



ACTIVITY: 'MANDALA'

TIME: 20+ minutes
SIZE: Small groups to whole of class
SPACE: Room to form circles
RESOURCES: Mandala example (p.70 or SenseAbility CD), chalk OR butcher's paper, tape, marking pen, students' personal tokens OR checkers pieces and grease pencil

NB: Ask students if they have each brought a small, robust personal item with them to class. If that was not possible, use checkers pieces/disc tokens on which students can write their initials.

The aim is for students to think about life's uncertainty and how they might cope with it.

The result should be class discussion about flexible thinking and perspective-taking, and how these are important to a healthy Sense of Control.

1. If you have not already drawn up the mandala, do so now enlisting students' assistance. You can either have a small mandala for small groups or a large mandala for the whole of class. The latter is better drawn in chalk on a large outdoor concrete area.
2. Explain what the mandala is and what its various sections represent. Allow students a minute or two to think about where they are now, and where they might like to be in six months, 12 months, two years, and 10 years.
3. Ask students to sit around the mandala. Then, one-by-one, have them turn their backs to the mandala and toss their personal token/initialled checkers piece over their shoulder to land somewhere on the mandala (if they miss, they should throw again).
4. When everyone's token/checker is on the mandala, commence discussion.



DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- Where on the mandala did you want your piece to end up? Where did it end up? What did you think and feel about that result?
- If you could throw again, would you? Why?
- Try to picture that this result is going to come true. How does that thought make you feel? Why do you feel that way? Have the group brainstorm alternative ways each person might think about that circumstance.
- The world and our future are uncertain, and despite our best-laid plans, things can turn out in unexpected ways. Why is it so important to be able to look at events from many perspectives? Why is it important to take control of the way we think about life's events? (Stress that this can apply to good events, as well as less desirable events).
- Brainstorm some circumstances in your day-to-day life where flexible, helpful, realistic thinking can help you maintain your Sense of Control (e.g. exams, sudden illness, flat bike tyre).