



**Your Brain Wants You to Be Happy (🧠 An Emotional Health Story)
(1st – 6-7 yrs.)
Drawing: Your Happy Place**



STORY CONNECTION – SLIDE 5 (Approx Time: 20-25 mins)

There is a special place inside your brain – called the reward pathway, but we can call it your “happy place.” Your “happy place” works to make sure you feel happy when you are doing behaviors that you need to do to stay healthy.

Materials needed:

- Paper
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils
- Stickers
- Glitter
- Paint
- Any other art supplies you want to have available to your student(s)
- *Optional:* Extension activity included below

Preparation needed:

- Be prepared to share your personal “happy place” (or just use the example in the instructions).
- Create an example drawing of your “happy place.”
- Print copies of extension activity to be available for student(s) who finish early

Instructions:

1. This part of the story talks about our “happy place” in our brain that is the reward pathway and allows us to feel happiness when we are doing behaviors that keep us healthy.
2. This activity expands on the idea of a “happy place” as an actual place. According to Cambridge Dictionary, the definition of happy place is a memory, activity, or situation that makes you feel happy.
<https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/happy-place>
3. Before starting this activity, talk about the term “happy place.” Ask questions and allow student(s) to respond.

Suggested Probing Questions:

- Have you heard of the term “happy place” before?
- What do they think it means?
- Is it an actual place?
- Is it the same for everyone?

- Can it change over time as you grow up?
4. Next, talk about your happy place. Be descriptive and give several reasons why you consider this place your “happy place.”

For example, I have a pillow that says “My Happy Place” that I keep in my classroom. I would share that with the student(s) and tell them all the reasons why my classroom and school is my happy place now. However, when I was a little girl, my happy place was my grandparents’ house. I would tell them this as well and give them reasons why I loved it there so much and why it made me so happy when I was a little girl.
 5. Have student(s) first turn and talk with a partner about their happy place. Remind them it can be a memory, activity, or situation and not necessarily an actual place. Give them a few minutes to talk about it together.
 6. Come back together as a group and have several student(s) share their partner’s happy place with the group. Do this until everyone who wants to share has the opportunity to.
 7. Lastly, tell student(s) that they are going to draw a picture of their happy place.
 8. Ask student(s) if they have any questions or need any clarification. Clear up any misunderstandings.
 9. Give them access to all the art supplies that you want them to work with and give them a specific amount of time to make their drawing.
 10. Student(s) who finish early or need an enrichment/challenge, can use the extension sheet to write about their happy place.
 11. At the end of the specified time, allow student(s) to share their drawings if they want to. Tell student(s) that we cannot be happy all the time. However, remembering our “happy place” can make us feel better when we are sad, mad, lonely, or afraid. They can put their drawing of their happy place in a spot where they can see it when they need it, either at home or at school.
 12. In closing, review “happy place” as a reward pathway in our brain for doing behaviors that keep us healthy AND as a memory, activity, or situation that makes us feel happy.

Name _____

After completing your Happy Place drawing, write the answers to the following questions.

Who is with you in your happy place?

What are you doing in your happy place?

Where is your happy place?

When do you like to go to your happy place?

Why do you love your happy place?