

Empowering Mental Health in Education




Module 3: *Your Mental Health Toolkit*

International webinar 3
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Welcome to the 3rd module of the *Empowering Mental Health in Education* training course!

During which we will explore lesson plans that use movies to discuss mental health with young people.



Today's journey



Objectives

- 📌 To understand the relevance and the opportunity of approaching mental health in classes and schools.
- 📌 To present the background and structure of *YoungMinds* handbook of lesson plans to teachers.
- 📌 To get familiar with the *YoungMinds* approach.
- 📌 To learn how the topic of mental health can be integrated into teachers' work and classes.



Agenda

10 min	Welcome to today's journey
40 min	Film connection
10 min	Mental Health in schools
30 min	Exploring the <i>YoungMinds</i> handbook
15 min	Coffee break
30 min	<i>YoungMinds</i> approach
20 min	Example of lesson plan
10 min	Before the next sessions
5 min	Your path ahead
10 min	Closing remarks



Film connection

- Choose 1 film from the booklet with which you relate the most
- While choosing, participants should think in 2 questions:
 - Q1. Does the film reflect something personal or something they've seen in others?
 - Q2. How does the film make them feel or think about mental health?
- In this activity, we will work in groups of 8 participants. You will be automatically divided into working groups.
- Each participant will have 1 minute to share their chosen films and reasons in group
- Participant that had chosen the same film, should share their option in the same moment

Take aways

- Film is a safe bridge into difficult topics.
- Structured reflection increases psychological safety.
- Mental health discussions require intentional boundaries
- Emotional responses are valuable learning tools.
- Different interpretations deepen understanding.
- Facilitation matters as much as content.

Why focus on mental health in schools?

Below are presented the key reasons why prioritizing mental health in schools can be an opportunity and can generate impact:

- Mental health affects everyone, regardless of background (universal)
- Addressing the topic, ensures students have access to the support they need (personal)

Universal & personal impact



- Normalises open conversations about mental health, turning it common
- Teachers modelling empathy help create a safe space and reduce stigma

Reduces stigma



- Affects students' school performance, relationships and self-esteem
- Emotional support leads to improved engagement & success

Linked to well-being & performance



- Promotes competences of emotional regulation, stress management & communication
- Promotes personal growth & resilience

Fosters emotional & social development



- Supporting mental health helps create a safe, inclusive & resilient classroom culture
- Students thrive in & environment where they feel support

