



MULYAVARDHAN
SHANTILAL MUTTHA FOUNDATION

The Mulyavardhan Voice

February 2019 Issue

FROM THE EDITORS

Hello all at ABE and DSE!

Firstly, we'd like to express how much we enjoyed visiting your schools in February. We are seeing a lot of progress in the Mulyavardhan classroom and we appreciate all the enthusiasm and work you're directing towards successfully carrying out the activities. We are happy that your students are enjoying and learning, at the same time!

This month's issue will focus on a component of Mulyavardhan that we haven't discussed in detail yet. Do you all remember the five competencies from training? In this issue and in the next, we'll delve deeper into understanding them.

But before we get into the competencies, let's begin with a photo gallery of just a sample of teachers that we visited this month!

A PHOTO GALLERY!



Susan Monteiro
Holy Cross, Bastora



Jessica Fernandes
Rosary Convent, Mandrem



Maria Mendes
Our Lady of Lourdes, Utorda



Sister Ilda Rodrigues
St. Joseph Vaz, Sancoale



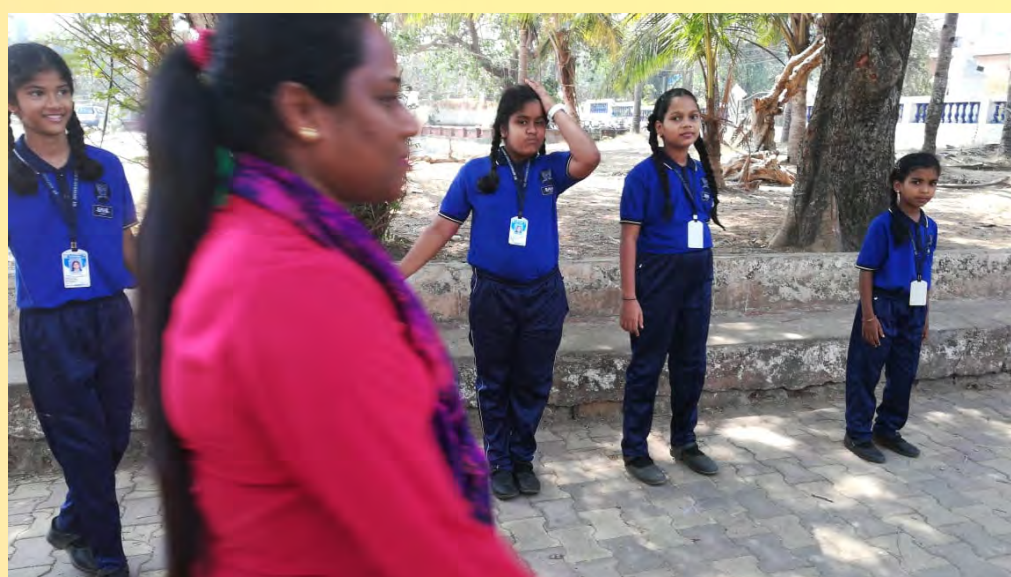
Valencia D'souza
Santa Cruz, Santa Cruz



Ritesh Raikar
St. Ann's, Quellosim



Rita Jacinta Cardoso
St. John of the Cross, Sanquelim



Greena Goes
St. Anthony's, Majorda



Krutika Desai
St. Xavier's, Velim



Blanch Pereira
St. Ann's, Thivim



Jyoti Redkar
St. Joseph, Pernem



Viola Pereira
Maria Bambina, Cuncolim

THE MULYAVARDHAN COMPETENCIES

Do you remember the competencies module in our training? Perhaps you remember it as that long, confusing session that made you wish for a lunch break! But in Mulyavardhan, the competencies are much more important than the values, because the values are ingrained in these competencies.

Let’s first define “competency”

Competency is often confused with having a skill. While skill is required to develop a competency, to become competent in something requires regular application of that skill. This consistent application develops the in depth knowledge of the skill leading to the competency of the skill. To illustrate, think of when you learnt how to drive. At first you only had the skill of starting the car, moving it from point A-B, etc. Eventually you even managed to get a driving license. However, you were yet to become a competent driver. Driving competence came to you after some years of driving. Some people become competent in a year, others in a 4-5 years. Similarly, think of any other skill and you will see knowing how to do it is only the first part; becoming competent in it requires some years of application.



How can we detect if the values have been learned by the students? Through the five competencies.

The lessons in the teacher activity book are organized in such a way that each unit focuses on certain competencies.

- Unit 1 – Self-Awareness and Self-Management
- Unit 2 – Self-Management and Relationship Skills
- Unit 3 – Responsible Decision Making
- Unit 4 – Social Awareness

[Here](#) is an informative video explaining the competencies with practical examples from other teachers.

In this month’s issue, we will be discussing three competencies:

1. Self-Awareness
2. Self-Management
3. Relationship Skills

For each competency, we will look at how we, the **teachers**, can first develop it within ourselves and then, then how we can help our **students** develop them. This is another resource-heavy issue, as we realized that there are hundreds of teaching sites online that will be helpful for you! They provide stories and advice from teachers on problems that you may also be having in school.

