

# SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

## SOCIAL SKILLS LESSON PLAN

### CASEL COMPETENCY: SELF-MANAGEMENT

### SOCIAL SKILL: STRESS MANAGEMENT

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#### BOOK INFORMATION

Book title: *I am Peace*

Author: Susan Verde

Illustrator: Peter H. Reynolds

Publisher and date of publication: Abrams Books for Young Readers (2017)

ISBN: 978-1419727016

Number of pages: 32

Reading level or interest level: K-6

#### BOOK SYNOPSIS

The narrator explains that sometimes she worries about what will happen next and what happened before. She explains that her thoughts seem uncontrollable. She takes a moment to take a breath and tells herself that she is OK. She pays attention to the ground beneath her feet and steadies herself. She notices the here and the now. Thoughts settle and minds clear. I am peace. She shares all the things she can do: watch her worries pop and disappear, she lets things go; say out loud what I feel inside; and share kindness with others and make a difference. She also thinks about the seeds she gives to a bird drop and something grows; she can hug a tree and connect with nature; she can watch clouds; she can use all of her senses to know what is around; she can breathe deeply and fill her body with air. She explains that she does not have to worry about the past or future. She can share her peace with others, those who need it. She dreams we are all at peace

This book could be used to help students manage their worry and anxiety. This book offers concrete examples of how to address feelings of unrest and anxiety.

This book could be used to demonstrate metaphors and similes.

#### LESSON OBJECTIVE

The goal of this lesson is for students to identify ways to cope with worry and anxiety. Students will be able to practice different strategies and understand the benefits of mindfulness when they are worried.

#### LESSON MATERIALS AND ADVANCE PREPARATION

K-2 Lesson Materials:

- Bubbles and wands (or students could pretend and imagine blowing bubbles)

Advance Preparation:

- Familiarize yourself with the mindfulness activity (in the post-reading activity section) so that you understand what it should look and sound like. Make sure you are comfortable with the script for the activity. Being familiar with the script helps you engage more fully with the students.

## KEY VOCABULARY AND CONCEPTS

**Simile:** a figure of speech involving the comparison of one thing with another thing of a different kind, used to make a description more emphatic or vivid (uses like or as)

**Metaphor:** A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable

**Mindfulness:** Being aware of what is happening in the present moment, the here and now

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Ask the students if they ever worry.

Ask them what kind of things they worry about.

Explain that the character in the book also worries. However, she finds ways to manage her worries and to feel better. Ask students what they do to make things better when they are worried.

Ask students to pay close attention to what the character does.

## READ THE BOOK

## POST READING DISCUSSION

Ask the students

- What kind of worries might this person (in the book) have?
- What kind of worries do you have?
- What does the person in the book do to help herself calm down?
- Have you ever tried any of these strategies?
- Are there any you might want to try?

Explain that these strategies of mindfulness work because when you focus solely on one thing (one of the strategies) you cannot focus on the negative things that are worrying you..

Ask the class:

- Why does the narrator in the book feel that after calming down she can be kind?
- Why would you have trouble being kind to others when you are worried?
- In what ways do worries negatively affect you?

## POST READING ACTIVITY

### **K-2:**

Explain to the students that one of the things the girl in the book did to be at peace is to watch her worry pop. Ask the students to close their eyes and imagine blowing a big bubble. Ask them to take a deep breath in through the nose and then to slowly let the air out through their mouth. Blow the air out slowly and steadily through the mouth. Compare this kind of breathing to how you would

blow a bubble. Ask them to focus on what their body feels like as they blow out the bubble. Ask them to imagine that the bubble holds their worry---then think of the bubble popping. Practice this several times. Name a worry, then blow a bubble and imagine the bubble popping and releasing that worry. Explain that we can be at peace when we take a deep breath and slowly exhale our breath. Identify specific worries (taking a test, going to the dentist, having trouble going to sleep at night). Then, practice slow breathing and exhaling, letting the worries float away and pop.

### **3-6:**

Ask the students to do a guided mindfulness activity, using the same strategies that are in the book. First, ask students to close their eyes. *Some students may feel uncomfortable closing their eyes. Ask these students to look at something calming in the classroom.* Ask students to take a few deep breaths through their nose, then slowly exhale out their mouth. Ask them to think, "I am OK. I am OK. I am OK."

Next, ask the students to notice the ground beneath their feet and other things "in the moment" that their body is feeling, smelling, hearing.

Ask the students to focus on "the moment," the "here and now." If the students start to think about the future or past, ask them to focus on what they can feel and sense right now.

Ask students to think, "I am peace. I am peace. I am peace."

Ask the students to imagine their worry coming out of their head in the form of a bubble.

The bubble may contain a worrisome scene from their life or words that represent their worry.

Ask students to focus on the bubble, envision the worry going higher and higher until it pops. Ask students to take a deep breath and notice what it feels like to have the worry drift away and pop until it disappears.

