

# Appendix A: Calm Moment Activities

This is a complete list of activities referred to in the Calm Moments Cards. Many activities can be interchangeable and used with situational stressors throughout the day.

## Remolding Negative Thoughts:

- Worry Stones – How to make: Use clay to form worry stones. Have students feel the ridges and bumps with eyes open. Then trade stones with another student. With eyes closed, notice the similarities and differences. Adaptations: Worry rocks can be collected on the playground. During indoor recess, have students decorate with positive affirmations using markers.
- Worry Monster/box- “Keeper of the worries”. Teacher can decorate a box as complex or as simple as you want. Write or draw a picture of your worries on a piece of paper and feed the worry or fear to the monster. The monster eats the worries. (The teacher can read through the worries and implement adaptations to class or problem scenario to ease the anxiety). See Activity Template L.
- Let It Go Art Project - At the beginning of class, the teacher passes out a drawing of a balloon. Student lists his/her worry inside the balloon. The teacher collects and states “Let your worries go.”
- Coat of Arm- Use both hands to put on your coat of arms. In your mind, design your coat with some of your favorite things, colors, or something important to you. Next, start at your wrist and using your index finger lightly trace around the opposite hand in between thumb and fingers. Place a sword in your one hand and a shield in the other hand for your protection. Now you are coated in protective gear and are ready for any surprise or emergency.

## Rechargers:

- ZENTANGLE Words- Students can doodle by making continuous repetitive patterns around letters of positive words. (See Activity Templates C, D, E, F, G)
- Brag Bracelet- The “brag bracelets” are given when a child has a shining moment at school or home. A strip of paper with positive affirmation or positive observation about the student is stapled onto the student’s wrist to show their parents. They can be used to promote discussion about a positive moment that occurred at school. (See Activity Template M)
- Color Mandala’s – Mandala’s are ancient art forms. They are symmetrical geometric designs made inside a circle. They can be used to decrease stress and tension promoting relaxation. How to Use: “Close your eyes. Focus your attention inward and notice what colors come to mind. Open your eyes. Begin to choose colors that you visualized. Start coloring either from the center and move outward or start at the edge and move inward.”( See Activity Templates Q, R) or refer to <http://www.centrum-mandala.cz/en/mandalas-children> or <http://www.printmandala.com>
- Pinwheel – (See Activity Template A and B) Use template A for students to create their own. You need:
  - 8.5 inch square paper
  - scissors
  - short straight pin
  - pencil with eraser
  - colored pencils, crayons, markers, paintsHow to make:  
On one side draw, sketch, color feelings you want to “blow away” or get rid of. You can add doodling or Zentangle designs to further decorate. Glue pinwheel to decorative paper or decorate back side in your choice of media. Following the lines, cut in from the corners leaving about 2 inches at center point. Bend one corner down to center (don’t fold). Skip the next corner. Bend the next corner down to the center. Skip and bend until there are 4 points at the center. Stick the straight pin through all four corners, center of square, and through the eraser. Lace another eraser on the back to cover the point of the pin.
- Puzzles: Have a puzzle up for the kids to work on in free time.

## Calming Activities:

- Composers- Have students write lyrics to their own music. Sometimes, students find this easier than speaking about feelings and words. The class can write silly songs (rhymes about feelings, class topic, composers in history).
- Humming- Allow students to hum while waiting. Humming stimulates the frontal lobe for impulse control. (8)
- Mind in a Jar- How to make: Use a snow globe or make your own by filling a water bottle. Fill three fourths full with water. Add glycerin almost to the top. Add 4 drops of liquid soap. Add glitter. Put lid on tightly and shake. How to use: Pass while waiting for assembly to start. "Shake the bottle. Watch the sparkles spinning and rushing around. This is your worried or upset mind. Set the bottle down, and breathe in and out slowly. Watch the glitter as it settles to the bottom. This is your mind calming down." (21)
- Doodling- Allow students time to listen to music and doodle. Play various types of music. Instruct the students to feel the music and draw. First with eyes open, then with their eyes closed.
- Calm Spray- Use lavender oil. Mix oil with water in spray bottle (labeled "Calm Spray"). Then mist the air.
- Apply "concentration cream" and allow the students to work the lotion into their hands. (3)
- Massage- Prior to a writing assignment, have the students massage the palm of their hand and each finger.
- Music- Play calming music when entering/ leaving classroom to promote easier transition.