This newsletter issue will pull from online resources, so please go ahead and click on the underlined blue text throughout the newsletter (looks like [this](#).) They will direct you to safe sites with a lot of information.

We hope that you read these resources and share with us what you have learned.



SELF-AWARENESS

-by Pallawi Singh

For Teachers

First, let's look at how we as teachers can work on developing self-awareness in ourselves, as we also need to be more self aware about our thoughts, emotions, actions and views when dealing with the children.

What is Self-Awareness?

Self-awareness is the ability to accurately recognize one's own emotions, thoughts and values and how they influence the behavior of an individual.

SKILLS TO BECOME SELF-AWARE

- Identifying Emotions
- Developing Accurate Self-Perception
- Recognizing our Strengths

SELF-QUESTIONING

Self-questioning is a very good way to become more self-aware. Teachers can ask themselves questions such as the following:

1. Am I taking proactive steps to identify and resolve my own "emotional triggers"?
2. Am I paying attention to what I need to pay attention to?

STRATEGIES

- Do a periodic review of yourself on different types of interaction with students.
- Take consultation from colleagues regarding behavior which are helping or hurting your effectiveness in classroom.



I hope it would help you. You can think about more such questions and come up with your own strategies

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Mindfulness meditation is very important for the teacher to become self-aware.

So many times teachers are present in the class physically but their mind is somewhere else. This situation is called "present body-absent mind". This situation hampers the process of becoming self-aware. Mindfulness meditation can reduce this.

Choose an object of meditation like breath, sound, body sensation, music etc.

Sit in an upright posture

Put your attention on your breath or other objects of meditation.

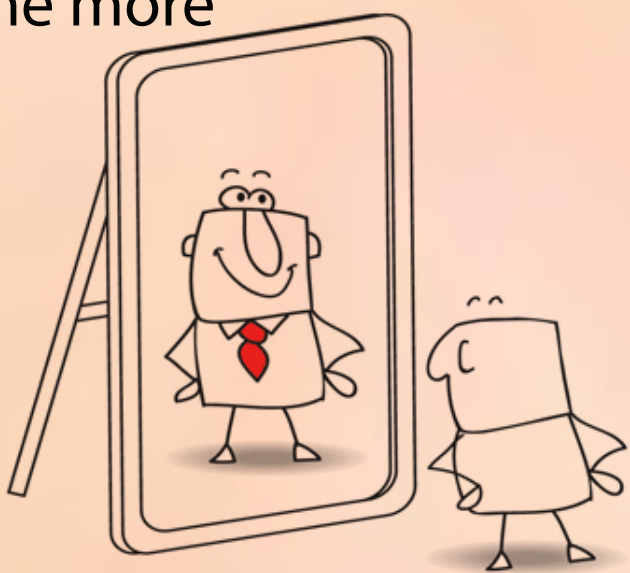
When your mind strays, bring back your attention on the meditation object.

For more information about mindfulness in the classroom, read this [article](#).

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE IN TEACHING

Self-reflection is very important to become more self-aware.

By reflecting upon yourself, you know your success and your struggles in the classroom.



REFLECTIVE PRACTICES

SELF-REFLECTIVE JOURNAL

After each lesson simply jot down few notes describing your reaction.

VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING

This is important because it captures moment-to-moment teaching processes.