Now that their worry is gone---ask students to pay attention to the calm feeling they are having.

Ask students to imagine sharing that feeling by doing something kind for someone else.

Ask them to imagine who they are being kind to and what they are doing. Ask them to think about their feelings of calmness and having that extra energy to serve another person.

Ask the students to think about what they can do when they are peace.

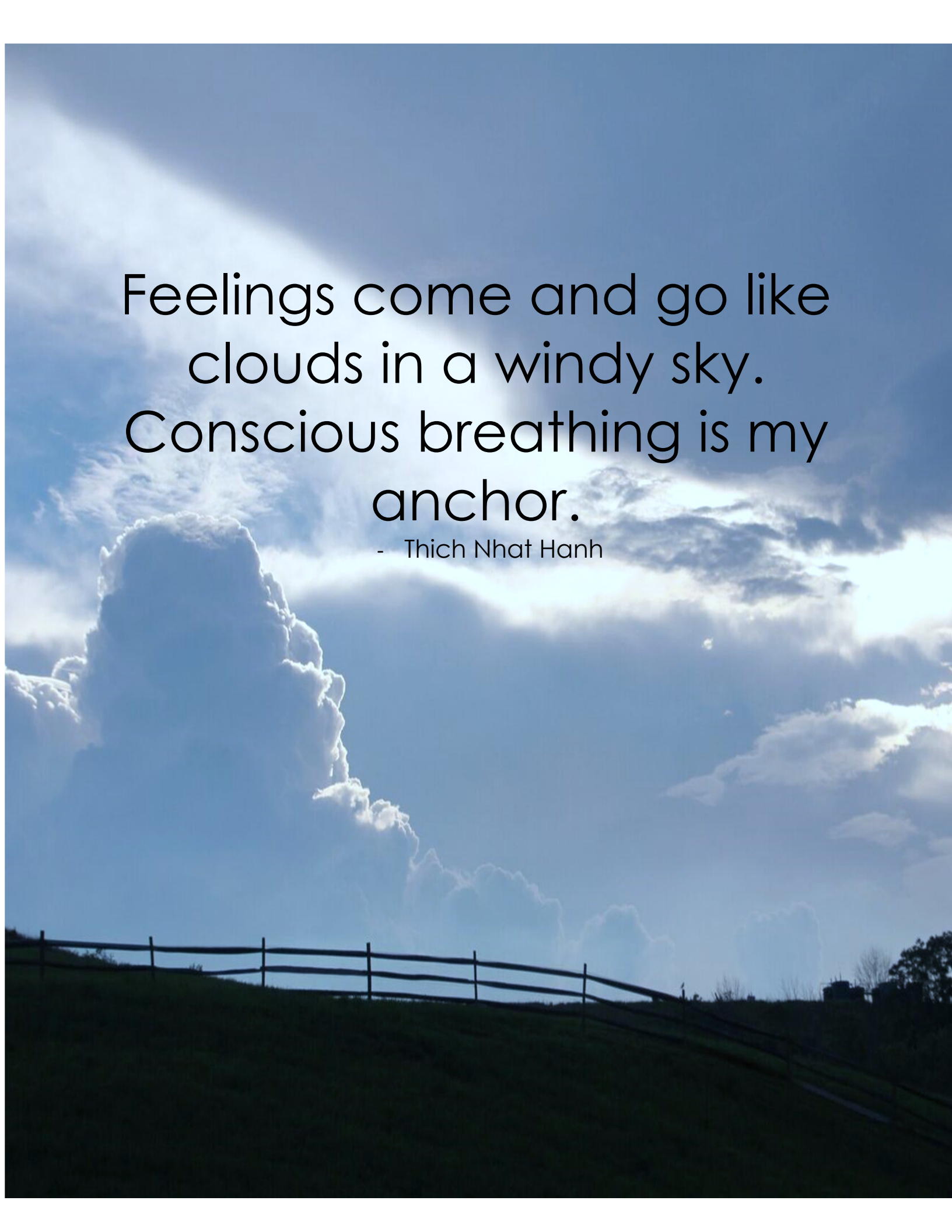
- Can you connect with nature?
- Can you watch the clouds?
- Can you use your senses to understand the world?

Explain that there are strategies to cope with worries about the past and future. Ask the students to open their eyes. Ask students to share what they felt and thought about.

- What are some things you can do when you are at peace?

## **CLOSURE**

Remind the students that we can use our coping skills to manage our worries. We can manage our worried thoughts and feelings by focusing our attention on our surroundings, the "here and now." This helps us to cope with our worries. Explain that this book showed different strategies of "mindfulness." We can use mindfulness strategies whenever we feel worried. Ask the students to practice these strategies this week, when they feel worried. Later this week, ask them to share their mindfulness experiences.



Feelings come and go like  
clouds in a windy sky.  
Conscious breathing is my  
anchor.

- Thich Nhat Hanh