Builds a safe & inclusive learning environment





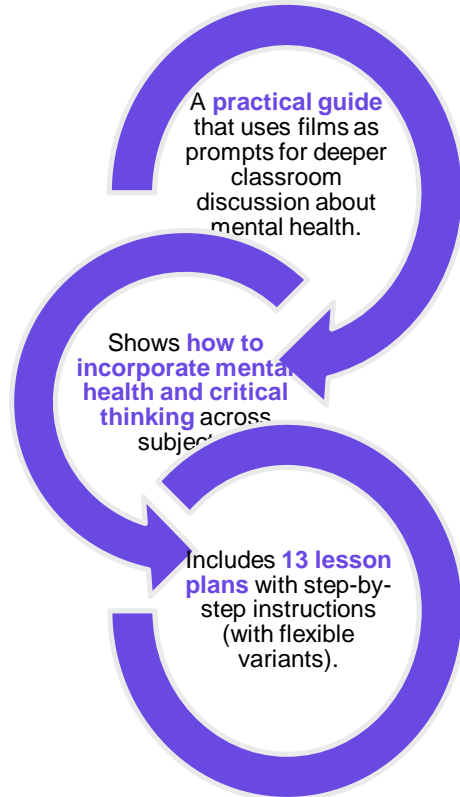
Module 3: Your Mental Health Toolkit

YoungMinds Handbook to reflect and dialogue with young people

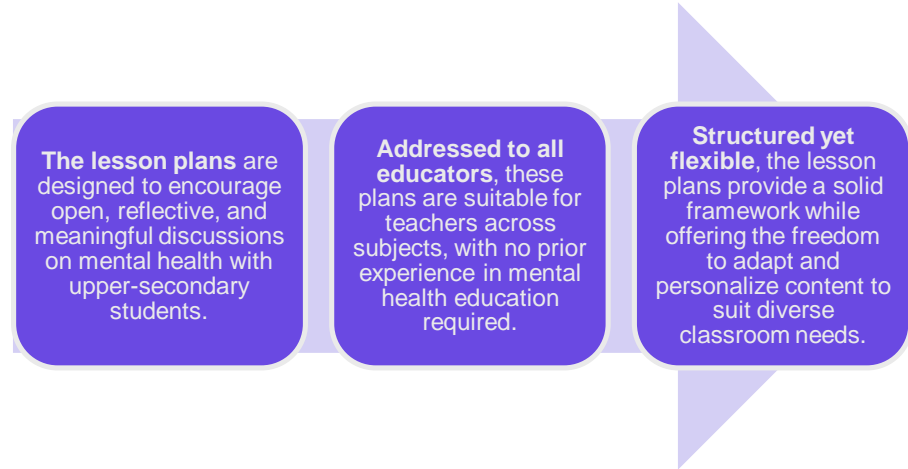


Exploring the *YoungMinds* handbook

WHAT IS THE HANDBOOK?



WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?



Exploring the *YoungMinds* handbook

HOW IS THE HANDBOOK STRUCTURED?



EXPLORING MENTAL
HEALTH IN THE
CLASSROOM



LEARNING METHODS
USED



LESSON PLANS
PART I - ARTISTIC SHORT FILMS

Exploring the *YoungMinds* handbook

HOW IS THE HANDBOOK STRUCTURED?



LESSON PLANS
PART II – EDUCATIONAL CLIPS



LESSON PLAN
HOW A SHORT MOVIE IS MADE



Worksheets
To support the
lesson plans

Exploring the *YoungMinds* handbook

WHAT INFORMATION IS PROVIDED IN THE LESSON PLANS?

CHARACTERISATION

TYPES

- Artistic short films
- Educational clips

TOPICS

- Mental Health Stigma
- Addiction & Coping Mechanisms
- Social Anxiety & Social Phobia
- Loneliness & Social Isolation
- Psychosis & Schizophrenia
- Depression
- Self-Harm
- Stress Management
- Self-Care
- Empathy & Support

STRUCTURE

Learning outcomes

- To develop students' understanding of mental health, encouraging empathy, self-reflection, and critical thinking

Duration

- 45 minutes
- 90 minutes

Activities

- Warm-up & ice-breaking; Film screening; Group discussions; Reflection; Creative tasks; Empathy-building exercises

Methods

- Visual learning; Inquiry-based learning; Collaborative learning; Reflective practice

Supporting Materials

- Worksheets
- Films
- Evaluation tools

GUIDELINES

Preparation tips

- ❏ Ensure proper technical setup (screening equipment, sound system, etc.)
- ❏ Familiarize with lesson content and discussion points in advance to guide meaningful conversations

After the film

- ❏ Encouraging reflection, sharing, and closing activities to reinforce learning
- ❏ Provide resources for students who may need additional emotional support



Module 3: Your Mental Health Toolkit

YoungMinds approach



Critical Thinking & Dialogical Methods

Mental health education through film-based learning

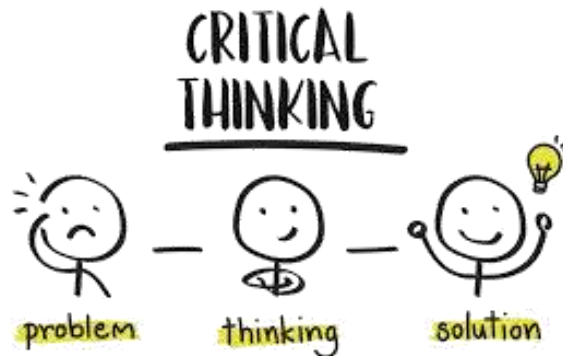


YoungMinds

Session goals (60 minutes)

Where we are going?

- Clarify what critical thinking is (and why it matters for student mental health).
- Practise two dialogical formats: Socratic dialogue and Community of Philosophical Inquiry.
- See how film can function as a 'safe stimulus' for discussing emotions and stress.
- Leave with a ready-to-use lesson plan based on two short films.



