

# My Happy Card

This is an overview lesson about Caring. To incorporate respect alongside caring, students will create a “My Happy Card” for use when they feel upset or are struggling throughout the school day.

**NOTE:** This lesson would work very well in conjunction with your art time during specials. Consider asking your art teacher if he/she would like to collaborate! It's a great way to show that you care about their academic focus as well.

## Caring Sub-Concept(s)

Compassion, Kindness

## Lesson Timeframe

45 minutes

## Required Materials

- ☐ Cardstock or cardboard
- ☐ Basic Art Supplies
- ☐ Packing or Scotch Tape
- ☐ Variety of Magazines (optional)
- ☐ Glue Sticks (optional)
- ☐ Scissors (optional)

## Standards Map

This lesson aligns with CASEL Competencies, National Health Education Standards, and Common Core State Standards. Please refer to the [Standards Map](#) for more information.

## Lesson Objective

Students will:

- Create a small, personalized reference card that inspires a feeling of happiness.
- Practice using coping skills when circumstances cause negative feelings.

## Teacher Connection/Self-Care

What do you do for YOU each day? Choose something just for you today. Take a hot shower. Turn on your favorite song on the drive home. You matter.

## Tips for Diverse Learners

- Assist a student with limited fine motor skills by mixing paint for them.
- Allow students to customize the size of their happy card based on their own needs.
- Provide a finished product to assist with visualization.



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See last page for details.



## Share

3 minutes

Have the students gather in your circle time or community area. Ask them to share one way they show respect to a friend this week.

(Provide examples if necessary.)



## Inspire

### What is Caring?

5-7 minutes

Explain that **caring** is *feeling and showing concern for others*. Today we will focus on caring and expressing that in our classroom. Like respect, caring for ourselves, our friends, and our space helps us to feel safe and show kindness daily. When we are caring, our actions show kindness and others enjoy our company!

### What is Self-Care?

5-7 minutes

Explain that self-care is when we take time to care for ourselves. This may sound silly, but if we don't take time to take care of ourselves, we aren't very good at caring for others. One way to practice self-care is to check your feelings often and have some tools to help you change your feelings when you are upset. We call these tools coping skills. When we use a coping skill it allows us to take some time away from the problem, clear our minds, and get back to feeling happy again!

- You may want to designate an area in your room that is quiet for students to use when practicing coping skills (your classroom library is one great option).



## Empower

30 minutes

Today each person will create their own special "My Happy Card" using our art supplies and cardstock. This will be a small card for you to keep at your desk. This is your very own card; no one can tell you what to put on it, how to make it, or even use it with you. It is for you alone.

### Step 1:

Each student will select a piece of cardstock for their collage. Allow students to cut down the cardstock to the size they desire. Some students may feel overwhelmed by this task, while others will want more space. Write the student's name on the card and have him/her trace over it with glue for a raised name if desired.

### Step 2:

Next, brainstorm images that bring happiness through your 5 senses with the students in your classroom. Start as a whole group and identify the 5 senses on the board (see, smell, hear, taste, touch) and then have each student provide one happy example that relates to at least one sense. Examples might include- favorite food (taste/smell/touch), favorite person (see, smell, hear), favorite stuffed animal (see, smell, touch), etc.

Using the art supplies provided (and the magazines if that was added) students will include a happy idea for all 5 senses on their card. There is no right or wrong way to accomplish this, as long as it is meaningful to them and they can explain what they put and why.

Note- To help these cards last, you can laminate them or tape over them to protect them after they dry.

### Step 3:

After all of the happy cards are finished, explain that students will use their “My Happy Card” throughout the year to help them when they are feeling down or upset. Students can take out their card and discuss some of the pictures on it with the teacher or assistant when they are overwhelmed, frustrated, or even angry. This is a terrific way to show caring for ourselves. When we let negative feelings stay inside for too long, we are not showing kindness. Our attitude starts to change and it becomes more difficult to respect and show kindness to others because of all these yucky feelings. Using your “My Happy Card” can help you to feel positive again quickly!

- Using your own card, demonstrate how to use the card to change your feelings. One idea is to guide a person through an attitude change by pointing at several pictures and asking him/her how the pictures bring happiness.
- You will need to create a signal or plan for your students when they want/need this coping skill.
- You will also need to select a special location for students to store their cards. One idea is to tape them down to their desk or have them store them in their cubby.



## Reflect

5-10 minutes

Have several students share 1-2 items from their card with the class. Students do not have to show their card if they do not want to. Emphasize that these cards are personal and some people may not feel completely comfortable sharing what they put on it. Ask the following questions as students share their art:

- How does that picture make you feel?
- Why did you draw/paint that picture on your card?
- Which of the 5 senses does that image remind you of?
- Does that picture remind you of a person, place, thing, or fun time in your life?



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LEARNING.

The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has been reviewing evidence-based SEL programs since 2003. Kindness in the Classroom® meets CASEL's SElect Program and is included in the CASEL Guide to Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.

Kindness in the Classroom® met or exceeded all of CASEL's criteria for high-quality SEL programming. Kindness in the Classroom® received CASEL's highest designation for high-quality SEL programming.

<https://casel.org/guide/kindness-in-the-classroom/>