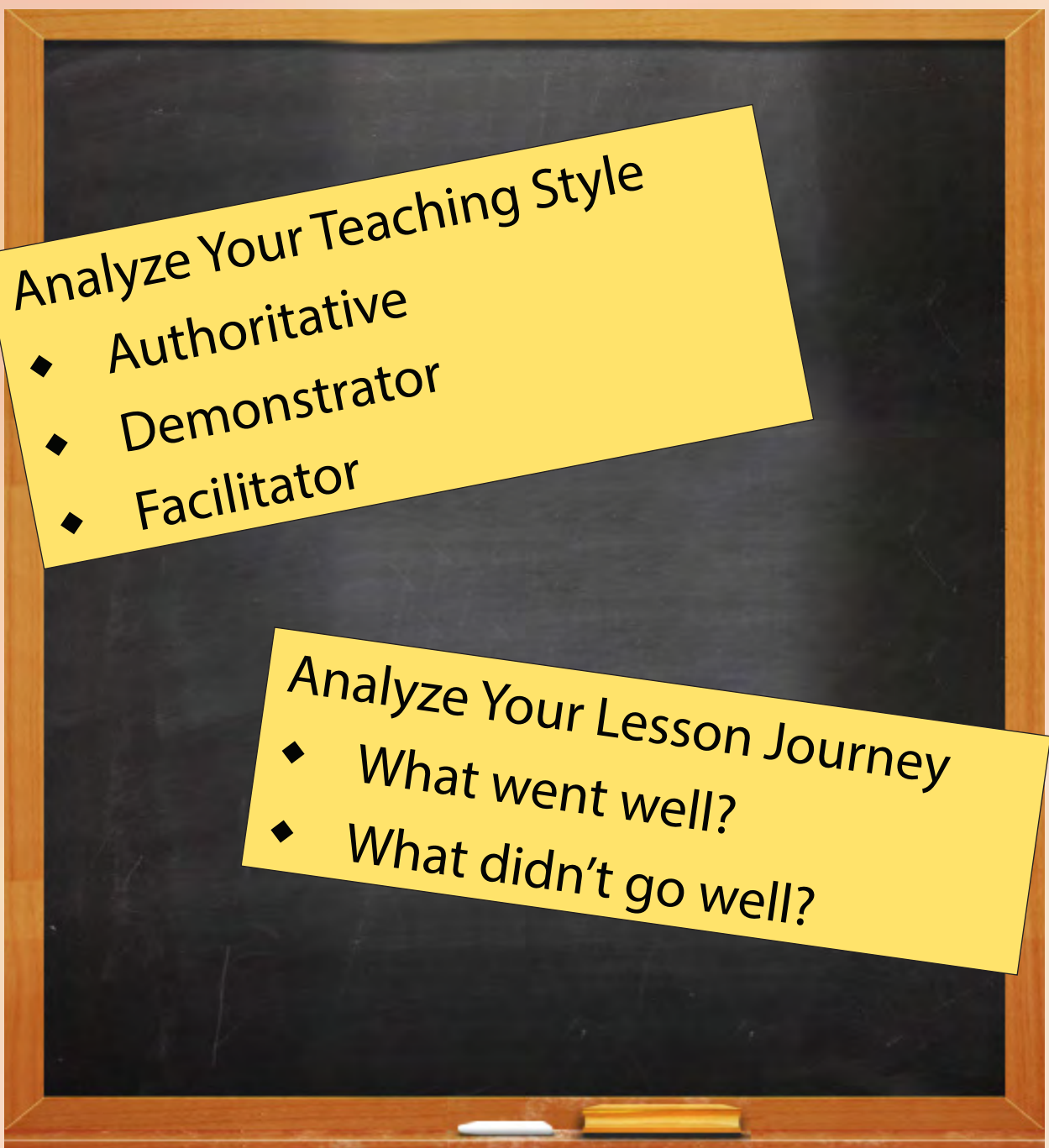
PEER OBSERVATION

Invite a colleague to observe your teaching to give you honest feedback.

To know more about reflective practices, you can watch this [video](#).

SELF-ANALYSIS

You can also analyze your own teaching style in the classroom.



To know more, check out this [video](#).