60-minute roadmap



Structure

- 0–10 min | Why critical thinking matters for mental health education
- 10–25 min | Critical thinking: skills, dispositions, and classroom indicators
- 25–40 min | Dialogical methods: Socratic dialogue + philosophical inquiry (CoI)
- 40–55 min | Film-based lesson: steps, questions, and teacher moves
- 55–60 min | Wrap-up, adaptation ideas, resources



Why critical thinking matters for mental health

Mental health + thinking

- ✓ Helps students name assumptions, test interpretations, and avoid ‘quick conclusions’.
- ✓ Supports healthier coping choices: comparing options, trade-offs, and consequences.
- ✓ Reduces stigma by examining stereotypes, language, and causal explanations.
- ✓ Strengthens self-reflection: noticing triggers, patterns, and what helps (metacognition).
- ✓ Improves media literacy around mental health content online (claims, evidence, influencers).

What is critical thinking?

Key idea

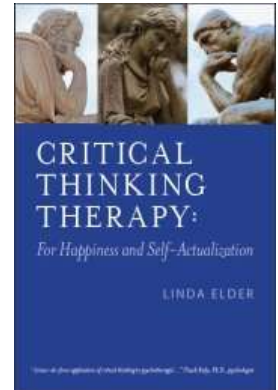
A disciplined way of thinking that aims at reasonable judgement.

It combines:

- Skills (how we think): analysing, evaluating, inferring, explaining, deciding.
- Dispositions (how we approach thinking): curiosity, fairness, courage, humility.
- Metacognition (thinking about thinking): monitoring biases and emotional reasoning.

In mental health education, it means: 'I can feel strongly AND still think clearly.'

"Critical thinking is reasonable, reflective thinking that focuses on deciding what to believe or what to do." (Ennis, 1985: 46)



Critical thinking in practice (classroom indicators)

From definition to behaviour

- Students ask for clarification: “What do we mean by...?”
- They distinguish fact / interpretation / feeling.
- They look for reasons and evidence: “How do we know?”
- They consider alternatives: “What else could be going on?”
- They recognise limits: “What would change my mind?”
- They reflect on impact: “What are the consequences for wellbeing?”



Dialogical methods (overview)

Pedagogy

Dialogue is not debate! The goal is understanding, not winning.

Teacher role: facilitator of thinking (not provider of 'correct answers').

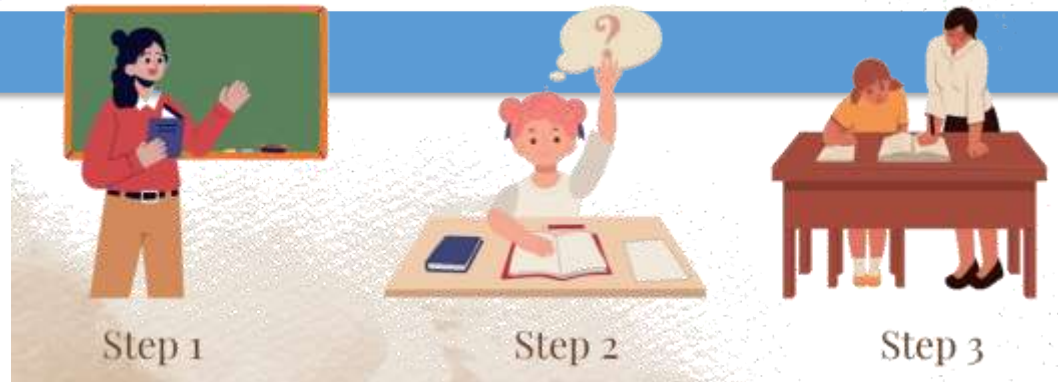
Core conditions:

- Psychological safety and clear boundaries. (carring thinking)
- Respectful listening; one person speaks at a time.
- Reasons matter: "Say why you think that."
- Permission to 'pass' when topics feel personal.

Film helps create 'distance': students discuss a shared object first, then connect to self.



Socratic dialogue: essentials



Aim: move from opinions to better-justified ideas through questioning.

Typical sequence:

- Clarify the claim (What exactly are we saying?).
- Test assumptions (What are we taking for granted?).
- Explore reasons/evidence (Why believe this?).
- Look for counterexamples (When might it not be true?).
- Refine the claim (So, a better version is...).

Facilitator moves: ask, paraphrase, probe, summarise, and slow down.

Mini Socratic dialogue (example: 'stress bucket')

Worked example

Student: "Stress is always bad."

Teacher: "What do you mean by 'stress' here: pressure, anxiety, or something else?"

Teacher: "Can you think of a case where stress helps someone?"

Student: "Maybe before an exam, it motivates."

Teacher: "So is stress always bad, or can it be useful in some amounts?"

Teacher: "What makes it harmful, its intensity, duration, or lack of 'release taps'?"

