**Mindfulness Matters Mandala ‘Growing & Changing’ www. MindfulnessMatters.ie**

**‘We delight in the beauty of the butterfly,**

**but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty’.**

**Maya Angelou**

The purpose of this Mindfulness Matters mandala is to explore growing and changing.

1. Ask the children to name something that stays the same forever.

They may suggest my school, my friends, my family, my home, my face, my toys etc.

1. Ask if this is really true? Go through some examples e.g. Does the environment stay the same forever? Are the trees always green? If we don’t look after our environment are there changes? Are there changes in our bodies as we grow older, or get taller. Are there changes when we don’t look after our bodies? Are there changes when we look after our bodies well? Explore the topics.
2. Ask them to give you examples of times when they found change difficult, also examples of when they found change easy or enjoyable.
3. Acknowledge that sometimes change can be difficult or scary but not always.
4. Ask if they still feel the same way about that ‘difficult’ situation now. If not what has changed? Is it the situation that has changed again or is it their perspective, the way they see it now? Explain that we all see things differently and how we see things changes over time too. Explain perspective.
5. Change is part of growth physically, mentally and emotionally. Sometimes even if we can’t see it at the time, change can be a positive transformation. Explore this topic using the example below:

The end of life for a caterpillar, it may be scary. Why might this be? Let’s look at what happens?

Ask the children about how a caterpillar moves, how it might feel (from the caterpillar’s perspective) when it is restricted in it’s cocoon.

This change is actually transformation into something more beautiful. Its freedom and happiness. Sometimes on the path to freedom and happiness we go through difficult changes.

1. Let’s take five minutes now to colour our mandala of growing and changing. Take five minutes of quiet time. This is your special time, your mandala time just ‘to be’. Let’s spend five minutes focusing on your special mandala and the freedom and happiness that sometimes comes with change. Change may. be like an interesting experiment. We know now that everything changes moment by moment. We are like scientists, scientists of our minds and bodies as we explore change. Notice how your mandala changes moment to moment and week to week.
2. This exercise may be accompanied with a mindfulness bowl. When mandala time is coming to an end the bowl may be sounded three times. Explain that there will be five minutes mandala time again next week to explore any change and growth that the children noticed during the week. The following instructions may be useful if using the mindfulness bowl.
3. When you hear the first sound you may take just a few moments to finish the little section you are working on.
4. When you hear the second sound you may put down your markers quietly.
5. When you hear the third sound you may close your eyes gently or lower your eyes to the floor, then listen to the sound all the way to the very end.
6. When you definitely cannot hear the sound anymore please raise your hand and open your eyes.

**Note:** If you do not have a bowl simply countdown e.g. A trí, a dó, a h-aon and finish by asking the children to take a nice slow deep breath.

