



ACTIVITY: 'MANDALA'

TIME: 20+ minutes
SIZE: Small groups to whole of class
SPACE: Room to form circles
RESOURCES: Mandala (p.73 or SenseAbility CD) and chalk OR butcher's paper, tape, marking pen, students' personal tokens* OR checkers pieces and grease pencil

The aim is for students to consider themselves in future scenarios which they may not have previously imagined.

The result should be discussion about the way that unforeseeable events can disrupt even the best laid plans, and how robust and flexible thinking skills can be very important to hopefulness in those situations.

NB: To prepare for this, the day before ask students to bring in a small, robust personal item with them to class. If that is/was not possible, use checker pieces on which students can write their initials.

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 best drawn in chalk on a large concrete outdoor 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, 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 token over their shoulder to land somewhere on the mandala.
4. When everyone's token is on the mandala, commence discussion.

*e.g. a Monopoly™ player piece

DISCUSSION SUGGESTIONS

- Where on the mandala did you want your piece to end up? Why there? Where **did** it end up? What did that result make you think and feel?
- If you could throw again, would you? Why?
- Try to picture that this result (i.e. where your token landed) is actually 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 hopefulness (e.g. exams, sudden illness, flat bike tyre, not getting into a team, a relationship problem).