Teacher: "What assumption is hidden in 'bad', that discomfort is always negative?"

Teacher: "How could we restate your claim more precisely?"

Possible refinement: "Chronic, unmanaged stress is harmful; manageable stress can be useful."



Community of Philosophical Inquiry (CoI)

Format 2

Aim: collective inquiry into a ‘big question’ using reasons, examples, and careful listening.

Core steps:

- Stimulus (film clip, story, image).
- Question generation (students create and select questions).
- Inquiry dialogue (build on each other; challenge respectfully).
- Reflection (What did we learn? How did we think?).



Teacher role: keep the inquiry philosophical (concepts, reasons, implications), not therapeutic.

YoungMinds approach



KEY APPROACHES IN YOUNGMINDS MENTAL HEALTH EDUCATION

	CRITICAL THINKING	PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY	DIALOGICAL METHODS
Value	Encourages questioning assumptions and analysing behaviours and emotions	Encourages reflective thinking on human experiences & mental health	Encourages open-ended questions & group discussions to explore mental health topic
Purpose	Fosters deeper engagement with mental health topics by challenging surface-level understandings & promoting self-reflection	Helps students explore deep questions about mental health, such as “Can someone live meaningfully while struggling with mental illness?”	Promotes dialogue & deep inquiry, fostering a safe space for students to express diverse perspectives
Focus	Develops resilience, empathy & problem-solving skills	Engages students in philosophical exploration, prompting them to consider the complexities of human emotions & behaviour	Builds communication skills, empathy & collective reflection
Application	Can lead to thoughtful discussions on mental health	Can be used to spark discussions about existential questions & personal experiences	The use of guided questions facilitates group conversations about stigma or coping strategies
Teaching methods related	Visual learning; Inquiry-based learning; Experiential Learning	Visual Learning; Reflective Practice; Experiential Learning	Visual Learning; Collaborative Learning

Why film works well for these topics

Method

- Short films create a shared experience quickly (low reading load, high engagement).
- Metaphors and visuals support discussion of abstract ideas (emotion, stress, coping).
- Film allows ‘critical distance’: discuss characters/ideas before personal disclosure.
- Teachers can pause, replay, and focus attention on specific moments.
- For sensitive topics: normalise a range of feelings; keep boundaries; know referral routes.



Film 1: How to Process Your Emotions

Film-based stimulus

Focus: why ‘processing’ emotions matters for calm, clarity, and self-understanding.

Use it to practise critical thinking about:

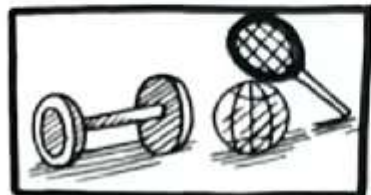
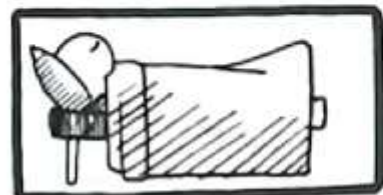
- What counts as an emotion vs a story about the emotion.
- Unhelpful assumptions (e.g., ‘I shouldn’t feel this’).
- Strategies that help: naming, reflecting, talking, writing, slowing down.

Viewing prompts:

- What is the film’s main claim?
- What reasons/examples does it give?
- What might be missing or overstated?

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b197XOd9S7U>







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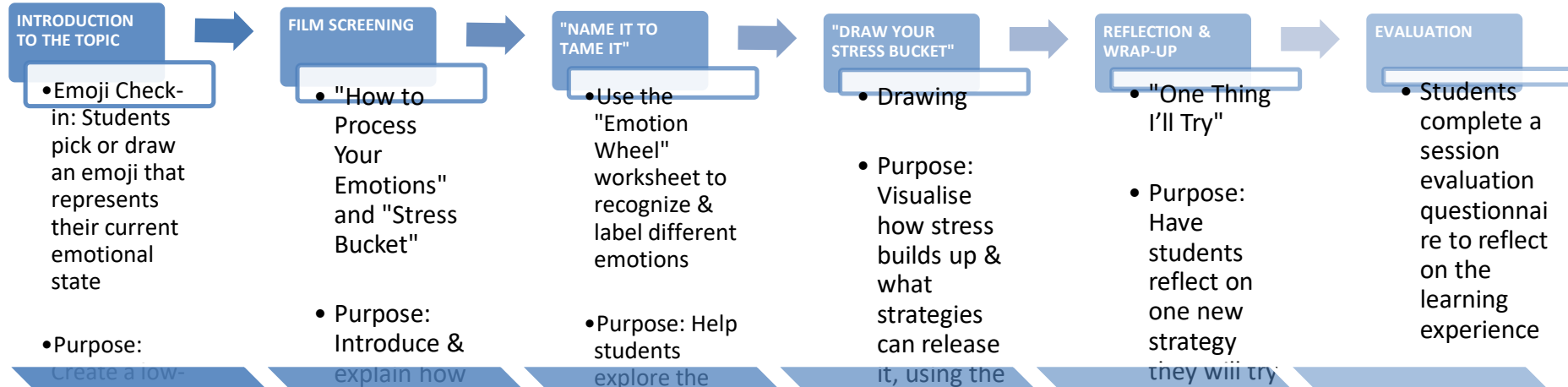
Example of a lesson plan



