



Understanding Fear

Activity from “Singing to the Lions”

Activity Description

Using the guided visualization and guided breathing exercise, the facilitator will help participants understand what our fear is and how we feel it in our bodies. By the end of the activity, participants will have a better understanding of how our bodies hold our emotions and how we can calm our stronger emotions.

Facilitator Notes

Understanding the nature of fear helps us reduce our panic and responses to that fear.

Purpose

For Participants to Learn
How Fear Affects Us
and What We Can Do
to Calm Our Fears.



Activity Guide

Recognizing Fear Exercise

Facilitator says: Fear is a natural way our body and mind goes through when we are put in scary situations. A little bit of fear can actually help us. It prepares us to face danger.

Visualization

Facilitator says: Sit down with your eyes closed. Imagine that you had to work late at school or stayed at a friends house longer than usual: you are walking down the street alone and you know that it is not a safe place. How do you feel? What is happening in your body? Notice how you heart may beat faster. You start to hear noises more clearly. You are more alert.

Imagine that you start walking under the light, where you can be safe, or you see your home around the corner. This little bit of fear helps you avoid a dangerous situation. *(everyone can open their eyes now)*

Ask participants to share their feelings of fear vs. safety

Facilitator asks: Can you see how a little bit of fear can help you?



Recognizing Fear Exercise

Part 2: Calming Paralyzing Fear

Facilitator says: But there are big fears that can be papryzing. Then we need to use “The Long Breath”. When you are very scared, do the Long Breath twice. You are breathing out all you fear. Feel you feet on the floor and how the chair supports your body. You can close your eyes if you wish. Breath in through your nose, filling up your belly first, then your ribs, and then your chest. Take a deep, slow breath in through your nose, 1,2,3, and now breath out slowly thorough your mouth, like you are breathing out through a straw or whistling silently, 1,2,3,4. You are breathing out all of your fears.

Do this breathing in and out one more time.

Facilitator says: When you are ready open your eyes, take time to bring yourself back to the present. How does everyone feel?

Closing

Facilitator says: A little bit of fear is good because it makes the heart beat faster and makes us alert. It also makes our sight and hearing very good. We are ready or action. But when we have big fears we can become paralyzed. Then we can stop and take time to do the “Long Breath” to help us process our fear.