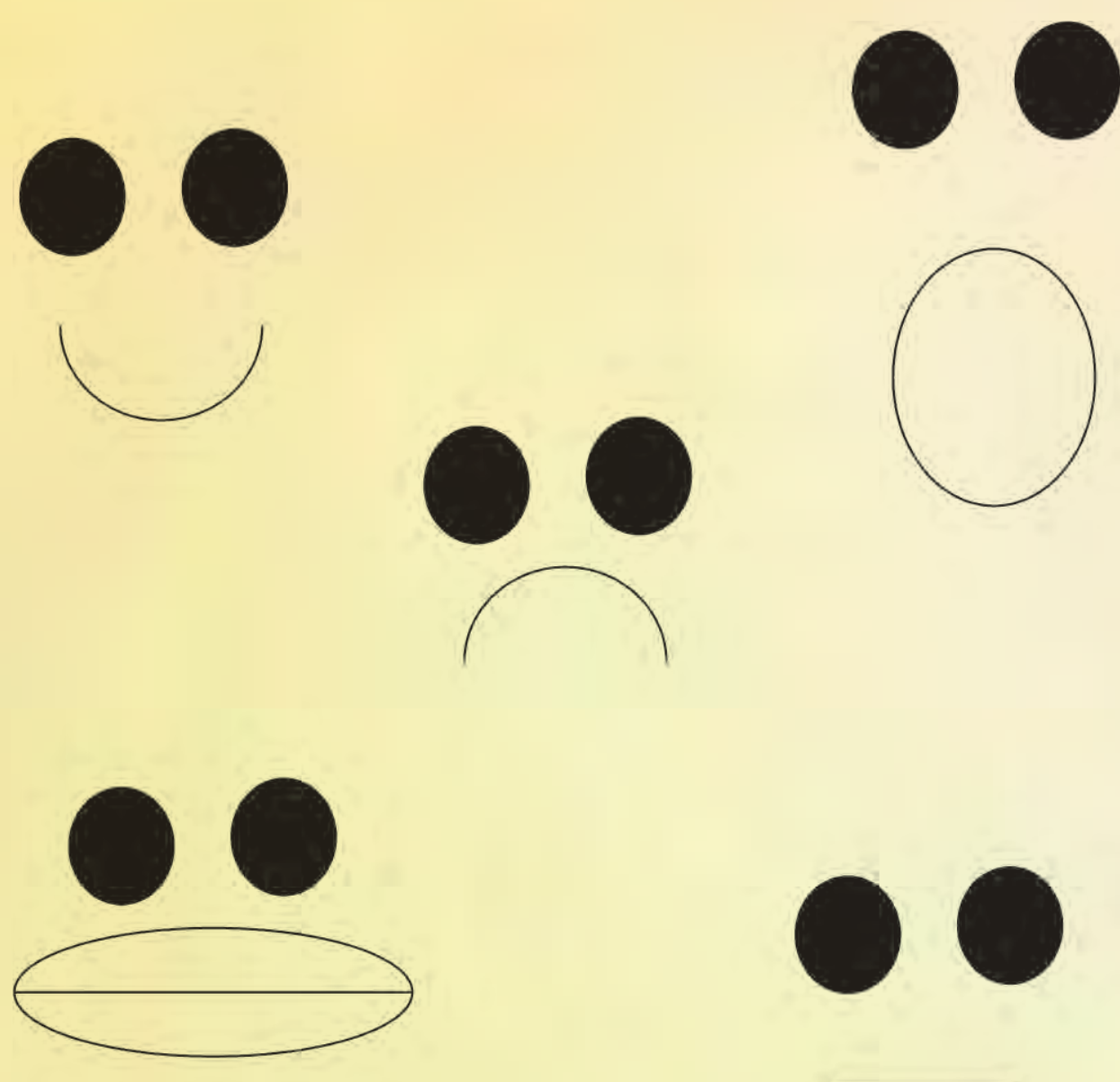
For Students

Self-awareness is an important competency for children to have too. Every child has their own set of emotions, triggers, experiences and events and when they enter the classroom, they bring all these with them. It is important for teachers to help students become self-aware about how these previous experiences have shaped them to become the person they are.

HELP CHILDREN TO IDENTIFY THEIR EMOTIONS

Try this activity:

1. Make emotion cards. It is difficult to define the word “emotion”. Draw a different face, like the ones below, on each card.
2. Show each card to the students and ask them to identify the faces. Ask them to mimic the faces. Ask them when they feel angry, upset, happy, etc.
3. Praise their self-expression. Tell them that it is good to express their emotions.



To learn more, please read this [article](#) and watch this [video](#).

PLAY ACTIVITIES AND GAMES

Children always love to play games and activities. We can teach them a lot through this teaching method. There are many activities about self-awareness online. Teachers have already used “My Identity” activity with 1st and 2nd standard children as this activity has been given in our MV teacher activity books. Teachers can use bellow mentioned activities with 3rd and 4th standard children by using given links.

- You can conduct “My Identity” to help students understand who they are.
- Try the self-awareness worksheet for the older students.

Here is the “[My Identity](#)” activity and “[Self-awareness worksheet](#)”

ASKING QUESTIONS IS EFFECTIVE

Teachers can ask different kind of questions to make children aware about their choices, actions and consequences.

Asking the 4 WHATS

What did you do?

What was the consequence of what you did?

What could you have done instead?

What would have happened if you'd have done that?

For details information about 4 WHATS, read this [article](#).

SELF-ASSESSMENT AND SELF-REFLECTION

Self-assessment and self-reflection are important processes to become self-aware. Teachers need to work on these two things along with the children. Self-assessment and reflection will help children to understand their day to day behaviours and emotions in a better way.

Positive self-talk is a great way for children for self-assess and self-reflect.

To know more about the positive self-talk for self-assessment and reflection, please check out this [video](#).



For Teachers

Once you've taken a look at Pallawi's resources about self-awareness, the next thing is to consider self-management. When we break down the definition of this competency, self-management has a few components.

- regulating our emotions and thoughts
- managing our behaviour
- managing stress
- controlling impulses
- motivating oneself
- the ability to set and work toward personal and academic goals.

First, let's look at how these points can be developed within ourselves.



HANDLING OUR EMOTIONS

In the classroom, especially one with 50-60 students, it's easy for us to get frustrated and angry, but children have a strong understanding of when the teacher is able to handle the class and when she is not. The emotions that we show in front of them, especially anger and frustration, affect our mental well being and also don't help in classroom management. Getting these emotions under control will make your job as a teacher much easier. I'd like to share the times that I was angry and frustrated in the classroom, based on three points that are from this [article](#).

"Understand what angers you." -

There were times when my primary students weren't involved in my lessons and were acting up because they didn't want to sit through my class! As a result, I was constantly getting angry with my students. But then, after reflecting on the root cause of this, I realized that my students were getting bored because I lectured too much. So, I changed my lesson plan to include more activities and channels for them to express.

"Make sure you never get into a shouting match with your students."

I've never had a shouting match with my students, but sometimes they did pass unnecessary comments and frustrate me as a result. Commenting on their comments encouraged them to make even more comments, because it became entertaining to them! This takes away from important teaching time and definitely worsens relations between the teacher and the student.