Example of a lesson plan



Lesson:	Put your stress into the bucket	Duration:	45 minutes	Films:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to process your emotions Stress bucket
Topics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stress & stress management Dealing with emotions 	Learning Outcomes:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand how emotions affect the body and behaviour. Identify how stress builds up and is released. Name different coping strategies and explain their impact on emotions and stress levels. 		



Lesson step 1 (5 min): check-in + safe space

Expanded lesson

Quick emotional check-in: choose an emoji / colour / weather-word for ‘how I am now’.

Ground rules (1 minute): respect, confidentiality limits, right to pass, no personal pressure.

Teacher script (example):

- “We’ll talk about emotions and stress in general first—no one has to share anything personal.”
- “If something feels too much, you can step out or speak to me after.”

Critical thinking move: distinguish describing a feeling from judging it.



Lesson step 2 (10 min): viewing + 'notice' questions

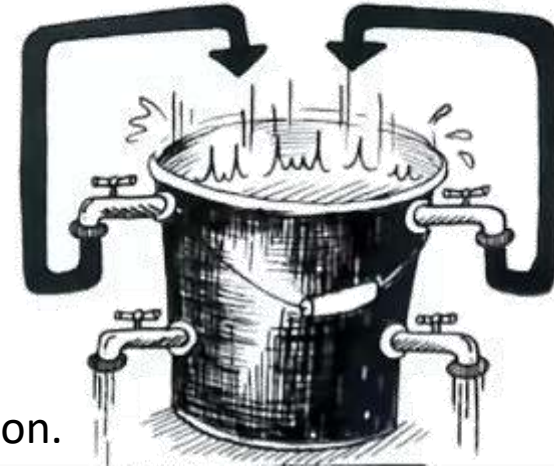
Expanded lesson

Play both films (or one now and one later). Pause once or twice for noticing.

Notice questions (low-risk):

- What words/images repeat?
- What metaphors are used (bucket, processing)?
- What emotions are shown or implied?
- What seems to cause stress? What seems to relieve it?

Critical thinking move: separate observation from interpretation.



Lesson step 3 (10 min): “Name it to tame it”

Expanded lesson

Use an Emotion Wheel (or simple list) to label feelings more precisely.

Small-group task: take one film idea and map it:

Feeling → Trigger → Thought/story → Behaviour → Consequence.

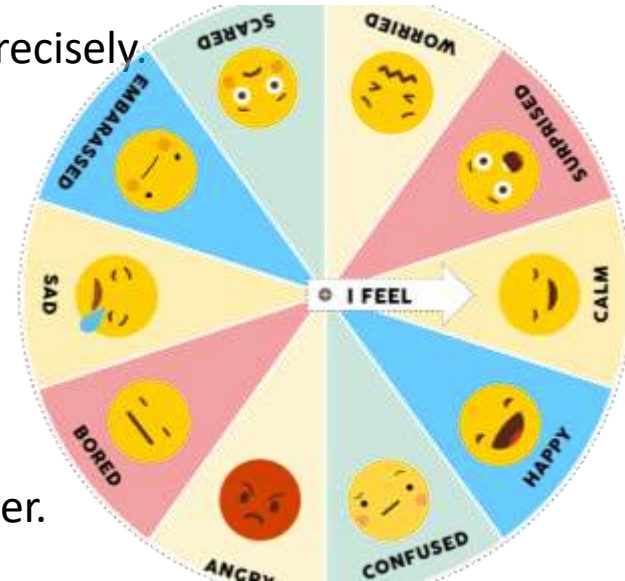
Critical thinking prompts:

Is the thought a fact or an interpretation?

