



Invite pupils to share their thought swaps with the class and write them on the slide.



“Sometimes when we are faced with these unkind thoughts, even if we have our thought swaps, this can still feel challenging. However, if we can use these thought swaps in the moment, we can begin to build patterns of replacing unkind thoughts with kind thoughts. This can take time but, with practice, can become a positive habit.”



Notes and troubleshooting

Prepare: If using the worksheet, print copies ahead of the lesson and hand out to Peer Learners for this activity.

Variations: If using the worksheet, ask pupils to write on the left-hand side the unkind thoughts listed on the slide and then the thought swaps on the right-hand side.



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Reflecting on the learning 10 mins



Resources needed: • Slides 9-13

• Pens and paper

• Reflection worksheet (optional) (optional)

Slide 9

Reflecting on the learning



SLIDE 9

One thing I have learned.



One thing I will do differently.



One question I would like an answer to.



Do:

Present Slide 9.



Say:

"Spend two minutes thinking about these reflection statements:

- One thing I have learned.
- One thing I will do differently.
- One question I would like an answer to."



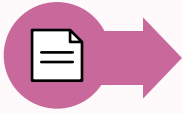
Do:

Invite pupils to share their reflection with the class for each statement. Write their responses on Slides 10-12.

Continued...



Reflecting on the learning (continued)



Notes and troubleshooting

Prepare: If using the worksheet, print copies ahead of the lesson and hand out to Peer Learners for this activity.

Classroom management: Their comment, question or thought doesn't have to be about mental health – it can be about the lesson itself, the activities, how it went, etc.

If using the worksheet, ask the Peer Learners to write down their reflections.

Follow-up: Collate any questions that weren't answered, and follow-up with responses to the pupils in the next lesson.



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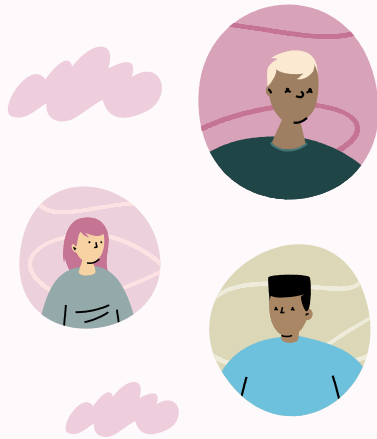
Reflecting on the learning (continued)

Slide 13

Lesson summary



SLIDE 13



It is important that we look after ourselves and treat ourselves with the same kindness and care that we would in any of our other relationships. This includes how we speak, act and support ourselves.



Do:

Present Slide 13.

Read out the lesson summary.



Being in the moment 5 mins



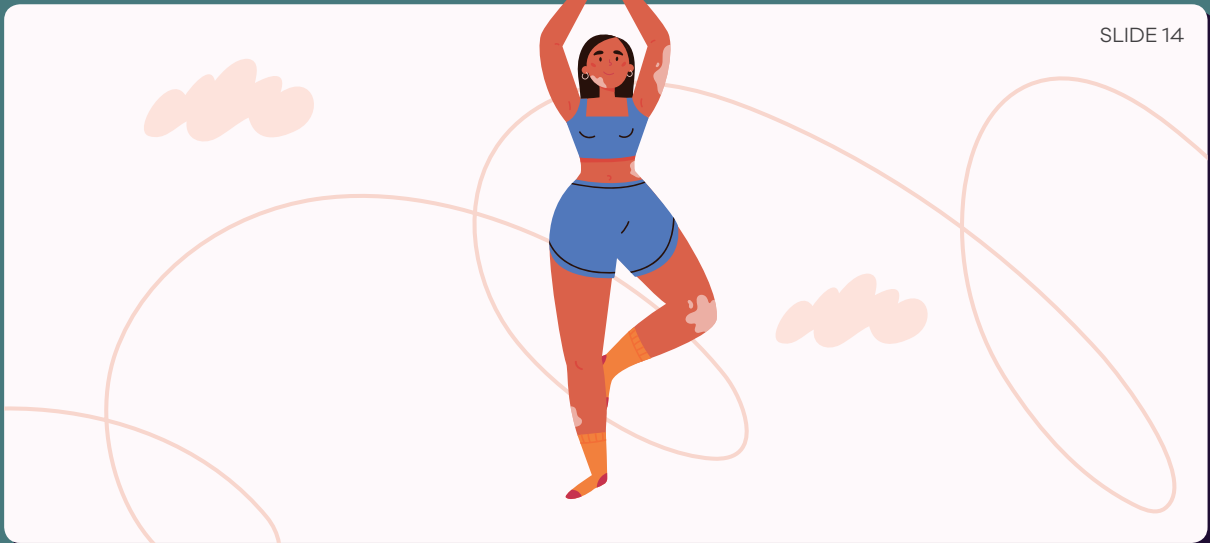
Resources needed: • Slide 14
• A mindfulness activity

Slide 14

Being in the moment



SLIDE 14



Do:

Present Slide 18.



Say:

"We'll finish the lesson with another short mindfulness exercise."



Do:

Read out the mindfulness activity you have chosen.



Say:

"That's the end of the lesson. Thank you everyone for your contributions."

Continued...



