

SEPTEMBER: OPTIMISTIC THINKING

Sample Kindness Club Meeting, High School

All Activities, tools, etc. shown here are suggestions. Please feel free to substitute and/or modify as needed. Visit your [Resource Library](#) for tools, videos, speaker ideas, etc.

If your meetings are online, be sure to notify participants in advance about any materials needed so they'll have their supplies ready.

Optimistic Thinking: Having gratitude & feeling hopeful; even in challenging times, understanding those things we can control and confidently directing our actions toward the positive.

1. **"Check in"** (How are we feeling? Welcome to our time today. What are you grateful for today?) As participants join the meeting virtually or in person, have a white board available with the following prompt: "If I were a song, today my song would be". Invite them to write their answer on the white board. They can give their names or post anonymously.

Because this is the first meeting, begin with an introduction about KM365. Then explain that we will begin each meeting this year with a check-in to help us focus on where we are emotionally today and think about where we'd like to be. This helps us become present for the meeting. Today's check-in was the song activity.

2. **KM365 Tool** (focus and get present with breathing/movement from the KM365 online toolbox or use your own.) This is another new component to our meetings this year. Mindfulness is the act of becoming present through monotasking (focusing only on the task at hand). We'll learn lots of tools to help us practice mindfulness so that we have options for times in our lives when we need to become present.

Today's tool is Becoming Present:

<https://kindnessmatters365.org/2020/09/11/becoming-present-breathing-exercise/>

Deploying mindfulness throughout our day helps us to reduce stress, even through a task as simple as handwashing. Focus on washing one's hands with care and noticing the sensations of the water and the soap. You can repeat the words we learned in Here and Now, or choose your own.



Your Notes

3. **"Attitude of Gratitude"** We'll cover this during our activity today.
4. **Review & Intro** Optimistic Thinking is seeing the positive in every difficulty. Refer also to the definition at the top of meeting plan. Let's hear some more about Optimism from Dido Balla:
https://kindnessmatters365.org/2020/07/13/how-to-cultivate-optimism-dido-balla/?tx_category=optimistic-thinking,type-speaker
5. **Discussion/KINDNESS IN ACTION** Mindfulness fosters gratitude
> Gratitude fosters optimism > Optimism has positive impacts on our stress levels and on our physical and mental well-being.

In addition to using mindfulness tools to help foster optimism, there are 2 actions we can take to foster gratitude in our lives.

The first is to create a gratitude journal and write down 2 -3 things you are grateful for. You can do it last thing in the evening or first thing in the morning. It can be done daily or every couple days. And you don't need a fancy journal to do it. It can be on plain paper, a standard notebook, or on the back of paper from the recycling bin. Write or draw them. And work hard to make them meaningful. Today, we invite everyone to try. Using paper or a notebook, jot down 3 things for which you are grateful.

The second way we can foster our own sense of gratitude is to write a letter or make a piece of artwork of gratitude to someone who has made a positive impact in our lives. Make it heartfelt and sincere and be sure to give details on the impact the person has had.

When you are finished with your letter/artwork, take time to send it. Gratitude impacts us positively when we give it AND when we receive it.

6. **Reflection:** How can you make a difference using what you learned today?
7. **Peace Pledge:** Decide as a group if you want to use the Kids for Peace pledge found in the Resource Library or if the club would like to develop their own.
8. **Wrap Up** Explain to club members how you will communicate with them about upcoming meetings/events/etc.

If you have a club page/group online, encourage club members to post to the group if they hear back from the person to whom they sent their letter/artwork.

Materials Required:

- paper/notebook
- pencils/pens/crayons/markers
- envelope
- stamps

Remember: If your meeting is virtual, give participants the list of materials they'll need ahead of time.

9. **Follow Up** Submit [Ambassador Report](#). Start a social media post where club members can reply with how their letters were received.

Contact Ambassador Support at
AmbassadorSupport@kindnessmatters365.org with questions or comments.