"Make sure to handle your stress/anger in positive ways."

After a full day in the classroom, I spent my evening doing something that allowed me to relax and take important time for myself. I went for a walk and listened to music. Sometimes, on an especially difficult day, I'd write a list of the things that made me angry and stressed and then I'd make a plan for each point. For example:

o Yelled at a student for not sitting in his place at all.

Tomorrow, I will give him task that require moving around so that he can expel his energy in a productive rather than disruptive way.



SMILE!

A lot of the feedback that I gave during observations is to SMILE! Make sure your students can see that you are enjoying the

class. They are at an age where they want to see a teacher who enjoys spending time with them. Research says that simply by smiling, we feel happier. Research also suggests that smiling in times of stress and anger can alleviate the tension. So put on a happy face when you're teaching, and your students will too!



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN OUR BRAIN?

Though this is a video for children it can teach us about why we get angry and emotional. It explains the science of emotions – especially anger - through pictures. Once you watch this, maybe you can share what you learned with your students! Watch it [here](#).

TEACHER "BURNOUT"

We understand that you have so many things to do as a teacher and it's difficult to stay motivated sometimes.

The constant chaos and the administrative duties and, yes of course, actually teaching can sometimes be absolutely exhausting. This is called teacher "burnout". There are ways to manage this burnout.

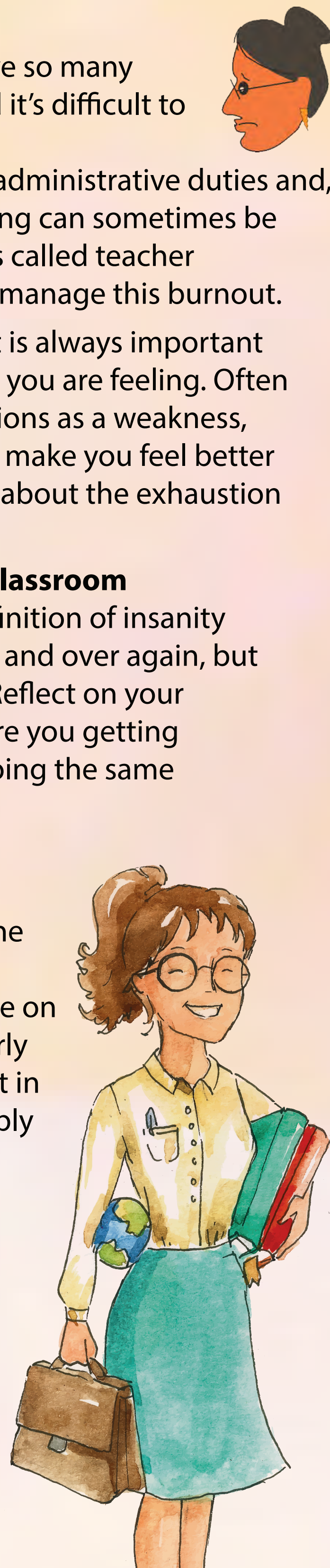
Find someone to talk to – It is always important to express the emotions that you are feeling. Often we think of expressing emotions as a weakness, but that's not the case. It will make you feel better to talk to someone you trust about the exhaustion that you're feeling.

Try something new in the classroom

Albert Einstein said: "The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again, but expecting different results." Reflect on your teaching in the classroom. Are you getting exhausted because you're doing the same thing repeatedly?

Try something new!

Slow down – You have a lot on your plate each day. Try the mindfulness meditation that Pallawi suggested in the page on self-awareness. I do this nearly every day to be more present in the moment and it is incredibly helpful! For more tips, read through this [article](#).



For Students

Now that you know what self-management looks like in you, the teacher, let's look at how you can develop this in your students.



SETTING GOALS



We as teachers need to know how to help students, even at an early age, set and work towards goals, in and out of school. Teach your students goal-setting. There are many lesson plans available online for this.

This is an example of a goal-setting

template from this [website](#), which also has a few lesson plans as well.

There are activities in the 3rd and 4th standard Teacher Activity Books that focus on making short-term and long-term goals as well!



MANAGING EMOTIONS

Student emotions are firstly to be seen as legitimate expressions of self. Primary students act as they feel, and sometimes that leads to fights and inappropriate behaviours in the classroom.

We'd like to remind you that there are activities in each standard's Teacher Activity book that will help students recognize and manage their emotions.



CONTROLLING IMPULSES

Many students in the primary ages are impulsive. They behave how they feel. If they are angry, some throw a tantrum or fight. When they're happy, they jump up and down. If they're bored, they'll get up and walk around. You can play a game like "red light green light". This game's rules can be found in this [video](#), along with a few tips on recognizing impulsive behaviour in the classroom.