Being in the moment (continued)



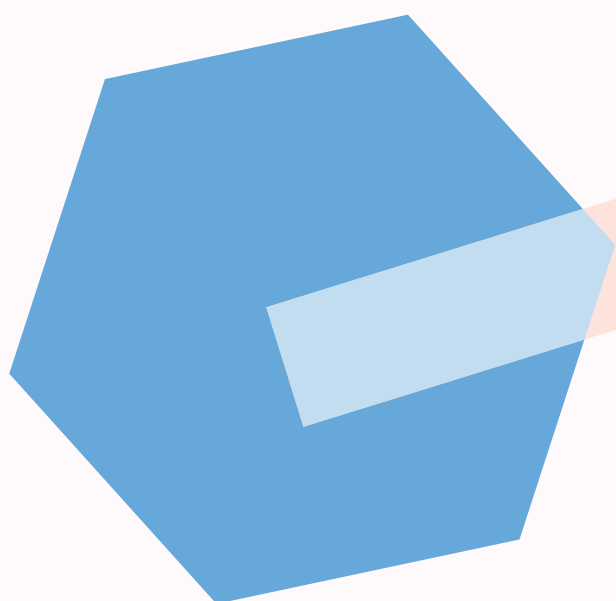
Notes and troubleshooting:

Prepare: Select a mindfulness exercise from the [Mindfulness Activities Pack](#).





Alternative activities



Taking action 25 mins



Resources needed: • Slides 16-18
• Pens and paper

Slide 16

Taking action

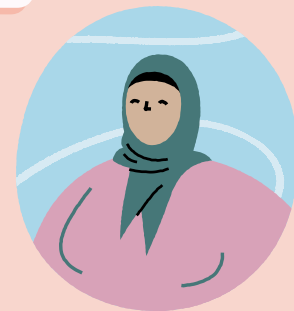


SLIDE 16



As well as our relationships with others, we also have a relationship with ourselves.

It is important that we look after ourselves and treat ourselves with the same kindness and care.



Present Slide 16.



“When we think about the relationships we have, we often think about those that involve other people, such as those we live with, partners, friends or peers.

However, even if we may not be aware of it yet, we also have a relationship with ourselves. Where we may dip in and out of seeing others, we are ‘spending time with’ ourselves all the time. Therefore, it is important that we look after ourselves and treat ourselves with the same kindness and care that we would in any of our other relationships.”



Taking action (continued)

Slide 17

Taking action



SLIDE 17

Click to add text

What does a healthy relationship with ourselves mean to you?



Do:

Present Slide 17.



Ask:

“What does a healthy relationship with ourselves mean to you?”



Do:

Invite the Peer Learners to share their words with the class and write them on the slide.

Time to share: 5 minutes.



Taking action



SLIDE 18

Click to add text

How can we
develop a healthy
relationship with
ourselves?



Do:

Present Slide 18.



Ask:

"How can we develop a healthy relationship with ourselves?"



Do:

Ask pupils to share their ideas with the class and write them on the slide.

Time to share: 10 minutes.



Say:

"We are going to design bookmarks to prompt ourselves to be kind and look after ourselves. The bookmark could include positive phrases or tips on developing a healthy relationship with ourselves."

Time to share: 10 minutes.



Do:

Encourage pupils to keep one bookmark for themselves, and any others they have created, gift them to someone at school.



Challenging thinking 25 mins



Resources needed: • Slides 19-23

Slide 19

Challenging thinking

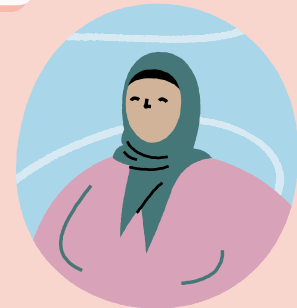


SLIDE 19



As well as our relationships with others, we also have a relationship with ourselves.

It is important that we look after ourselves and treat ourselves with the same kindness and care.



Do:

Present Slide 19.



Say:

“When we think about the relationships we have, we often think about those that involve other people, such as those we live with, partners, friends or peers.

However, even if we may not be aware of it yet, we also have a relationship with ourselves. Where we may dip in and out of seeing others, we are ‘spending time with’ ourselves all the time. Therefore, it is important that we look after ourselves and treat ourselves with the same kindness and care that we would in any of our other relationships.”



Challenging thinking (continued)

Slide 20

Challenging thinking



Click to add text

SLIDE 20

How can we
develop a healthy
relationship with
ourselves?



Do:

Present Slide 20.



Ask:

"How can we develop a healthy relationship with ourselves?"



Do:

Invite the Peer Learners to share their words with the class
and write them on the slide.

Time to share: 5 minutes.



Challenging thinking (continued)

Slide 21

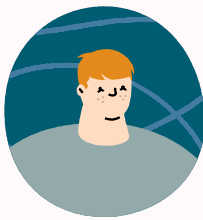
Challenging thinking



Click to add text

SLIDE 21

What might the barriers be to developing a healthy relationship with ourselves?



Do:

Present Slide 21.



Ask:

"What might the barriers be to developing a healthy relationship with ourselves?"



Do:

Invite the Peer Learners to share their ideas with the class and write them on the slide.

Time to discuss: 5 minutes.



Challenging thinking (continued)

Slide 22

Challenging thinking



Click to add text

SLIDE 22

What support from ourselves or others would be needed to reduce these barriers?



Do:

Present Slide 22.



Ask:

"What support from ourselves or others would be needed to reduce these barriers?"



Do:

Invite the Peer Learners to share their ideas with the class and write them on the slide.

Time to share: 5 minutes.



Challenging thinking



SLIDE 23



Do:

Present Slide 23.



Say:

"Free writing is an opportunity to express thoughts, feelings, and insights without judgment or criticism. It is an activity you can do to build a connection with how you are feeling.

Don't worry about grammar, spelling, or sentence structure. The focus is on self-expression. The theme of the writing what makes you, you."

Time to complete: 5 minutes.



Do:

Invite pupils after the writing session, to share how they found the activity.

Thought swaps worksheet



I'm not good enough



I am enough as I am

I can't



I'm trying

I've failed



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Reflection worksheet

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One thing I have learned:

One thing I would do differently:

One question I would like an answer to:





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