

### Worries Are Like Clouds – Jar of Joy

<b>Designed for Ages</b>	3 - 5 years old
<b>Adaptable for Ages</b>	2 - 8 years old
<b>Learning Experience Description:</b>	This is the first learning experience in the Worries Are Like Clouds unit. This unit engages the picture book: <i>Worries Are Like Clouds</i> and helps children explore what joy is, how it feels in their body, and how they can express joy in a healthy way.
<b>Te Whāriki (Aotearoa New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum):</b>	<a href="#">Mana Reo (Communication)</a> <a href="#">Mana atua (Well-being)</a>
<b>Te Whare Tapa Whā (Māori model for well-being):</b>	<a href="#">Taha hinegaro (Mental &amp; emotional)</a>
<b>Te Whare o Oro (Māori framework for understanding the brain):</b>	Limbic system: emotional regulation, affiliation and tolerance.
<b>Tapasā (Cultural competency resource for teachers working with Pacific learners):</b>	Turu 1: Identities, languages, and cultures
<b>Materials:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Picture book: <i>Worries are Like Clouds</i> by Shona Innes and Írisz Agócs. <a href="#">Video version available on YouTube.</a></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Music for an upbeat song that the children can dance to.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Jar/container x 1</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Paper (enough so each child has a 3-8 small pieces)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Pencils/crayons/paint x enough for each child</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Scissors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Optional:</i> Items to embellish the children's drawings with. i.e. glitter pens, stickers, feathers, fabric, etc.</li> </ul>	
<b>Things to consider:</b> <p>This is the first learning experience in the unit: <i>Worries are Like Clouds</i>. Learning Experience #1 and #2 can be facilitated on the same day or on separate days. You can also choose to only do Learning Experience #1 or #2.</p> <p>This learning experience uses the picture book: <i>Worries Are Like Clouds</i>. If you cannot access the book or show the video reading on YouTube, you can use another book that talks about worries or even omit the book completely.</p>	



### Prepare ahead:

Cut the paper into smaller pieces for the children to draw things that bring them joy.

### Instructions:

1. Gather the children in a quiet area where you can read without distractions.
2. **Read the picture book *Worries are Like Clouds*** to the children.
3. Reflective questions:
  - What are worries? (You may need to explain to the children what “worry” means).
  - What sort of worries do you think the elephant might have?
  - Where do you think the goose feels worry in their body?
  - What do you feel in your body when you are worried?
  - What are some things the animals did to help them deal with their worries?
4. **Share with the children: “I’ve heard that sometimes when people or animals are feeling sad or worried, they like to dance to feel better.”**
5. Ask the children, “I wonder if we might do some dancing together and pretend to be different animals while we dance?”
6. To **guide the children through mindful dance movement**, before you turn the music on, pick an animal from the book and explore with the children how they could move their body to look like that animal dancing. For example, if you choose the panda, you might ask the children to demonstrate with their bodies:
  - What might a panda look like dancing in the rain?
  - Would they make big movements or little movements with their legs?
  - Would they wave their arms?
  - How might they like to splash in puddles?

After you have explored different movements with the children, **then you can turn the music on and invite the children to dance like that animal.** You can repeat this process with multiple animals.
7. When you get to the final animal, you can encourage the children to line up behind you, dancing like that animal and following you until you get to the drawing table. This is a transitional movement to avoid the children’s attention straying, but you can modify as needed.
8. When the **children are sitting at the drawing table**, ask them: **“How did it feel when you were pretending to be dancing in the rain?”**
9. Remind the children that they can always try dancing like different animals when they feel sad or worried, just to see if that helps them feel differently.
10. Bring the book back out (or just remind the children of the part of the book) and re-read the page that says “When we have such wonderful days we wish we could bottle them, or somehow keep them with us to look at and feel again another day.”



11. **Ask the children: “What are some ways that we can remind ourselves of our happy days?” and appreciate each answer suggested.**
12. **Share with the children: “As a group, we can keep all of these ideas and put them into our very own Jar of Joy!** We can draw or write things on a piece of paper that make us happy. Then we can fill the jar with all our pieces of paper. That way we have a memory box of things that make us happy. And when we feel like we need some extra joy in our life we can go to the jar and pull out a piece of paper.”
13. **Ask the students:** “When might someone need a little more joy? When might they want to take a piece of paper from the Jar of Joy?”  
*Variation: Instead of making one jar for your whole group, each child could make their own jar.*  
*Optional: You may want to brainstorm a list with the children what brings them joy.*
14. Show the children the jar that they get to fill. **Give each child some pieces of paper. Invite them to draw or write a happy memory,** something or someone that makes them happy, or a joyful drawing. If you have the materials, you can offer the children glitter glue, stickers or other embellishments to add to their paper.  
*Optional: if you have additional craft materials (i.e. ribbon, feathers, stickers, glitter, fabric etc.) you can ask the children if they want to add any of that to the drawings. You can also connect these different materials to the children’s senses by asking them what feels (via touch) happy to them, what smells happy, what makes a noise that makes them happy, etc.*
15. Once the children have finished, **invite the children to share what they drew, write down what they describe on the paper,** and then put the papers in the jar.
16. Inquire with the children where there might be a safe and accessible place to keep their Jar of Joy within their learning space. Place it there together so everyone can see it and use it when necessary.

*Optional: you can let the children continually add to the Jar of Joy. It can also be helpful if you model using the Jar of Joy.*

*You could also pull something from the Jar of Joy each morning as a gratitude ritual to start your day.*