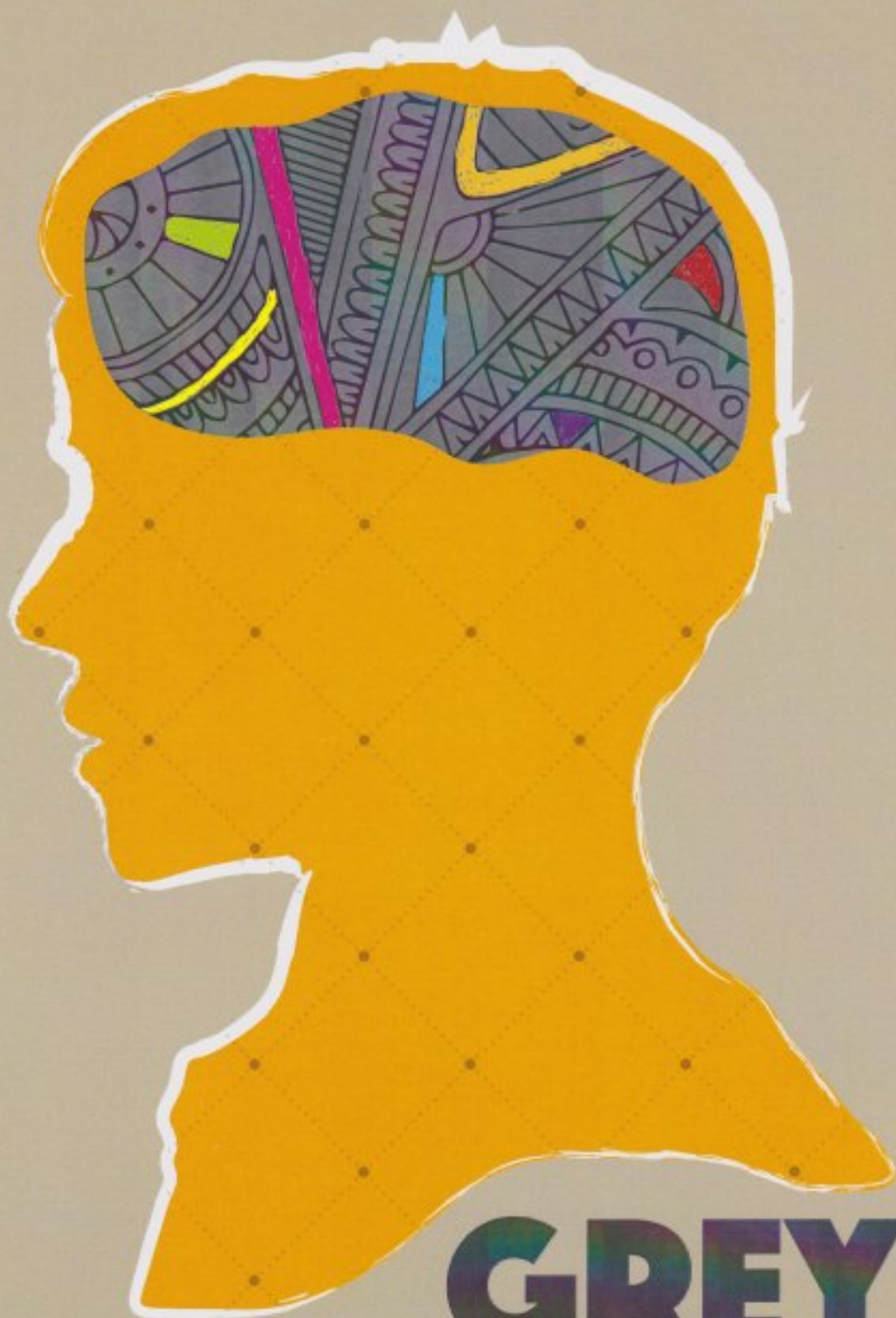


In Partnership With



# GREY MATTERS

RESOURCE PACK | 2017

# CONTENTS PAGE

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>3</b>
• Teachers' Pack	3
• Synopsis	3
• About TheatreWorks	4
• Credits	5
• Acknowledgements	6
 <b>2. EXPLORING THEMES FROM THE PLAY</b>	 <b>7</b>
2.1 Quick One-Minute Stress Relief Exercises	8
2.2 Myths about Stress	10
2.3 Brainteasers	12
2.4 Muscle Relaxation Exercise	14
2.5 Weekly Motivator	16
2.6 Colouring 101	18
2.7 Mindfulness Bingo	24
 <b>3. USING THE PLAY AS A RESOURCE</b>	 <b>26</b>
3.1 Forum Theatre: Breaking the news of failure	27
3.2 Writing Skits about Stress	29
 <b>4. FURTHER INFORMATION</b>	 <b>31</b>
• Symptoms of Stress	31
• List of helplines and services	32



# INTRODUCTION

*Grey Matters* is a specially crafted programme (piloted in February 2017) exploring the issue of stress and how it affects students' mental health. From the pressures of school, family and friends, students face an ever-increasing amount of stress.

Tackling perceptions that 'young people do not go through stress' and misconceptions that 'people who go for counseling are crazy', – *Grey Matters*, aims to better prepare and equip students with the ability to cope through periods of increased stress

## TEACHERS' PACK

This teachers' pack aims to provide teachers with a set of interactive materials to support any follow-up exercises based on the performance of *Grey Matters* and its themes of stress management. Teachers can utilise these activities in their Character and Citizenship Education classes. Please feel free to adapt our ideas into formats that are more appropriate to the needs of your students. Provided with each activity is information about the activity and how to carry it out.

**How to use the pack:** The activities in this resource pack are selected to fit within your own scheme of work. The activities are related to stress and stress management, allowing for deeper exploration to the issues at hand. Each activity is flexible and can be run independently of each other. Some of the activities include additional worksheets that have been included. Furthermore in the pack are a list of helplines and services that teachers can inform their students about.

## SYNOPSIS

*Grey Matters* traces the journey of Damien facing the stresses of adjusting to major changes in his life, such as preparing for a national exam, fulfilling his role as a CCA leader and living up to the expectations of his family, friends and teachers. Damien neglects to take proper care of his mental health, and when it all becomes too much, he opens a mental first aid kit that he found under his table.

While we are familiar with physical illnesses and injuries, we often forget that our mental health needs to be taken care of as well. *Grey Matters* hopes to not only provide coping strategies for periods of intense stress, but also as we go about our daily lives. After all at the end of the day, our grey matter matters.