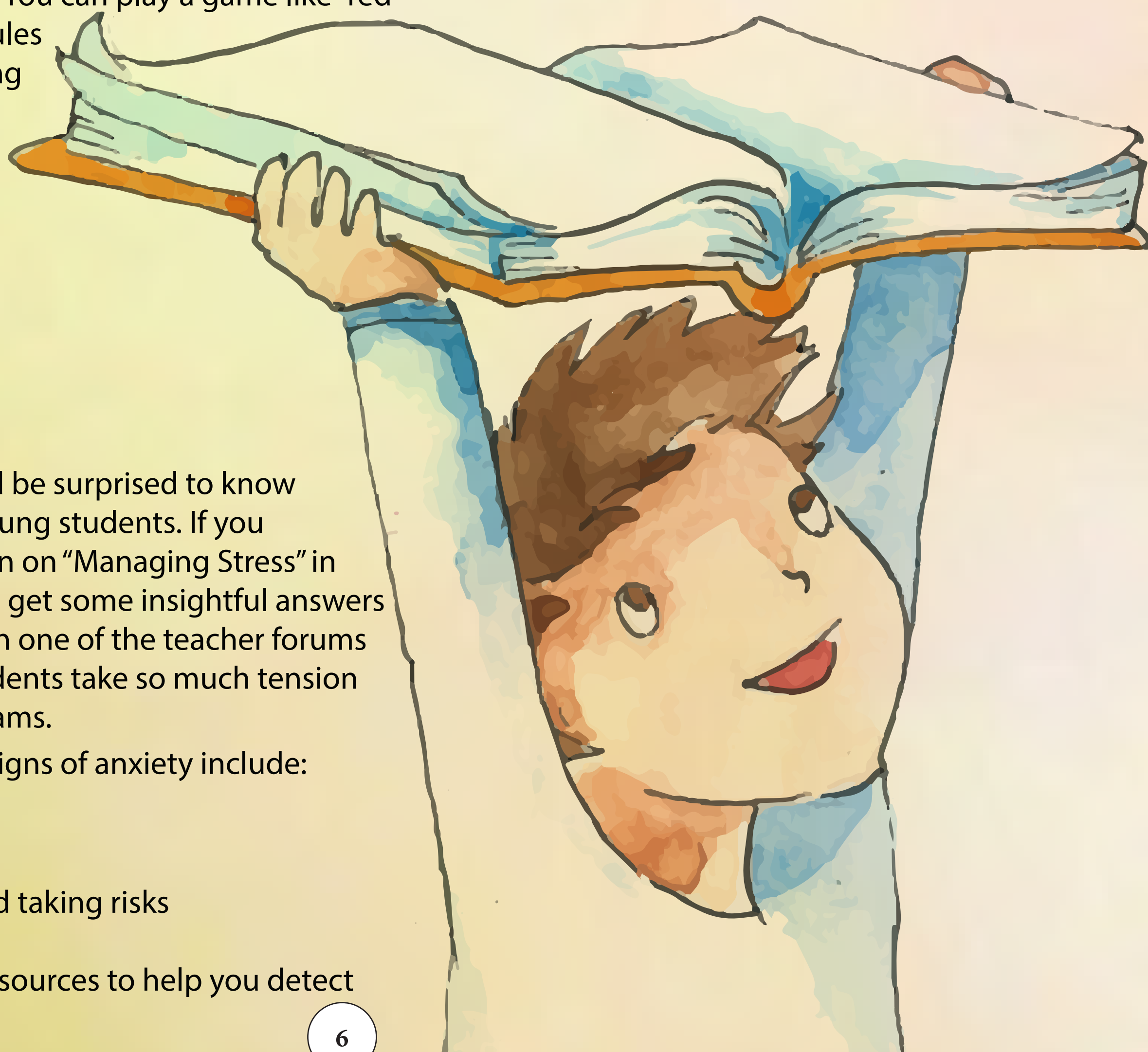
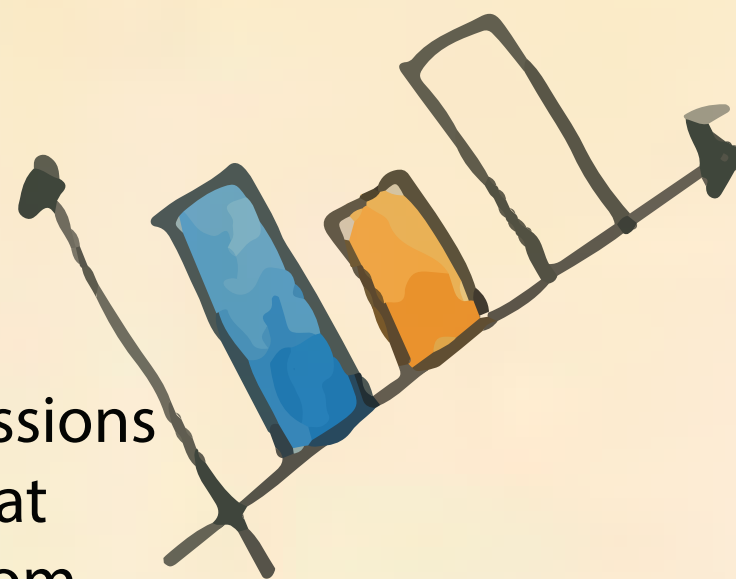
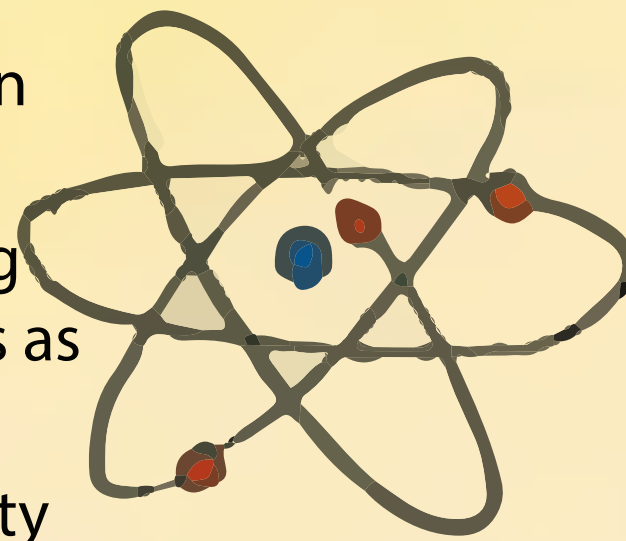
STRESSED OUT!