What assumption is hidden in the interpretation?

What alternative interpretation is possible?

Goal: students practise ‘emotional literacy + reasoning’ together.



Lesson step 4 (10 min): draw your stress bucket

Expanded lesson

Students draw a bucket with:

- Stressors (drops): school, relationships, online pressure, etc.
- Healthy taps: sleep, movement, connection, hobbies, asking for help.
- Unhelpful hoses: avoidance, doomscrolling, substances, aggression, isolation.

Critical thinking prompts:

- What is the short-term benefit of an ‘unhelpful hose’?
- What is the long-term cost?
- Which tap is most realistic this week—and why?

Option: keep it general (‘a typical student’), not personal.



Lesson step 5 (10 min): choose one dialogue format

Expanded lesson

Option A — Mini Socratic dialogue (whole class, teacher-led)

Claim to examine: “Strong emotions always make thinking worse.”

Use clarification → assumptions → reasons → counterexamples → refinement.

Option B — Col inquiry circle (student-led with facilitation)

Big question examples:

- “Should we trust our feelings?”
- “Can avoiding stress ever be healthy?”
- “What makes a coping strategy ‘good’?”



Critical thinking move: give reasons, ask for examples, and consider objections.

Wrap-up (5 min): reflection + transfer

Closing

Exit ticket: “One thing I’ll try when my stress bucket fills up is...”

Quick meta-reflection:

- What question changed your thinking today?
- What helped the dialogue feel safe and productive?

Teacher tip: end with agency (small, realistic steps), not ‘perfect wellbeing’.





Module 3: Your Mental Health Toolkit

Preparing for the next national session






YOUNGMINDS HANDBOOK

On using movies to reflect and dialogue with
young people about Mental Health in schools

Autonomous work

Before the next national session, you should:

-  Read and explore the YoungMinds Handbook
-  Familiarise yourself with its structure and content
-  Understand the lesson plans, films, and teaching methods

[Autonomous work Module 3](#)





Your preparation tasks

Each group must:

1. Carefully read and study the lesson plan
2. Understand the mental health topic
3. Understand the teaching methods
4. Watch the associated film or clip
5. Prepare to deliver the lesson plan

**Important:
Inform your colleagues**

Why is this preparation important?

Structure of the session:



30-40 minutes

10-15 minutes

30-40 minutes

10-15 minutes

2 teachers

All participants

2 teachers

All participants

15 minutes

Others act as student

sit together

Others act as student

sit together

Discussion

Discussion

Discussion



WHILE OBSERVING...

What strengths did we notice across activities?






What challenges kept coming up?

How do these experiences connect back to the methods we talked about on the webinar, like Socratic dialogue or critical thinking?

Why practise before using it in class?






This practice session helps you:




-  Gain confidence
-  Understand the lesson flow
-  Experience the activities yourself
-  Identify challenges and improvements
-  Learn from colleagues

How you will work: pairs or small groups

Before the national session:

-  Form pairs (or small groups of 2–4 teachers)
-  Each group chooses ONE lesson plan
-  Inform colleagues which lesson plan you selected

During the national session:

-  One group presents
-  Other teachers act as students
-  Afterward, group reflection and discussion

Practical adjustment

During the national session:

- ❏ You do NOT need to show the full film again
- ❏ Approximately 30–40 minutes instead of 45 minutes
- ❏ More time for discussion and feedback

Flexibility

Each partner school can organise this based on:

- ❏ Number of teachers
- ❏ Time availability

Possible options:

- ❏ Prepare lesson plans before the national session
- OR
- ❏ Choose and prepare lesson plans during the national session





Longer workshops

If selecting a longer lesson plan:

- ❏ Work in groups of 3–4 teachers
- ❏ Adapt the lesson for the workshop setting
- ❏ Focus on key activities

Autonomous work

Before the next national session:

-  Explore the YoungMinds Handbook
-  Form groups
-  Choose and prepare one lesson plan per group
-  Inform your colleagues

[Autonomous work Module 3](#)





Module 3: Your Mental Health Toolkit

Your path ahead





What's next?

TODAY
Mid Feb

4th International
Webinar
March

Autonomous work

Explore the handbook, join a colleague and choose 1 lesson

THANKS!



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