## ABOUT THEATREWORKS (SINGAPORE)

Established in 1985, TheatreWorks (Singapore) is an independent and international performance company based in Singapore. It is an Institute of Public Character. It is currently led by Artistic Director, Ong Keng Sen and Managing Director, Tay Tong.

Since its establishment, TheatreWorks has staged over 200 productions and 2,500 performances in Singapore and overseas, and has reached an audienceship of over a million. TheatreWorks' home is 72-13, a heritage building that was once a rice warehouse on Mohamed Sultan Road next to the Singapore River.

TheatreWorks is a multi-faceted arts company that works intensively across languages, art forms, disciplines and socio-political borders. Rather than residing stably in the staid singularity of one Art or one Culture, TheatreWorks believes in the idea of leaving one's own position, one's locality and locating oneself in the unknown – to co-work and co-create in a third space. This vision has made Theatreworks distinct and sets it apart from other performance companies in Singapore.

TheatreWorks has two main red lines in its work: the first is the creation and presentation of inter-disciplinary and intercultural productions/programmes that brings together artists from across disciplines and cultures and from both the traditional and contemporary worlds. The second being Docu-Performances which are performances created from historical instances and phenomenon, archival materials, real-life experiences and living persons.

TheatreWorks is dedicated to the development of contemporary arts in Singapore and to the evolution of an Asian identity and aesthetics of the 21st Century through a culture of differences. It asks, what is Asian in this age of globalisation, internationalisation, modernisation and urbanisation? Its works exist on the tension between modernisation and tradition; local and global. Representing the continuum between tradition and contemporary, the works are unafraid to be exotic and yet conceptual. TheatreWorks' projects present the hybrid identity of the contemporary Asian and embrace the multiple realities.

[www.theatreworks.org.sg](http://www.theatreworks.org.sg) | [www.72-13.com](http://www.72-13.com)



## **THEATREWORKS ENGAGEMENT PROGRAMMES**

TheatreWorks Engagement Unit seeks to deepen the engagement of patrons and stakeholders; and engages new audiences through its programmes. Engagement Programmes are developed to encourage audiences to appreciate theatre and utilise theatre as a platform to discuss taboo yet critical issues facing them today.

<https://writingandcommunity2017.wordpress.com>

## **CREDITS FOR GREY MATTERS**

### **CAST FOR PREMIERE RUN**

Ali Anwar  
Fiona Lim  
Kimberly Arriola  
Matthew Fam

### **CREATIVE TEAM**

Director & Playwright	Thomas Lim
Producer	Ezzat Alkaff
Production Stage Manager	Ganesh Jayabal
Crew	Nadira Pillay

### **THEATREWORKS TEAM**

Artistic Director (on leave of absence)	Ong Keng Sen
Managing Director	Tay Tong
Administrator	Ong Soo Mei
Project Manager	Mervyn Quek
Engagement Executive	Ezzat Alkaff
Production Executive	Ganesh Jayabal
Finance & Accounts	Rosalyn Zaldua
Intern	Ellenie Liew

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

TheatreWorks would like to thank the following for their support. Without them, this programme would not be possible:

### **South East Community Development Council**

for supporting the pilot run of this programme

### **National Arts Council**

---

We would also like to thank the following people and organisations for their contributions:

Ministry of Education, Student Development Curriculum Division

Joanna Koh, Senior Guidance Officer

Response, Early intervention, and Assessment in Community mental Health (East), KK Women's and Children's Hospital

Dr Delphine Koh, Principal Psychologist

Lim Xuan Shi, Psychologist

Community Partner



With Support from



Copyright © 2017 by TheatreWorks (Singapore) Ltd

All rights reserved. No part of this resource pack may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of TheatreWorks.

## **2.EXPLORING THEMES FROM THE PLAY**

This section of the resource pack contains exercises exploring stress and stress management. These activities are solely based on the topic of stress, and are not related to the storyline of *Grey Matters*.

### **2.1 QUICK ONE-MINUTE STRESS RELIEF EXERCISES**

A series of four quick One-Minute exercises that teachers can utilise at the end of their classes.

### **2.2 MYTHS ABOUT STRESS**

An activity that aims to address and discuss common myths people may have about stress.

### **2.3 BRAINTEASERS**

A series of brainteaser exercises to challenge quick thinking.

### **2.4 MUSCLE RELAXATION EXERCISE**

An exercise that focuses on tensing and relaxing muscles to relax the entire body.

### **2.5 WEEKLY MOTIVATOR**

A worksheet to help students set goals that will improve their mood and help to reduce stress.

### **2.6 COLOURING 101**

Colouring is a way to reduce stress and has many emotional and mental benefits to it. In this activity, the colouring sheets provided are for students to use during their free time.

### **2.7 MINDFULNESS BINGO**

An activity to introduce and provide students a variety of self-care tips and exercises.



## 2.1 QUICK ONE-MINUTE STRESS RELIEF EXERCISES

### EXPLANATION:

Sometimes due to workload and schedules, it may be difficult to include ways to relax and unwind. This activity contains four one-minute individual exercises that teachers can use at the end of their classes to help students manage their stress.

#### 1) ONE-MINUTE BREATHING

- Spend One-Minute, at the end of the day, to breathe. This can be done standing or seating.
- Ask the students to close their eyes and focus on their breathing and how their body is feeling.
- Take a deep breath and let it out.
- Do it at least 10 times.

#### 2) PLANNING WORK & REWARDS

- Ask the students to look at how much homework they have that day, and plan out when they are going to do it. Let them know that having a schedule helps them to cope and manage the work they have.
- Tell them to include a short break or a mini reward for himself or herself whenever they finish a piece of homework.
- Remind them, not to cheat and have a break or reward themselves halfway.



### 3) QUICK TENSE & RELEASE

- This is a short version of the muscle relaxation exercise (If you want to go through the exercise in more details please refer to the *Muscle Relaxation Exercise*)
- First step is to apply muscle tension to a specific part of the body, squeeze the muscles tightly for five seconds. Then loosen your grip and exhale as the muscles loosen.