## Positive Affirmations:

- Jokes- Adults can share jokes with students. If the students become too loud, whisper a joke. Students can submit their own jokes throughout the week. At the end of the week a several jokes are chosen. The student who submitted the joke gets to read it to his/her peers. (19)
- Positive Affirmation Poster – Place posters on the inside door stall, near the sink or mirror (28) Include positive affirmations from cards on to posters. See activity Templates 1-6.
- Sensory Detective- Allow the students a few minutes to scan their environment observing both positive and negative sensations. Vision (is the room too dark too light, sunny, flickering), smell (perfumes, foods, yucky smells), ears (loud, humming, soothing), touch (clothing, glue, supplies), Teacher asks the students to be aware of their environment, anything they like dislike, or just an awareness of their surroundings. (24)
- Student Shout Out Box – Students write positive statements and compliments about each other or themselves. They write the name of the person getting the compliment, but they don't sign their own name. Then the teacher puts them up on a bulletin board or the teacher reads the compliments to the class at the end. (30))
- Grow a thought- Teacher draws a seedling and states, "Today we are going to grow a positive thought. Think of something positive about our classroom." Teacher writes on board "We are good helpers, we are worthy, we are likable, we can \_\_\_\_ ". The class selects one. Teacher states, "Each day we will water our thought by listing anything we hear or see that would make our plant grow. We also will look for weeds, any thoughts we have seen or heard that would hurt our thought making it difficult to grow." Each day review and show pictures of the plant growing from a seed to a full plant. (7)
- Mental Health Day- Allow for a day without homework, brainstorm with the class positive ways to spend their free time (i.e. mindfulness, yoga, relaxation, do something fun with friends or spending time in nature). Teach them to take time to recharge them selves.
- Mold Your Thoughts – Teacher passes out play dough or clay to each student. Teacher states, "Each one of us has the ability to control our thoughts. We can program our thoughts to influence how we think. Shape the dough or clay into the image of a brain. As you work, mold in feel good, calming and relaxing thoughts." Explore with students descriptions of positive thoughts as they mold.

- Toss Away Anxieties- (Throw away paper airplane) Using recycled paper, have students make a paper airplane. Students can write their worries on the plane. Then sail them away! (27)
- Happy Moments- Teacher has a list of “happy places”, favorite vacation, holiday, playdate, birthday....Tell the students to sit up, close their eyes and think of their “happy place”, then either throughout the day or the week, have them take a moment to focus on a different sense... “what can you see with your eyes”, “what can you hear” “smell”, focus on the colors, and so on. Allow them to linger and enjoy their place and they can leave any time by opening their eyes. When you have moments throughout the day allow them to come back to those “Happy Moments”.
- Take What You Need Tear Offs -Teacher makes a list of tear offs to put on bulletin board for student’s to tear off what is needed for the day. Examples: 1. Today I Will Be..... strong, brave, happy, caring, a friend, amazing, helpful, better, smart, calm, relaxed, hope, courage, peaceful, love, understanding. 2. I need a smile (27)
- Count Down - “Close your eyes. With palms facing up, tap each finger to your thumb while counting. Begin by taking your left thumb and touch your index finger, then middle finger, ring finger and little finger. Do this slowly. Repeat with the right hand. Now reverse the sequence beginning with touching the left thumb to the little finger. Now, make a fist with both hands and as we slowly open and close the hands, we will count to 10. Open the fist, count 1, close, count 2 and so on.” Quietly count out loud with your students so that they progress at a slow pace. Adaptation: Tap fingers on table or rest hands on thighs and just lift each finger individually while counting. Tap out C-A-L-M. (6)
- Power Pellets- How to make: Fill an empty jar or small canister with craft pom poms. Consider the psychology of color when you choose your pom poms - Red= energy, determination. Orange= physical confidence, strength. Yellow= uplifting, increases perception, increases focus. Green= balances emotional and physical feelings, renewal, coping. Blue= reliable, honesty, peaceful, loyalty. Purple= imagination, energy. Pink= empathy, kindness. (11) How to use: Provide students with power pellets when they need for power for learning, coping, or listening. They also could be used to ease anxiety during those specific difficult times of the day, transitions, assemblies, etc... (17) See Activity Template N.
- Lip Balm-Draw heart with scented lip balm on back of hand prior to test (try lavender, orange, lemon or grapefruit scents)
- Calm Spray- Use lavender oil. Mix oil with water in spray bottle (labeled “Calm Spray”). Then mist the air.
- Smart Spray-How to make: \$1 spray bottle, fill with water, and sprinkle with a little multi colored glitter. How to use: Spray/mist around the room or each individual kid before times when students really need to think (tests, lengthy writing, math) to activate brain power. (17) See Activity Template N.
- Brain Sprinkles- How to make: \$3 sugar jar, fill with rice and glitter. Tape the inside opening closed. How to use: Sprinkle imaginary brain powder above the heads of all students in need of increasing thinking, problem solving, and coping. Adaptation: Use all glitter in a salt or pepper shaker and sprinkle glitter on the desks of students before tests, writing, or math. (17) See Activity Template N.
- Affirmation Weaver - Play Indigo Ocean Dreams CD #2 Affirmation Weaver recording. On completion of the story discuss what a positive affirmation is and how it impacts one’s performance. Let the students choose to either draw a picture or make a bookmark using their own personal positive affirmation. (Appendix E, Reference 34)

