

Virtue of the Week

Yoga postures and Virtues adapted from *Yoga for Little Bears*

by Monica Batiste

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Virtue of the week

Virtue of the week is an opportunity to grow self-esteem in a joyful and positive way.

Each week a new virtue will be selected. The virtue will be described, and there will be fun activities which may include games, colouring in pages, or yoga postures designed to help grow each virtue.

For schools, virtue activities and yoga postures fit into the National Curriculum under PDHPE.

There is no charge for this service, however we do ask that you share our emails or website with anyone that may benefit.

Motivation



Write the word MOTIVATION on some paper or card and paste it on your wall to show everyone that enters your room, that motivation is the virtue of the week.

What is motivation?

Motivation is the spark of energy that you use to reach your goals. Motivation is high when you believe in yourself, and low when you have doubts. Reduce doubts by having faith in your great ideas and selecting smaller steps towards your goals. Reduce doubts by trusting your intuition that you are on the right path. By reducing doubts and increasing self-belief, you will stay motivated to reach your goals.

How to believe in yourself

Set small goals

Setting goals is a positive step to teach you that you have the desire and the means to do what it is you want. Setting short-term goals will build stronger confidence in order to achieve long-term goals. Growing confidence in a child's abilities will serve them longer than setting specific goals.

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For instance, setting a goal of winning first place means the child may win, or not. Setting a goal of developing skills along the way is always achievable.

Build confidence

Build confidence in children from where they are, not where they want to be, or where you think they should be. One of the virtues yoga builds, is acceptance ‘I am where I am, and it’s okay.’ When you can accept your body and life is where it is, then your brain and body lets go of the resistance to where you are, and moving forward is possible. When a child is reminded they are not where they ‘should’ be in regards to any skill, they will build resistance. The resistance feels like pain, sorrow, grief, disappointment, anger, sadness, and frustration. Acceptance feels like deep breathing. Acceptance feels like ‘okay, I can begin from here.’ Acceptance is the only way to move forward. You cannot be where you are not, but you can move towards a goal from where you are. You cannot move towards a goal if you’re stuck in resistance. Letting go of resistance begins with ‘I am where I am, and it’s okay.’

Build skills

No matter which skill is being developed, virtues can be acknowledged. Each time a virtue is acknowledged, you build a child’s self-worth and self-belief.

How to reduce self-doubt

Select small steps towards new skills and celebrate each small success with a virtue.

Create images of smaller goals, and paste them onto the wall. Whether the goal is to achieve greater health, the completion of a project, or the ability to catch a ball – it doesn’t matter. The objective isn’t to reach goals; it’s to build the self-esteem, which will pave the way for the child to innovate, plan, believe and strive for a wonderful life.

Acknowledging motivation with virtues

Virtues grow with acknowledgments. Every time you witness an act of motivation you acknowledge it by naming the act, naming the virtue, and using the person’s name. This supports the growth of emotional intelligence, including self-esteem, self-awareness, self-love and self-belief.

Examples of virtues acknowledgments are;

‘I see your determination when you finished the race today Tammy, well done.’

‘Herbert I saw your confidence when you stood in front of the class this morning to show us your project. Fantastic work!’

Peggy that was excellent focus during yoga this morning.’

When you offer an acknowledgement, use eye contact (to support neural development), a smile (to show support), a kind voice (to promote positive attachment), and if appropriate, a soft touch on the shoulder (to help anchor the virtue).

Yoga and Motivation

Yoga supports the development of all virtues, as all postures bring out virtues, but some are more evident than others. For example, motivation could be grown through inviting children to identify a challenging

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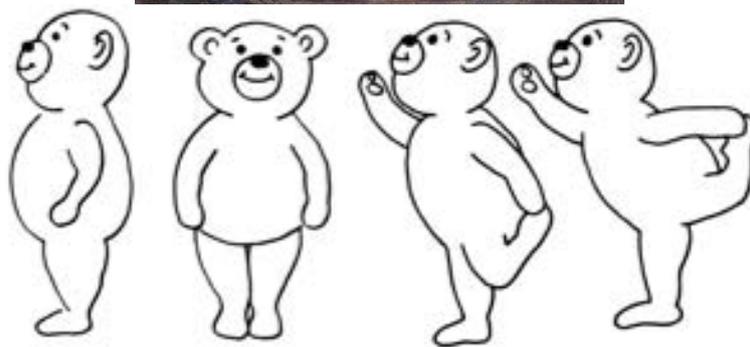
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posture and then working towards its achievement, by breaking it into smaller postures. For instance Dancer's pose requires focus, determination, balance, flexibility and grace to be achieved. From day one, you can acknowledge virtues. For showing up to the yoga mat, you can acknowledge determination, and the confidence for trying something new.

Dancer's pose begins with mountain pose. In mountain pose you can acknowledge confidence and focus. From *Mountain pose*, children move into *Small Tree pose*. Here you can acknowledge focus, balance, flexibility and determination. From *Small Tree pose* the child moves into *Dancer's pose*. You don't have to wait until the final posture is achieved before offering acknowledgement and building self-confidence, belief and motivation.

Motivation can be acknowledged each time a step is taken.

Dancer's pose



Mountain Pose

Small Tree Pose

Dancer's Pose

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How to do Dancer's Pose

Start in *Mountain pose*, breathe in and step right foot forward, hold left foot in left hand (*Small Tree pose*) and stay here for option one. For option two, press foot into hand and lift foot to sky. Reach right hand forward. Press body down, but lift head and heart. Lift leg higher, stay focused and hold for up to thirty seconds, using your breath to stay focused. Look at one spot to help you balance. Return to *Mountain pose* and change sides.

What about you?

Adults can build self-belief by looking for their virtues, and being absolutely kind towards themselves. It has been proven that humans perform more effectively when offered positive reinforcement rather than negative. A lot of adults talk themselves down 'I can't do that. I've never been able to do that. I couldn't.' but most of that is based in the past. Perhaps the adults of the past didn't have the skills to recognise how to build self-esteem? What matters is where you are and how you move forward from here. If you want to build motivation, start from here. Spend 10 minutes in the morning acknowledging the virtues you see in yourself, and 10 minutes in the evening doing the same. Write down your goals and break them down into tiny steps. Celebrate every step. Look at the goal everyday and remind yourself that you are worth it. When motivation wanes, it is time to re-evaluate your goals and boost your self-esteem. You are worth it. Never give up on yourself.

**Yoga postures, activities and colouring in sheets can be downloaded from our website*

<http://www.monicabatiste.com.au/teaching-resources.html>

About Monica

Monica writes stories, paints pictures, and teaches yoga. She is passionate about personal development and believes emotional intelligence is *the key* to helping you create a happy and successful life; whatever that means for you.

She lives in North Brisbane with her lovely husband, Andreas, and between them they have four beautiful daughters, and seven awesome grandchildren.

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