#### Directions:

- i. Squeeze all the muscles in your lower limbs (feet and legs) as tightly as you can for five seconds.
- ii. Now relax and exhale, noticing the difference between the state of tension and relaxation.
- iii. Stay relaxed for 15 seconds before moving to the next group of muscles.
- iv. Repeat this set of instructions with the different muscle groups below.
  - o Lower limbs (feet and legs)
  - o Stomach and chest
  - o Arms, shoulders and neck
  - o Face

### 4) REMEMBERING TO BE THANKFUL

- Sometimes when we are stressed, we tend to overlook things that we are grateful for.
- Ask the students to take out a piece of paper and write down three things that they are grateful for either that day or in the week (It can be someone, an activity etc).
- Optional: Students can partner up and share about one point they are grateful for, going into details of why they are grateful.

## 2.2 MYTHS ABOUT STRESS

### EXPLANATION:

This activity aims to address six common myths about stress. Teachers should explain that stress is part of our lives and there's no getting around it. However, there are some misunderstandings the basic of stress and its role in our lives. Teachers can pair students up or spilt them into groups to discuss each myth before asking them to explain why their answers.

*This activity will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.*

### MYTH 1: STRESS IS THE SAME FOR EVERYBODY

Stress is **not** the same for everybody, nor does everyone experience stress in the same way. What is stressful for one person may or may not be stressful for another; each of us respond to stress in an entirely different way.

For example, some of us are stressed out by high pressure at school, while others may thrive on it.

### MYTH 2: STRESS IS ALWAYS BAD FOR YOU

According to this, no stress makes us happy and healthy. But this is wrong — stress is to the human condition what tension is to the violin string: too little and the music is dull and raspy; too much and the music is shrill or the string snaps.

Stress is not bad (especially in small amounts). The key is to understand how best to manage it. Managing stress makes us productive and happy, while mis-managing it may cause us to fail or become even more stressed.

### MYTH 3: STRESS IS EVERYWHERE, SO YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT

You can plan your life so that stress does not overwhelm you. Effective planning involves setting priorities and working on simple problems first, solving them, and then going on to more complex difficulties.

When stress is mismanaged, it's difficult to prioritize. All your problems seem to be equal and stress seems to be everywhere.



#### **MYTH 4: ASKING FOR HELP WHEN WE ARE STRESSED IS A WEAKNESS**

We are all different — our lives are different, our situations are different, and our reactions are different. There are many different stress management techniques, and each person can try each one till they find what works best for themselves, just because we need to talk about it with someone or a professional, does not make anyone weak. Taking care of yourself and asking for help when you need it are signs of strength, not weakness.

#### **MYTH 5: NO SYMPTOMS, NO STRESS**

An absence of symptoms does not mean the absence of stress. In fact, camouflaging symptoms with medication may deprive you of the signals you need for reducing the strain on your physiological and psychological systems.

Many people experience symptoms of stress in a very physical way, even though stress is a psychological effect. Feeling anxious, shortness of breath, or simply feeling run down all the time can all be physical signs of stress. Feeling overwhelmed, disorganized and having difficulty concentrating are common mental signs of stress.

#### **MYTH 6: ONLY MAJOR SYMPTOMS OF STRESS REQUIRE ATTENTION**

This myth assumes that the “minor” symptoms, such as headaches may be safely ignored. Minor symptoms of stress are the early warnings that your life is getting out of hand and that you need to do a better job of managing stress.

If you wait until you start feeling the “major” symptoms of stress it may be too late. Those early warning signs are best listened to earlier rather than later. A change in lifestyle (such as exercising more) to deal with those early warning signs will be far less costly (in time and economics) than dealing with the effects of not listening to them.

## 2.3 BRAINTEASERS

### EXPLANATION:

This is a brainteaser exercise, which could be led by a teacher. It can be used as a starting point for other activities and exercises in this resource pack. There are a total of six brainteasers.

This activity encourages students to think on the spot. You can go through this activity with a sense of haste; so that the students will answer the questions quickly rather than spending too much time to answer the question.

Teachers can read the questions out and ask the students to write down or call out their answers. You have the option, though not compulsory, of eliminating students who get the brainteasers wrong to create a sense of competition among them.

At the end, you may explain that stress can be a positive element as it encourages and motivates us as individuals. However too much stress will end up being negative and detrimental to us.

*This activity will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.*

### BRAINTEASER #1

What do you put in a toaster?

Answer: Bread

Note: There is a possibility of several students answering, 'toast'.

### BRAINTEASER #2

Say "silk" five times. Now spell "silk." What do cows drink?

Answer: Cows drink water.

Note: If you students said "milk," you could tell them they may be stressed and should take a couple of breathes before continuing.



### **BRAINTEASER #3**

If a red house is made from red bricks, and a blue house is made from blue bricks, and a pink house is made from pink bricks and a black house is made from black bricks, what is a green house made from?

Answer: Greenhouses are made from glass.

### **BRAINTEASER #4**

Many many years ago, a plane was flying at 20,000 feet over Germany. Germany at the time was politically divided into West Germany and East Germany. During the flight, two of the engines failed. The pilot, realising that the last remaining engine is also failing, decides on a crash landing procedure.

Unfortunately the third engine fails before he has time to attempt an emergency landing, and the plane crashes smack in the middle of "no man's land" between East Germany and West Germany.

Where would you bury the survivors? In East Germany or West Germany or in "no man's land"?

Answer: You don't bury survivors.

Note: Teachers, you can congratulate your students for getting this far.

### **BRAINTEASER #5**

If the hour hand on a clock moves  $\frac{1}{60}$  of a degree every minute how many degrees will the hour hand move in one hour?

Answer: One degree.

### **BRAINTEASER #6**

Without using a calculator – You are driving a bus from Jurong East to Redhill. At Jurong East, 17 people get on the bus. At Clementi, six people get off the bus, and nine people get on. At Dover, two people get off and four get on. At Buona Vista, 11 people get off and 16 people get on. At Commonwealth, three people get off and five people get on. At Queenstown, six people get off and three get on.

You then arrive at Redhill. What was the name of the bus driver?

Answer: It was you.

## 2.4 MUSCLE RELAXATION EXERCISE

### EXPLANATION:

Stress can act as a good motivator for people. However, overwhelming stress leads to negative effects. Some physical symptoms of stress include sleep disturbances, back, shoulder or neck pain and muscle tension.

Progressive muscle relaxation is one technique used to help reduce stress. This exercise helps to lower people's overall tension and stress levels, and helps them to relax when they are feeling anxious.

Two key parts to this exercise is Tension and Relaxing the tense muscles. First step is to apply muscle tension to a specific part of the body, squeeze the muscles tightly for five seconds. Then let all the tightness flow out and exhale as the muscles loosen.