Stress? In primary school? You'd be surprised to know that it actually does exist for young students. If you conduct the 4th standard lesson on "Managing Stress" in the teacher activity book, you'll get some insightful answers from your students. A teacher in one of the teacher forums was surprised that primary students take so much tension about their schoolwork and exams.

A reaction to stress is anxiety. Signs of anxiety include:

- Showing a lot of fear
- Becoming upset very easily
- Avoiding new situations and taking risks

This [website](#) has many more resources to help you detect anxiety in your students.



Relationship skills - The ability to...

- listen well and communicate clearly
- establish and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals/groups
- cooperate with others
- resist inappropriate social pressure, negotiate conflict constructively, and seek and offer help when needed

Let's look at the four main components of relationship skills!



COMMUNICATION

Using verbal and nonverbal skills to express oneself and promote positive and effective changes with others.

Research suggests that effective classroom communication between the teacher and the student is essential for positive student outcomes. Teachers can work on their communication skills by doing the following:

1. Repeating your instructions in a variety of ways -

Many students do not listen to verbal instructions the first

time they hear them. Try using different communication tools especially visual aids to hold student's attention. Give the students something to either look at or hold for your instructions to be clearly understood, e.g. give students worksheets that outline your points when teaching an especially tough topic. **Don't forget simple instructions can be repeated by one of the students.**

2. Communicating respectfully -

This includes active listening which means making eye contact, not interrupting and focusing on the speaker.

This skill is caught by the students from the adults around them who model such communication. Respect begets respect. Teachers who are respectful of the students in turn get students who are respectful of the teacher.

3. Checking for understanding -

Asking students "have you understood?" is the least effective way to gauge if they have truly followed your instructions. All you will hear is a chorus "yes teacher". Instead ask students to summarize what they have understood, or to explain it to the class or write a sentence of what they followed in their notebooks or form a question they can ask their friends.

4. Non-verbal communication -

Effective communication is incomplete without non-verbal cues. Showing irritation (even though you don't verbally discourage) when a student asks a question will dissuade the student from asking questions. Teachers who use gestures and animated facial expressions infuse enthusiasm in their teaching which in turn creates enthusiasm in the students for the teacher and the subject.

This [video](#) is a simple animated story that highlights the different ways in which "whole-body listening" takes place. Play this video in class. Pause after every few minutes to ask students what they understand about whole-body listening and also to demonstrate what they're learning.

[Source](#)



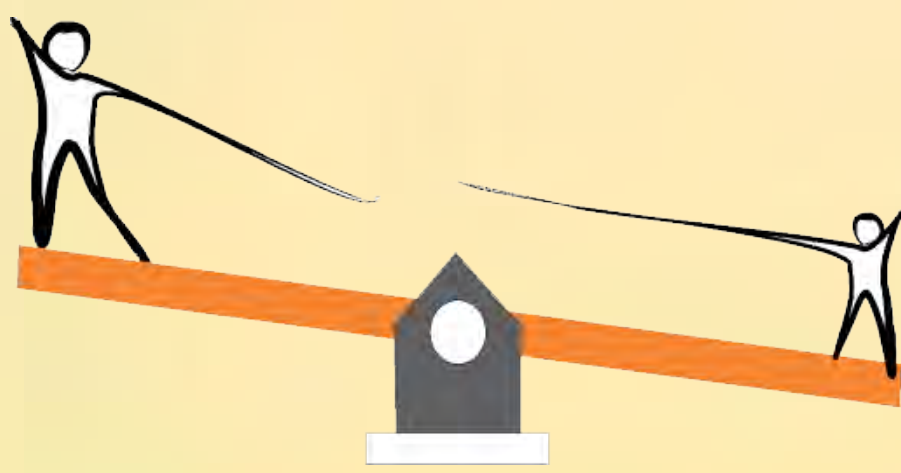
BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

Establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding connections with individual and groups

Research suggests that a positive relationship has lasting impact on the health of any individual. A strong and positive relationship with teachers helps students develop into well adjusted individuals in later life. Teachers can start developing positive relationships with their students by doing the following

- Greet students by their name in the morning
- Ask about their feelings
- Ask about their life outside of school
- Ask about their hobbies and interests
- Have lunch with them once in a while
- Recognize birthdays in some way
- Send positive messages about the child to the parents
- Make home visits
- Share something personal about yourself
- Spend time playing with them

Teachers can also show [this](#) simple animated picture story with easy to understand narration. This video sensitizes students to the differences among themselves while promoting empathy and a feeling of acceptance for all. Teachers can then discuss relationship challenges within the classroom and brainstorm along with students to come up with solutions



NEGOTIATION

Achieving mutually satisfactory resolutions to conflict by addressing the needs of all connected.

When you find students in conflict, the goal is not for **you** to end the conflict immediately but to make that conflict a learning opportunity for **students** to learn conflict resolution skills. As students become competent in this skill they deal with conflict in non-aggressive ways and this decreases aggression in the classroom. Coach students to work through conflict by explaining the following:

1. Understand

To do this, everyone needs to:

- say what they feel about it (without interruptions).
- listen to what other people have to say about their feelings (without interrupting them).
- try to put themselves in the other person's shoes and try to understand their point of view.

2. Avoid making things worse

To do this, no one will :

- Say anything nasty, scream, shout, hit etc

3. Work together

- Say what you feel without blaming the other person
- Take turns at speaking. You might even want to decide on a time limit for each person
- Talk quietly. A loud nasty voice makes everyone upset and unwilling to listen. Write down what you each see as the problem and then read what the other person has written.

4. Find the solution

Once you have listened to each other and found what the problem is, then you need to look for a solution.

Possible outcomes

- Yes/Yes - when both of you are pleased with what you worked out
- Yes/No - when one side is happy because they got what they wanted and the other is sad because they didn't get what they wanted
- No/No - when neither side is happy because nobody got what they wanted

[Source](#)



REFUSAL



Effectively conveying and following through with one's decision not to engage in unwanted, unsafe, unethical conduct.

Whether it is the fear of hurting others, trying to avoid conflict or just wanting to be a more agreeable person, students often fall prey to peer pressure. This [video](#) about an elephant named Babar will help teachers build their student's ability to say "NO" to negative peer pressure. The video has many incidents where the main character (Babar) is faced with the dilemma of either accompanying his friends in doing something he knows to be reckless and dangerous or refusing to go along. The story provides opportunities for teachers to pose open ended questions to students such as:

- What would you have done if you were in Babar's shoes?
- How can you say no when your friends ask you to do something you know to be wrong?

Emphasize that succumbing to negative peer pressure is never the correct choice to make. Teachers who do not have the means to show this video in class can narrate the story to their students.

FEBRUARY TEACHER FORUMS

February 16 th forum at St. Joseph's School, Calangute	February 20 th forum at Mary Immaculate School, Panjim
	
Manuel Fernandes, Saint Xavier Vidyalaya, Korgao; Llvenda Fernandes, Our Lady of Grace Primary School, Bicholim; Rosaria Fernandes, St. Joseph's Primary School, Calangute; Roanne De Souza, Our Lady of Mount Carmel School, Arambol.	Sony Coelho, St. Ann's, Tivim; Preeta Afonso, Mary Immaculate, Panaji; Mercy D'lima, St. Ann's, Tivim; InaciaColaco, St. Andrew's, Old Goa; Glinda Saldanha, St. Theresa, St. Estevan; Ana Fernandes, Santa Cruz; Eny K. Fernandes e D'Souza, Our Lady of the Rosary, Dona Paula; Monica Vaz, St. Mary of the Angels, Chinchnim

Some of the topics that we discussed in this forum:

- 1. Using cooperative learning structures in other classes
- 2. How to tell Mulyavardhan stories to a multilingual classroom
- 3. Challenges with including differently abled students in the MV activities

Thank you to all the teachers who attended!

Your insights are very valuable to us. To anyone curious to know what we discussed, we will be sending transcripts once again on the WhatsApp groups.


Thank you to Sister Jasmine for helping us with the arrangements and to St. Joseph's School, Calangute and Mary Immaculate School, Panjim for hosting us.

We hope that you found this issue to be informative and useful! Our next issue will cover the competencies of social awareness and responsible decision making and tie them to our two remaining values of responsibility and active contribution.

We truly rely on your feedback when creating these newsletters. We hope that these resources are helping you, so please do send us your thoughts on your WhatsApp group.



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