



# PLEASANT EVENTS CALENDAR FOR STUDENTS

*"If your compassion does not include yourself, it is incomplete."*

*—Jack Kornfield*

## OVERVIEW

Students learn to care for themselves by planning enjoyable activities to combat stress and anxiety.

## PLANNING FOR IT

### WHEN YOU MIGHT USE THIS PRACTICE

- When students are feeling overwhelmed or stressed
- When students are operating on “autopilot” and need to take a step back to take care of themselves

### TIME REQUIRED

- ≤ 15 minutes

### LEVEL

- Upper Elementary
- Middle School
- High School
- College

### MATERIALS

- A calendar

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will:

- Understand the value of self-compassion in maintaining their mental health
- Understand that taking time to do things they enjoy is one way to practice self-compassion
- Understand how to prioritize and deliberately plan weekly activities

## SEL COMPETENCIES

- Self-awareness
- Self-management

## HOW TO DO IT

### REFLECTION BEFORE THE PRACTICE

- Think about all the things you enjoy doing that help to relieve your stress.
- How often do you engage in those activities? How do you feel after doing them?
- Try participating in the Pleasant Events Calendar activity before sharing it with your students, or simply join them!

## INSTRUCTIONS

### OVERVIEW

Encourage students to make time to explore their interests and engage in activities they enjoy through the use of a Pleasant Events Calendar. You can think of it as a form of self-care for your students.

### ACTIVITY

1. **Reflect:** Encourage students to think about and write down a list of activities they enjoy doing. These can include hobbies, things they do by themselves, or things they do with friends and/or family.
2. **Schedule:** Ask students to think about their weekly schedule and how often they do those activities. If they do not do them regularly, encourage students to schedule one or two of those activities into their upcoming week.
3. **Follow up:** In a week (or an appropriate time frame), check in with students, and ask if they were able to schedule their pleasant activity into their week.
  - a. *How did it go?*
  - b. *What did you do last week?*
  - c. *Are there other activities you might like to try?*
  - d. *What's the best time of the day or week to schedule fun activities?*

## REFLECTION AFTER THE PRACTICE

How did you and your students feel before, during, and after the activities you scheduled? What adjustments will you make for the coming week?

Consider why it is important to take time to do the things you all enjoy. How can you incorporate these activities into your schedules on a regular basis?

## THE RESEARCH BEHIND THE PRACTICE

### EVIDENCE THAT IT WORKS

Middle schoolers participated in an [eight-session mindfulness course](#) based on a [stress reduction workbook for teens](#); as part of the course, they created a Pleasant Events Calendar. Middle schoolers had greater self-compassion and mindfulness and felt less stress and depression after they completed the course compared to before.

### WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Students experience stress that can feel overwhelming at times. With so many responsibilities on their plates, they may struggle to take care of themselves. Self-compassion, or treating ourselves kindly, provides an opportunity for us to pause, take stock of what we need, and respond with care. And this activity encourages students to proactively integrate more pleasant and enjoyable activities into their weekly schedules.

Ultimately, being self-compassionate may allow students to be more open to receiving and giving care to others. The practice of taking care of and being kind to themselves can help students [reduce stress and increase feelings of curiosity and gratitude](#). And people who grow up into self-compassionate adults have [stronger relationships with their partners](#) and may be more resilient when confronting stressors like a [serious illness](#).

## SOURCE

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