Note: Remind your students, it is important to focus on and notice the difference between the tension and relaxation! They should take care not to hurt themselves while tensing their muscles. If they have any medical issues, it may be best for them to sit out of this activity.

*This activity will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.*

Teachers, you can try this activity with your students. The instructions are as follows:

### DIRECTIONS:

- Try to wear loose, comfortable clothing, and remove your shoes.
  - Find a quiet, comfortable place to sit, close your eyes and let your body go loose. (You can lie down, but there is the likelihood you'll fall asleep!)
- 1) Take a deep breath in through your nose, and hold it for a few seconds.
  - 2) Breathe out, and take another deep breath through your nose.
  - 3) Pay attention to your body and how it feels. Start with your right foot.
  - 4) Squeeze all the muscles in your right foot. Curl your toes as tight as you can, and hold it for five seconds.
  - 5) Now relax and exhale, let your right foot go limp.
  - 6) Notice the difference between tensing and relaxing.
  - 7) Stay in this relaxed state for 15 seconds.



Repeat this set of instructions with the different muscle groups below.

- Foot (curl your toes downward)
- Lower leg and foot (tighten your calf muscle by pulling toes towards you)
- Entire leg (squeeze thigh muscles while doing the above)

(Repeat on other side of body)

- Hand (clench your fist)
- Entire right arm (tighten your biceps by drawing your forearm up towards your shoulder and "make a muscle", while clenching fist)

(Repeat on other side of body)

- Buttocks (tighten by pulling your buttocks together)
- Stomach (suck your stomach in)
- Chest (tighten by taking a deep breath)
- Neck and shoulders (raise your shoulders up to touch your ears)
- Mouth (open your mouth wide enough to stretch the hinges of your jaw)
- Eyes (clench your eyelids tightly shut)

8) Now stay in this relaxed state for a couple of minutes, before slowly opening your eyes.

## 2.5 WEEKLY MOTIVATOR

### EXPLANATION:

This Weekly Motivator is a tool intended to help remind students to take care of themselves and to follow through on the different components of their very own self-care programme. Students could select one or more areas as part of the worksheet to work on in a given timeframe.

Teachers should encourage their students to focus on setting realistic goals and identifying barriers they may need to overcome in order to achieve their goals.

*This activity will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.*



# WEEKLY MOTIVATOR

Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

My timeframe for these goals: ☐ Today ☐ This week ☐ This month

## PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

I will spend at least  
\_\_\_\_\_ days doing the  
following physical activity  
for \_\_\_\_\_ minutes:  
\_\_\_\_\_

## FUN

Regardless of how I feel,  
I will commit to scheduling  
\_\_\_\_\_ fun activities,  
including: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## EATING RIGHT

I will make the following  
choices to improve my  
eating habits:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## SUPPORT FROM OTHERS

I will spend at least  
\_\_\_\_\_ minutes on at least  
\_\_\_\_\_ days spending  
time with:  
\_\_\_\_\_

## RELAXATION

I will spend at \_\_\_\_\_ mins  
on at least \_\_\_\_\_ days on the  
following relaxing activities:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## MY SPECIFIC GOAL

My goal is:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Step #1:

Step #2:

Step #3:

How likely are you to follow through with these activities during the timeframe you have set?

Not Likely	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Very Likely
---------------	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----------------

What might get in the way of meeting the goals you have set for this timeframe?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Brainstorm possible ways to overcome these barriers:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 2.6 COLOURING 101

### EXPLANATION:

Colouring is an activity that many people used to do when they were younger, but have stopped as they grow up. Recently, there has been a rising trend on colouring books for teens and adults; many studies have shown that there are many mental and emotional benefits to colouring, including stress relief.

Some students may feel that they are not particularly artistic and are fearful that they may not have the skills to colour something beautifully. Teachers should encourage students to try, as there is no wrong way to colour. Colouring presents itself as a creative venture without the need for artistic flair.

Note: Please note that even though colouring has benefits, it is not the same as art therapy. Here are links to websites that have different free templates that can be printed and used.

*If this activity is done in school, teachers can allocate 30mins to allow students to get into the 'zone' of colouring. Additionally, students can take it back and do it in their own time.*

We have included a few drawings that can be used. Alternatively, teachers can inform their students to Google colouring pages for adults to find some that they can print out themselves.

**<http://www.coloring-pages-adults.com>**

**<http://coloring-pages.info/adultscoloringpages>**

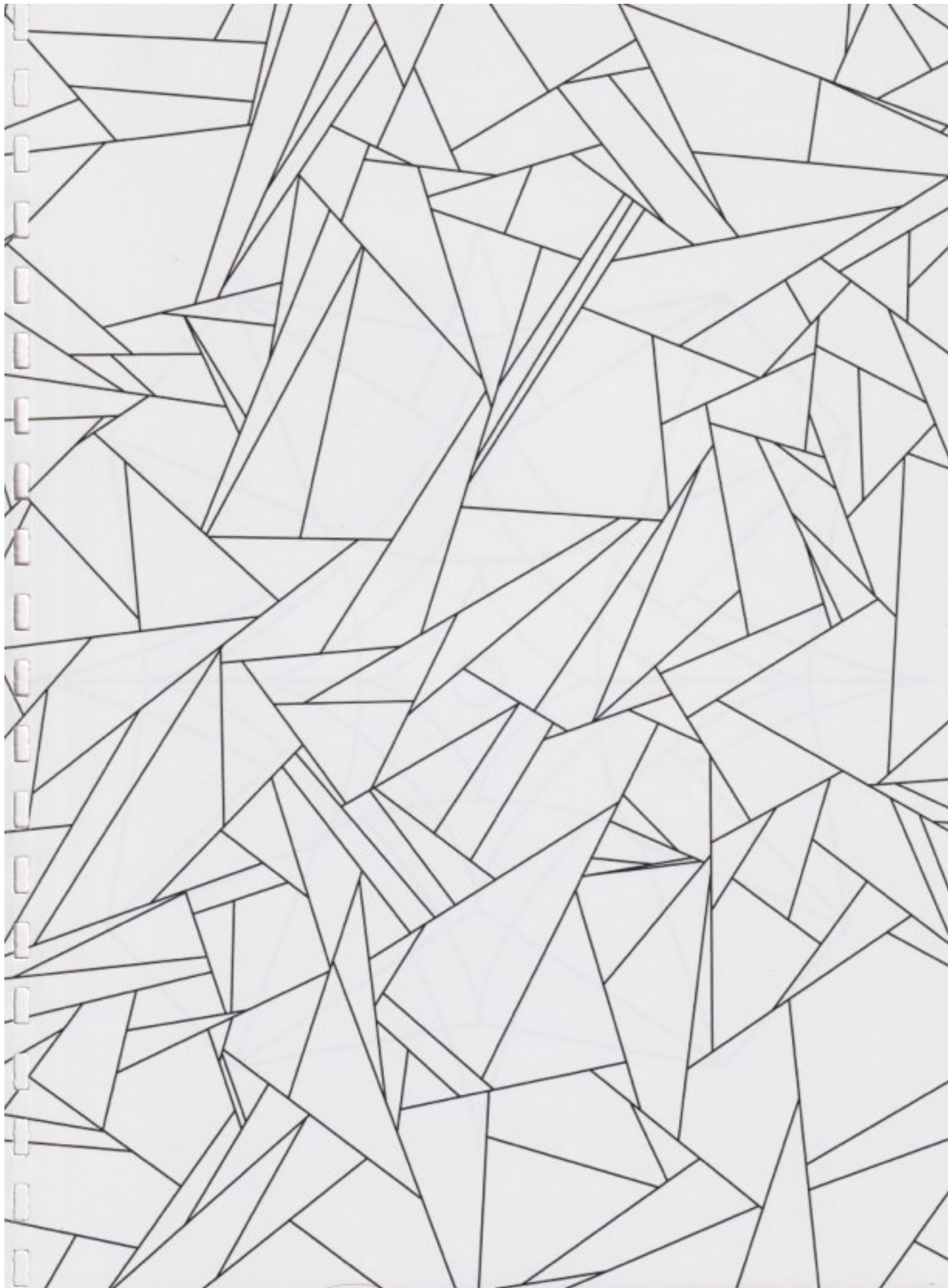
If students are stuck about which colours to use or are hesitant, you can suggest ways to overcome this:

- 1) Go in blindfolded – Just pick a colour and start. Let it be spontaneous.
- 2) Use a colour scheme – Pick one colour, and just use every different shade of that one colour.
- 3) Use a spectrum – Use each and every different colour available so there's a spectrum.

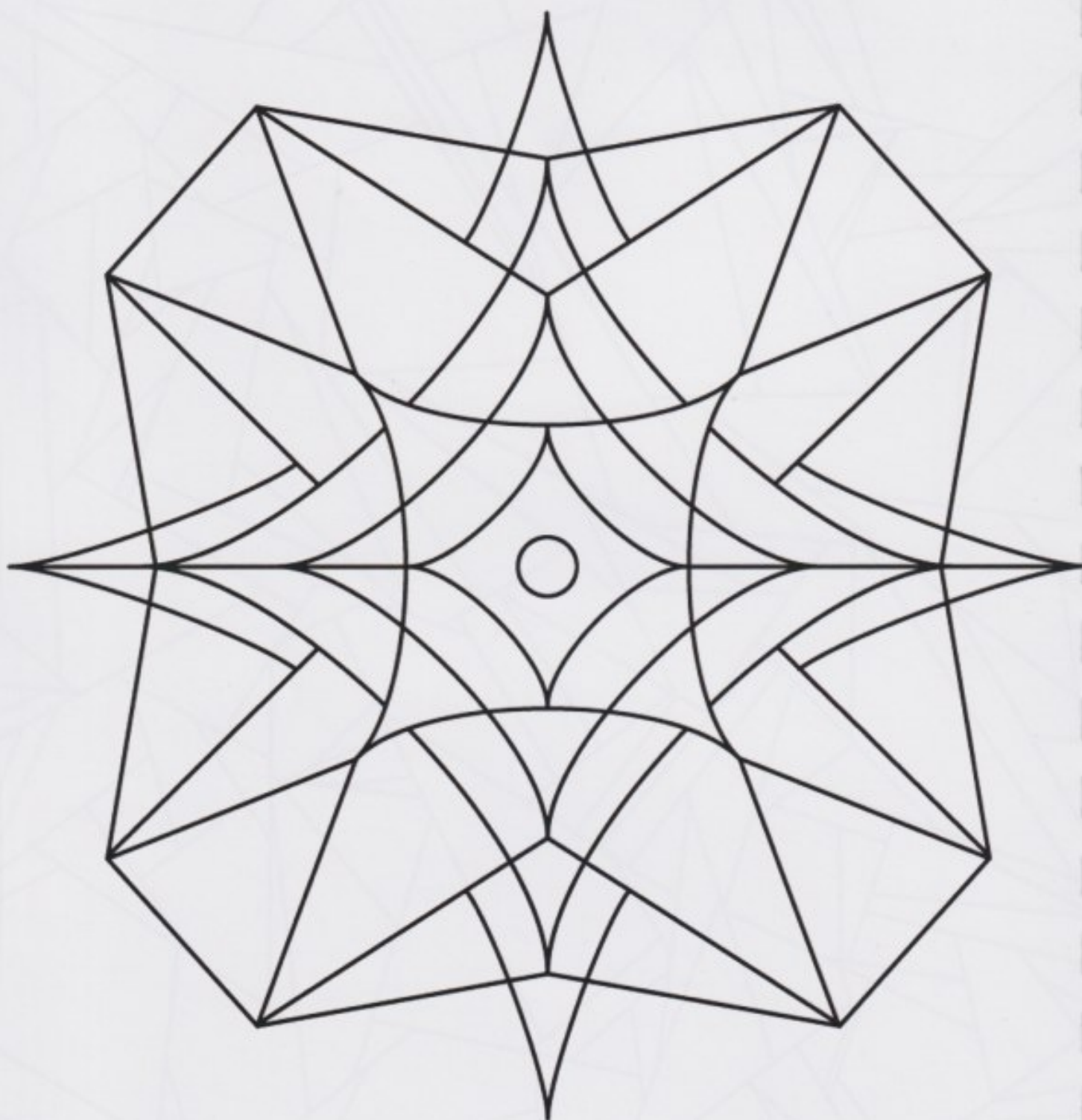


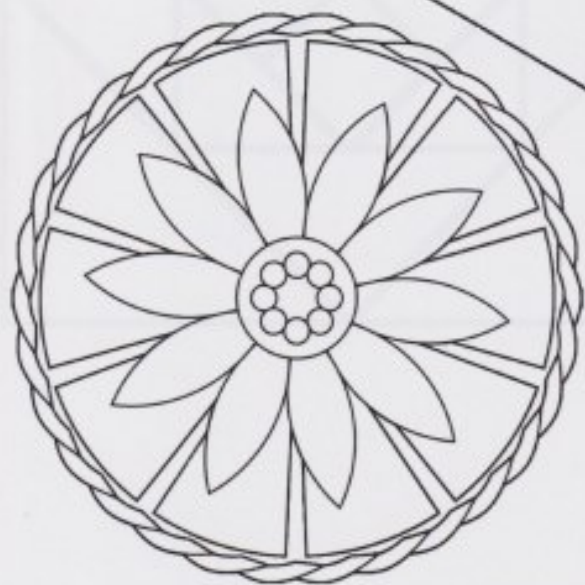
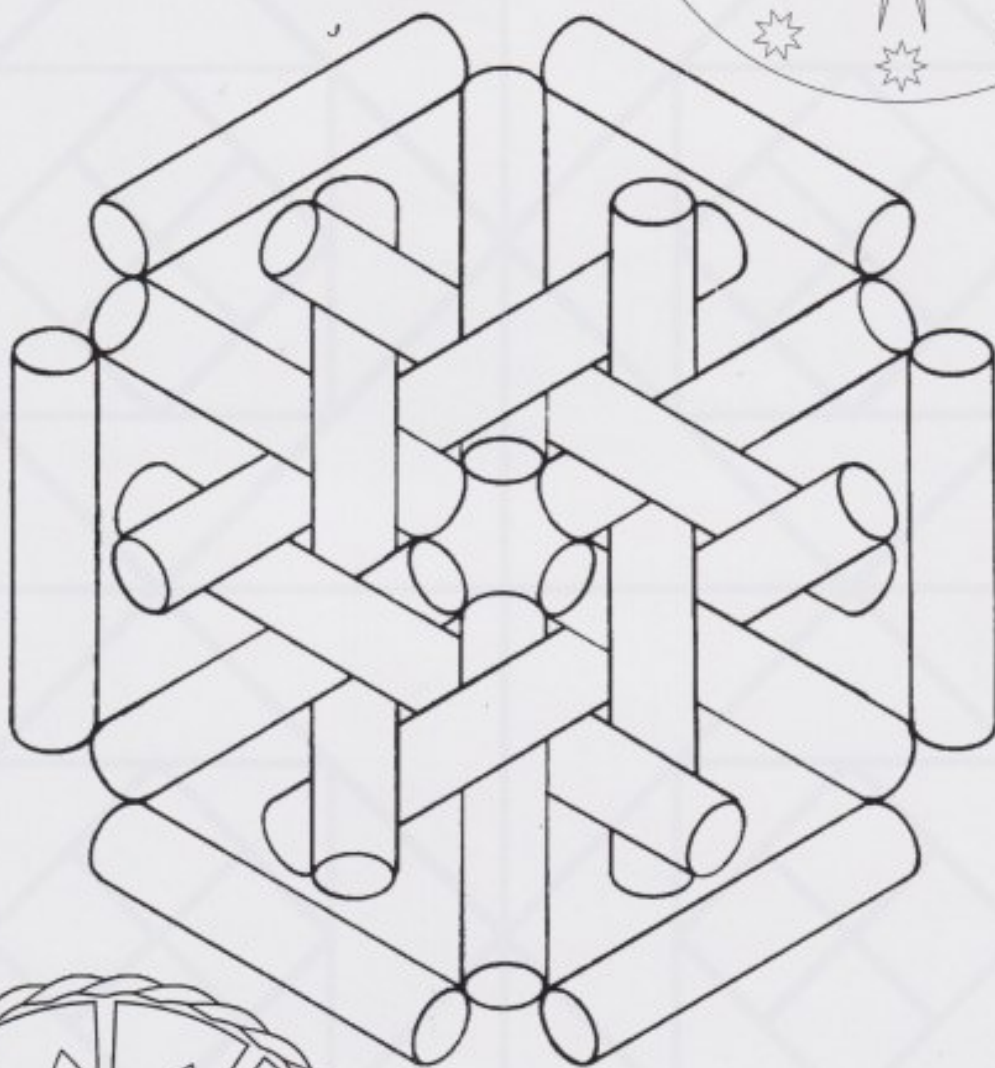




