



Helping teachers work with children when they first return to education following major traumatic or life-changing events

Worries Are Like Clouds – Worry Box

Designed for Ages	3 - 5 years old
Adaptable for Ages	2 - 8 years old
Learning Experience Description:	This is the second learning experience in the <i>Worries Are Like Clouds</i> unit. This unit works with the picture book: <i>Worries Are Like Clouds</i> and supports children to explore what worry is, how it feels in their body, and how they can express worry in a healthy way.
Te Whāriki (Aotearoa New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum):	Mana Reo (Communication) Mana atua (Well-being)
Te Whare Tapa Whā (Māori model for well-being):	Taha hinegaro (Mental & emotional)
Te Whare o Oro (Māori framework for understanding the brain):	Limbic system: emotional regulation, affiliation and tolerance.
Tapasā (Cultural competency resource for teachers working with Pacific learners):	Turu 1: Identities, languages, and cultures
Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Picture book: <i>Worries are Like Clouds</i> by Shona Innes and Írisz Agócs. Video version available on YouTube. <input type="checkbox"/> Shoebox or other small box to use as a worry box. <input type="checkbox"/> Art materials for decorating the box, i.e. coloured paper, paint, stickers, pom poms, glue, scissors. <input type="checkbox"/> Paper x one per child. <input type="checkbox"/> Crayons/Pencil Crayons x one per child. 	
Things to consider: <p>This is the second learning experience in the unit: <i>Worries are Like Clouds</i>. Learning Experience #1 and #2 can be facilitated on the same or 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 omit the book completely.</p> <p>You can modify the box activity to incorporate a different emotion other than worry depending on the needs of your children.</p>	



Prepare ahead:

Cut a hole in a shoebox where the children can insert their paper that holds their worries.

Instructions:

If you haven't read the story with the children, now is a great time to do so. If you have already worked on Learning Experience #1, you can re-read the book or simply reference it with the children as below:

1. **Return to the page of the book where the elephant looks sad and there are clouds raining on him. Ask the children: "What do you think the elephant is feeling? Why might the elephant be feeling that way?"**
2. Ask the children: "What do we think a worry cloud looks like? How might it move?" **Invite the children to use their bodies and act out being a worry cloud.** Encourage them to move around the room as if they are a worry cloud.
3. Invite the children to pause from being worry clouds and ask them:
 - **Are there times maybe kids might feel like that?**
 - **How can you tell if someone is feeling worried?**
 - **What are things you can say to your friend who is worried?**
4. Ask the children: "What do we sometimes see after rainy dark clouds? Rainbows!" "How can we use our bodies to make a rainbow? How do rainbows move? How do you think it feels to be a rainbow?" **Invite the children to use their bodies and act out being a rainbow - this might include creating movements for each colour, creating a conga line, or simply using arms to sway in an arc shape.**
5. Ask the children: "**Someday it feels that we have more worry clouds than rainbows. Do you think we could build something to hold our worries for us?**" Then we would not have to hold them in our mind, heart and body? What could we maybe build?"
6. Share with the children that we are going to make a **magical worry box today**. (If possible, you can adapt the Magical Worry Box to whatever one of their ideas was) This box is magical because it can worry *for us* so we do not have to be worried.
7. Move the children towards the crafting area and bring out the box to be decorated.
8. Share with the children that we get to **decorate our worry box** however we would like. Offer them a selection of art materials to decorate with and to each take turns with their suggestions and additions. While they are decorating, you may want to ask them questions about why they are decorating it in a certain way, how we can show that it is magical from the outside, etc.



Note: this part may be best facilitated by taking smaller groups of children to decorate the box at a time. Or some children can decorate the box while others can draw worries.

9. Let the children know that when they have a worry, they can put it in the worry box. Suggest to them that the **worry box works especially well when we first tell someone what we put on our paper before we put it in the box.**
10. You could invite children to **draw a worry** on a piece of paper.
11. Invite the children to **share what their worry** is with someone else. Perhaps a teacher / older child can also help to write down what was shared alongside the picture. Invite the children to **put their worry drawing into the box.**
12. Inquire with the children **where they want to keep** the Magical Worry Box.
13. Ask the children: “What can we do with our worries if we do not have a worry box with us?” **Discuss with the children other healthy ways to cope with worries** including, talking to their family, speaking their worries into their hand and blowing them away, dancing their worries away.

On-going use: you can encourage the children to use the worry box on a regular basis. You can even encourage it as part of a daily practice: ask the children if they want to put anything in the worry box when they arrive each day.

Make sure to regularly check through the worry box in case anything is added that needs adult attention.