

The Middle Path Mental Roller Coasters

Staff Name	
SEL Module	SEL Foundations
SEL Principle	The Middle Path
SEL Lesson	Mental Roller Coasters
Lesson Duration	80 min (40 min Psychoeducation/40 min Experiential)
Grade or Age Level	Grades 9-12
Teacher Clarity	<p>Learning Intention: Psych Ed Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand dialectical thought • Understand how dialectical thinking can improve their relationship with themselves, and their relationship with their outer world (family, community, friends, etc.) <p>Experiential Students will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify real life examples of dialectical situations • Demonstrate a willingness to take on perspectives they do not initially agree with.
Essential Vocabulary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialectical thought • Validation • All or Nothing Thinking • Superlatives • Walking the Middle Path • Acceptance vs. Change
Material and Technology Needs	<p>Psych Ed: TV with YouTube access Mental Roller Coaster handout Wise Mind daily journal handout Whiteboard and whiteboard markers Balance and weights</p> <p>Experiential: Whiteboard and whiteboard markers Argument prompts</p>

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Psycho-Education

	Pacing	Activity	Action	Assessment
Intro	10 min	<p>Group Question: Teacher asks: "Thumbs up or down, who here has ridden a roller coaster?"</p> <p>"What was it like? Who likes them? Who doesn't?"</p> <p>Watch the following clip on YouTube: "The Rattler Roller Coaster Six Flags Fiesta Texas Offride Shots"</p>	<p>Students' responses based on personal experience.</p> <p>Students watch short clip.</p> <p>Teacher: "Why do engineers allow this roller coaster to flex so much?"</p> <p>"What would happen if the wood did NOT flex?"</p> <p>(Answers: to endure and absorb the incredible amount of force thrown at it. It would break).</p>	<p>Students:</p> <p>Allow all answers.</p> <p>Listen for insight about "It would break," etc.</p>
Body	20 min	<p>Roller Coaster of the Mind</p> <p>Vocab: Validation and Acceptance</p> <p>Vocab: All or Nothing Thinking</p> <p>Show Clip: "The Simpsons - No Tv and No Beer"</p> <p>Show Clip: "Tacoma Narrows Bridge Collapse "Gallop in' Gertie"</p> <p>Discussion on "What is Walking the Middle Path?" (role play below)</p>	<p>Teacher:</p> <p>Hands out "Roller Coaster of the Mind" worksheet.</p> <p>Ask:</p> <p>"Does it ever feel like you have a roller coaster in your brain, with emotional forces hitting you either unexpectedly or expectedly? Even if it's expected, it's still hard, right? To handle these events in our lives, we need a strong and flexible structure—our brain—to support it so it doesn't cause us to "snap", just like the roller coaster structure needs to be both strong and flexible.</p> <p>Explain Wise Mind using balance example (See Instructor's Manual).</p>	

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		<p>Pair and Share</p>	<p>1) Read the example on the worksheet as a class.</p> <p>2) Diagram 3 stressors, 3 rigid response to each stressor, and one Wise Mind response to each stressor on the board using examples given by students.</p> <p>Teacher Demo:</p> <p>Demonstrates an all or nothing response and how to change it to a middle path response:</p> <p>Role Play:</p> <p>Have volunteer student "insult" you, and follow-up with the insulted teacher expressing belief in the insult.</p> <p>Ask class, "Who is the one who created the final thought, "I'm no good,?" (The one who was insulted).</p> <p>Ask the class to re-write the response using Wise Mind.</p> <p>Have kids pair up and write their own examples of stressor, rigid responses, Wise Mind response. Kids share examples with the class.</p>	
Closure	10 min	Fist to 5 and homework	<p>Ask:</p> <p>Fist to five, how well do you understand what is meant by "All or nothing thinking?" "Middle Path thinking?" How confident do you feel that you could recognize the weak spots in your mental roller coaster?"</p> <p>Assign Wise Mind daily journal homework</p>	Visual confirmation of understanding.

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Experiential

	Pacing	Activity	Action	Assessment
Prep and set-up	5 min	Groups	Split class into two groups and have them sit on opposite sides of the room around a table.	
Intro	5 min	Debate Prep	Explain the nature of a debate. Explain that each group will debate topics about which they may or may not agree.	
Body	20 min	Debate	<p>Give each group a debate topic, and assign "for" or "against". Have students discuss their points as a group, and after 5 minutes, present each side to the entire class as argument/counterargument. Do this with 3 debate topics. Examples: "Teenagers shouldn't have smart phones." "Homework is pointless." "School should be year-round."</p> <p>Make sure each group gets a chance to argue "for" at least one topic that is typically argued against by most adolescents.</p>	
Closure	10 min	Discussion	Have the students describe what it was like to take time to consider an opinion that they didn't necessarily agree with. What did it take to do that? What got in the way of wanting to do that? Did they encounter any all or nothing thinking? How did they manage it? If they weren't able to agree, were they at least able to appreciate another point of view?	