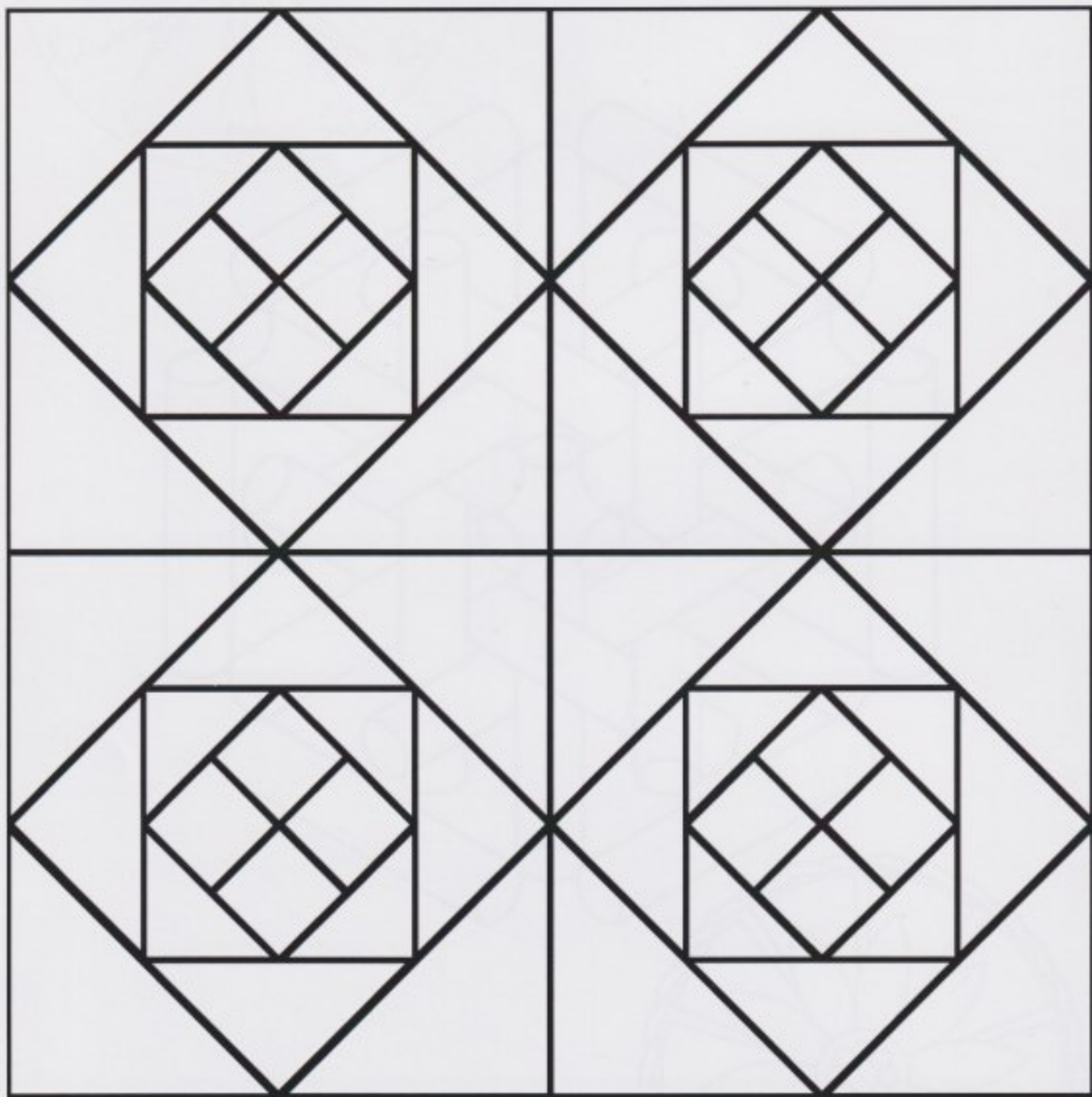












## 2.7 MINDFULNESS BINGO

### EXPLANATION:

This exercise begins with the teacher leading a discussion about different self-care tips and exercises that their students can carry out to help them relieve stress, and ending with students doing a Mindfulness Bingo.

Teachers can start off with letting the students know the stress management exercise Damien presented in the play - (Identifying his emotions, breathing, and relaxation exercises). Then teachers should ask the students about the different ways they relieve stress and write their suggestions on the board. The idea is to get at least 25 suggestions so that they can fill up the bingo sheet.

Here are some examples that can be included:

- 1) Breathing
- 2) Relaxation Exercises
- 3) Identifying emotions
- 4) Watching a movie
- 5) Playing games
- 6) Spending time with family
- 7) Meet your friends
- 8) Eating a healthy meal
- 9) Reading
- 10) Exercising
- 11) Go for a walk
- 12) Listen to Music
- 13) Take a bath
- 14) Take a nap
- 15) Play with pets
- 16) Shopping
- 17) Talk to someone
- 18) Cooking



- 19) Writing a journal
- 20) Singing
- 21) Count to 10
- 22) Take a 5-min break
- 23) Meditation
- 24) Dancing
- 25) Cleaning your room

After 25 suggestions have been listed, pass out the Bingo sheet. Instruct students to fill in the Mindfulness Bingo Sheet randomly with the suggestions on the board. Inform students that you will randomly call out the suggestions given, and they should mark off the suggestions called out in their bingo sheet. If a student has marks off five tips in a row, diagonally, vertically or horizontally in their Mindfulness Bingo Sheet, they should call Bingo. If they are incorrect, they are disqualified. If not, they are the winner!

*This activity will take approximately 15-minutes to complete.*

## MINDFULNESS BINGO

		<b>FREE SPACE</b>		

## 3. USING THE PLAY AS A RESOURCE

This section of the resource pack contains activities that are based on the performance of *Grey Matters*.

### 3.1 FORUM THEATRE: BREAKING THE NEWS OF FAILURE

This activity engages the students to act and think of positive solutions to a stressful situation that Damien faces, breaking the news that he failed his exam to his mother. (A skit is included for the students to perform).

### 3.2 WRITING SKITS ABOUT STRESS

This activity starts off by exploring Damien's reaction to stress, with the aim of students writing a short skit about a stressful situation and ways to cope with it.



## 3.1 FORUM THEATRE: BREAKING THE NEWS OF FAILURE

### EXPLANATION:

This activity follows on from the performance; it's a scene between Damien and his mother. The focus is for students to learn how to manage and speak respectfully to their parents - which can also be a source of pressure in their lives.

In this activity, two students should take on the role of Damien and his mother and act out the scene. After seeing the scene once, the other students should think of ways to solve the problem presented on stage (breaking the news of Damien failing his exam). The scene will be performed again, but this time, the audience can shout '*Stop!*' and replace the actor playing Damien. This student should play Damien and try to solve the problem by trying a different strategy or tactic that the original actor did not do.

Inform the students to pay attention to the scene and as they are watching to take notes of the moment Damien could have spoken up, and let his mother know how he is feeling and he needs help coping with school.

After the scene has been performed once, ask the students to think about what Damien could have said rather than remaining silent. Instruct the student actors to play the scene again, but this time the audience can shout *Stop!* and replace Damien to try out a different approach. The student playing the mother needs to decide how she will react to Damien speaking to her. It is not necessary for this student to remain angry as she did following the script as the situation has changed since the second student playing Damien is utilising a different approach.

Teachers can stop the scene if they feel the situation is not progressing. Teachers can also ask the students to explain what they intended to do so everyone in the class can understand.

*This activity will take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete.*

### SCENE: BREAKING THE NEWS OF FAILURE

**Mother:** Damien, Damien? Damien! Where are you? Come and help me carry the shopping.

*Stage Direction: Damien slowly drags his feet to help his mother carry the bags.*

**Mother:** What took you so long? I had to carry all these heavy bags up myself after a whole day at work.

*Damien is unusually silent the entire time.*

**Mother:** Anyway, have you received your exam results back? You finished your exam two weeks ago, haven't your teachers returned the papers back to you?

*Damien remains silent as he puts away the groceries.*

**Mother:** Damien? I'm speaking to you. What's wrong with you? Did something happen?

*Damien remains silent.*

**Mother:** Why are you behaving so oddly? Does this have something to do with school? Is something wrong? It is your exams? Did you..... fail?!

**Damien:** *(Quietly)* I got 48 for one of my exams.

**Mother:** What did you say? Speak up.

**Damien:** I failed.

**Mother:** You failed! Didn't you study? You know why this happened? It's because you didn't study! You are forever on your computer playing games and using Facebook.