## **Movement Activities:**

- Free Movement or Dancing to student’s musical listening preferences (pop/trendy music) at the start of the class.
- All in One Game-Stand in a circle holding hands. One person is in the middle. The person in the middle calls in someone - one at a time. The goal is to see how many people you can fit in the middle without breaking hands. For more cooperative team building games to teach happiness see [www.Kidactivities.net](http://www.Kidactivities.net) Activities That Connect Kids!, [www.everydaylife.globalpost.com](http://www.everydaylife.globalpost.com), [www.mrgym.com](http://www.mrgym.com), [www.ultimatecampresource.com](http://www.ultimatecampresource.com)
- Movement-Movement often helps increase the level of alertness. Use movement when memorizing multiplication tables or spelling words. Break homework into 10-15 minute segments interspersed with movement such as jumping rope, bouncing on a trampoline, rocking in a rocking chair or swinging. (14)

- Bubble Shield – Allow students to blow bubbles. Adult states, “Focus on the words calm and relax. Imagine these words inside the bubbles. Let them surround you, protecting you with peaceful thoughts.”
- Mooloos Test Day Dance on YouTube-A fun song with hand motions that students can sing and dance prior to a test.
- Kid’s Tia Chi (YouTube)-Short video to learn stances and few simple movements.

## Visualization:

- Paint A Picture - Prior to completing a project, ask students to relax your eyes, body muscles, and mind. Imagine yourself in a quiet bright white room. There are several paint jars in the room and you are holding a magic paintbrush. Dip your brush into the first jar of paint and paint green grass, trees, and plants. Dip your brush into the next jar and paint red flowers, cardinals, and apples in some of the trees. Dip your paint into the third jar, blue, and paint the sky and a small puddle near your feet. Smell the fresh air. Feel the water from the puddle on your toes. Dip your brush into the next jar, yellow, and reach your arms into the sky to paint a large warm sun. Feel the warmth from the sun shining onto your face and skin. Take deep breaths and say to yourself “ I can do this”. Open your eyes and take time to feel the good feelings and how your body feels before starting your project. (3)

## Focusing and Calming Activities:

- Go to GoZen! Anxiety Relief for Children on YouTube! Provides simple introduction to why children worry, 4-7-8 Breathing Exercises and loving kindness reflection. Learn ways to calm with young teen looking characters.
- Play or project [www.calm.com](http://www.calm.com) or Calm.com App. This site provides relaxing music with nature sounds and visual imagery. Allow student to doodle.
- Clear Minds- Have the students settle in their seats, close their eyes and experience a true brain break. Strike a chime, singing bowl, triangle or instrument that resonates with a clear, distinctive tone for 10-20 seconds. Have the children clear their minds and focus on the sound until the tone disappears.
- Mindful Play Palette – How to make: Copy art palette in activities handouts. Add color to the palette and then laminate. How to Use: Recess aide passes out the art palettes and instructs students to, “Scan the environment. Find an item that matches the color on the palette. Be observant by noticing the colors and textures in your environment. Adaptations: Add outdoor pictures or pictures of the senses, eyes, ears, nose, and a hand. The student can find the objects or just experience the outdoors through their senses. (See Activity Templates H,I)
- Moment of Time- Set a timer on the smart board or using a sand timer. Turn over and remind students to be silent and mindful while the timer is counting down.
- Meltaways – Ask student to think of something that melts (ice cream, ice cube, snow). Pretend they are the melting object. Have them sway and slowly dissolve into a puddle on the ground. (12)
- The Aware Walker – Recess aide instructs students, “As you walk, focus your attention on the bottom of your foot with each step you take. Feel how the heel lands and rolls to the toes. Notice your weight, the sounds of your feet, the texture of the ground and how it changes as you walk. Be aware of the sites, colors, smells and sounds that surround you as you walk. Feel the warm sun or gently blowing breeze on your face.” (2)
- Wash Away Your Worries- Teacher instructs student to “Breath in. Tighten up shoulders, arms and hands as you lather up. Then, release your tensions with a deep breath out, haaa”. Repeat action 3 times.
- Picture It-Prior to the test, have students close their eyes and picture themselves doing well on the test. Teacher guides students: “Close your eyes, imagine I am passing out the test. Make sure your pencil is sharpened. Take your time and read each question. Picture yourself completing the test. Go over each item to make sure the answers are correct. Envision yourself getting your test back and you got the best grade ever.”
- 4-7-8 Breathing teaches student how to deep breath. This video uses visuals and simple instructions for diaphragmatic breathing. It is a great resource for learning how to breath for anyone! Check it out! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uxbdx-SeOOo>