**Damien:** I wasn't.... Can I go now, I'm not feeling well. I'm having a headache.

**Mother:** You were on your computer! And no! You stay there while I'm talking to you! I have to tell your father that we have to ban you from using the computer. Maybe I should cancel the holiday trip, and arrange for more tuition.

*Damien sulks and stands awkwardly in the room.*

**Mother:** Don't you have anything to say for yourself? If you have nothing to say, just go to your room! You better not use the computer! I don't care that your exams just ended. Since you didn't study last time. You better start studying now.



## 3.2 WRITING SKITS ON STRESS

### EXPLANATION:

This activity follows on from the performance, and aims to have students write a skit about different stressful situations in which they may face in their lives. This activity may be done in groups, leading up to the group performing out the scene.

Using the play as a starting point, teachers can ask students to recall on any symptoms of stress that Damien might have experienced (racing thoughts, moodiness, agitation, inability to relax, feeling overwhelmed). Teachers should inform their students that these are not the only symptoms of stress and may discuss with their students other symptoms as well as ways to cope with stress.

As a lead up to the writing activity, students can read the **Scene: *Breaking the news of failure***, as an example of a scene they are meant to write. In the scene, Damien breaks his news to his mother that he has failed his exams. You can use this scene to break down the following

- The stress causing situation
- Specific instances relating to the situation
- How stress is affecting Damien (Mood change & headaches)

Students may refer to the Symptoms of Stress in the Further Information section for a detailed list of symptoms.

*This activity will take approximately 40 - 60 minutes to complete.*

### EXAMPLE:

Write a 3 - 5 minute script that explores Academic Pressure in a stressful situation.

You will need to be sure that your skit includes the following:

- ☐ An overview of the stress-causing situation
- ☐ 3 or 4 specific instances relating to the situation
- ☐ How stress is affecting the student (for example: loss of appetite, loss of sleep, easily irritable)
- ☐ 3 unconstructive ways to cope with the situation.
- ☐ 3 constructive ways to cope with the situation.
- ☐ Prediction of outcome/resolution based on coping strategies (positive or negative)

The same set of instructions can be given out to students and each group can be assigned a different scenario.

- Pressure to do well academically
- Schedule overload
- Conflict with parents / siblings
- Peer pressure to hang out late / feeling pressures to change to fit into a particular group of friends.

## INSTRUCTIONS

Write a 3 - 5 minute script that explores \_\_\_\_\_ in a stressful situation.

You will need to be sure that your skit includes the following:

- ☐ An overview of the stress-causing situation
- ☐ 3 or 4 specific instances relating to the situation
- ☐ How stress is affecting the student (for example: loss of appetite, loss of sleep, easily irritable)
- ☐ 3 unconstructive ways to cope with the situation.
- ☐ 3 constructive ways to cope with the situation.
- ☐ Prediction of outcome/resolution based on coping strategies (positive or negative)



## FURTHER INFORMATION

### SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

We live with more stress than ever before. Changes in the economy, the environment, technology, work, social and family life – all of these pile on the pressure. And on top of that, we still have to deal with everyday problems.

Stress manifests itself in many ways and can lead to a range of symptoms. Any of these symptoms can be 'early warning' signals that you have too much stress in your life. It's important to know that each person is different and may experience different symptoms of stress.

COGNITIVE SYMPTOMS	EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS	PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS	BEHAVIOURAL SYMPTOMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Memory problems</li><li>• Inability to concentrate</li><li>• Poor judgment</li><li>• Seeing only the negative</li><li>• Anxious or racing thoughts</li><li>• Constant worrying</li><li>• Inflexible thinking</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Moodiness</li><li>• Irritability or short temper</li><li>• Fears or phobias</li><li>• Agitation, inability to relax</li><li>• Feeling overwhelmed</li><li>• Sense of loneliness or isolation</li><li>• Upset by change</li><li>• Depression or general</li><li>• Unhappiness</li><li>• Loss of pleasure/ enjoyment</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Aches and pains</li><li>• Diarrhoea or constipation</li><li>• Nausea/ dizziness</li><li>• Chest pain, rapid heart beat</li><li>• Loss of sex drive</li><li>• Chronic fatigue</li><li>• Hormone imbalance</li><li>• Indigestion</li><li>• Raised blood pressure</li><li>• Headache</li><li>• Tense/ painful muscles</li><li>• Breathing difficulties</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Eating more or less</li><li>• Sleeping too much or too little</li><li>• Isolating yourself from others</li><li>• Procrastinating</li><li>• Using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to relax</li><li>• Nervous habits (e.g. nail-biting, pacing, rapid speech)</li><li>• Quick to anger</li><li>• Sticking rigidly to routines</li><li>• Avoiding situations or people</li></ul>

## FURTHER INFORMATION

### LIST OF HELPLINES AND SERVICES

ORGANISATIONS	HELP PROVIDED	CONTACT
Samaritans of Singapore (SOS)	For anybody in crisis and persons with suicidal tendencies to call	Tel: 1800-221-4444 (24 hours helpline)  <a href="https://sos.org.sg">https://sos.org.sg</a>
Singapore Association for Mental Health (SAMH)	For people who have psychological, psychiatric or social problems and others who need information for such persons	Tel: 1800-283-7019 Mon - Fri: 9.00am - 6.00pm  <a href="http://www.samhealth.org.sg">http://www.samhealth.org.sg</a>
Institute of Mental Health (IMH)	Psychiatric Emergencies	Tel: 6389 2222 (24 hours helpline)  <a href="https://www.imh.com.sg">https://www.imh.com.sg</a>
Community Health Assessment Team (CHAT)	For youths, between ages 16 to 30, with distress in relation to mental health issues.	Tel: 6493 6500 / 6493 6501  Walk-in to CHAT Hub @ *SCAPE Tue - Sun: 12.00pm - 9.00pm  Excluding public holidays  <a href="https://www.chat.mentalhealth.sg">https://www.chat.mentalhealth.sg</a>



# NOTES

## NOTES

## CONTACT US

### TheatreWorks (S) Ltd

72-13 Mohamed Sultan Road, Singapore 239007

T: +65 6737 7213

F: +65 6737 7013

E: [tworks@singnet.com.sg](mailto:tworks@singnet.com.sg)

[www.theatreworks.org.sg](http://www.theatreworks.org.sg), [www.72-13.com](http://www.72-13.com), [www.artsnetworkasia.org](http://www.artsnetworkasia.org)

Like us at TheatreWorksSg 