

# *I REALISE*



## EDUCATOR'S GUIDE AND ACTIVITY FOLDER

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This guide is to be used for educational purposes; it intends to be informative and part of the readers' development, and it does NOT necessarily provide solutions for emotional or behavioural issues. The author's focus in the *I realise* series is on supporting healthy reader development and not on giving rehabilitation aids for readers with educational/health challenges. If you have any concerns regarding a learner's mental health, we recommend that you contact a psychologist, professional counsellor or therapist.

The *I realise* stories are designed to be read and discussed together with an educator (parent or teacher), in a 'shared expanded reading' style so as to raise readers' awareness and enhance their emotional intelligence. Each title presents scenarios that target different cognitive/life skills to support positive development. Readers are invited to explore the messages conveyed in ways that encourage reflection and expression while seeking personal significance for each individual.

Below is a guide for 'shared expanded reading', with activities you can do with each story to help readers develop a variety of cognitive aptitudes and life skills. Before embarking on a journey with the readers, educators are invited to consider the whole guide, to explore (rather than study) its content, as it presents concepts and ideas that may be useful even if the educator and readers do not cover those issues directly. Teachers may print any relevant pages of this guide in preparation for reading with their class.

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for guided participation in expanded reading, aimed at developing specific skills in the following domains:

#### A. Facilitating self-expression

- a. Targeting critical skills and self-development
- b. Expressing difficult things

#### B. Intra-personal communication

- a. Body awareness
- b. Emotional awareness
- c. Emotional Control

#### C. Inter-personal communication

- a. Listening and connecting
- b. Empathy and acceptance

#### D. Language focus

Mastering verbal and non-verbal language

## 1. ABOUT 'SHARED EXPANDED READING'

**Shared Reading** is an interactive reading experience that occurs when learners join in or share the reading of a book or other text while supported by an educator. **Expanded reading** happens when learners are encouraged to take ideas from the book or text and to build on them.

The rationale for 'shared expanded reading' is that by encouraging learners to process the contents on deeper cognitive levels, we help them internalise concepts in the books and raise more personal awareness, thereby enhancing the development of their emotional intelligence. Below are guidelines for, and examples of, 'shared expanded reading'.

### A. NO LESSON PLAN

The concepts introduced in the *I realise* stories can be further explored by means of this reading guide and its suggested questions and activities. However, how much and what portion of each concept will be discussed is not prescribed. It was the author's intention to provide a thorough guide, with enough subjects matters and resources so that readers have the support available to explore chosen themes however much and deeply they can and/or want to. Nonetheless, the educator's most important resource has to be the learners themselves. A learner-centered approach is highly recommended. How a concept is introduced and expanded on will very much depend on the learners' input: the ideas and questions they bring up and raise. Therefore, this guide does not provide any specific amount of teaching per session, but rather advises the teacher to let the learners guide them in that respect.

### B. A POSITIVE READING EXPERIENCE

It is fundamental that the best context for reading is created, where the following factors apply:

- The activity of reading is anticipated and experienced as an enjoyable and precious time spent together (if learners would rather do something else, then come back to these books when the time is right);
- All readers are in the right mood – for example, not hungry, upset, tired or needing to exercise;
- All readers are comfortable (for example and if possible, sitting in a circle away from classroom desks, or sitting on the sofa at home away from distractions);
- All readers are connected and trust each other – the educator will need to model and monitor open-mindedness, mutual respect, tolerance, empathy and encouragement;
- All readers are given the opportunity to explore their own thoughts and feelings in an all accepting, tolerant and safe atmosphere.

**Please note that with a view to encouraging identification and relevance to all readers, the main character in the *I realise* stories is not named, or given a gender, and it speaks in the first person. We suggest simply referring to the main character as 'our character', 'he or she'.**

### C. ONE AND MANY READERS

Depending on the age and reading level of your learner/s, it is likely that the educator will actually read the text. This is because children's maturity levels are usually above their reading abilities (this can be said of language learners in general). Additionally, the concepts presented in the *I realise* stories are complex – even though the author has made every effort possible to keep the words simple. For this reason, it is also important that the learners follow the reading by looking at the illustrations. These have been designed to convey meaning that is complementary and key to understanding the text. Furthermore, learners will hugely benefit from being encouraged to participate in the reading process. In this sense, educators and learners are all readers together.

### D. OPEN PARTICIPATION

To encourage enthusiastic active participation, use different tones of voice when reading, so as to convey meaning, make the text come to life, and engage the readers.

Read slowly and allow time for learners to process and understand what they can by themselves. It will also give them a chance to join in the story if they wish to do so. Pause your reading when a learner comes up with comments and questions by themselves.

Acknowledge any ideas they may have and remember that they cannot be wrong in their thinking and understanding so far. You may do this by showing that you have heard and appreciate their input, and that any idea is valid and welcome. You may for example say: "You think ...", and repeat what they have just said as a way to acknowledge and validate the expression of their thoughts and feelings. Or you may just smile and show interest with an "Ah-ha...", "That's an idea...", or "Could be..."

If a learner asks a question, repeat it and give them time to come up with their own answer. Respect all styles and perspectives. Invite and acknowledge any child's or learner's observation and rather than respond by sharing your opinion, encourage them to express themselves further. Most importantly, resist the temptation to give your approval or disapproval of the way they comprehend things today. Even when an idea seems strange or wrong to you, engage your curiosity and again, practice saying things like: "Hm, I wonder..." or "Is that so ..." or "May be..."

Naturally, an educator should feel confident to use strategies known to support closure when required, such as when reassuring a child who is getting upset. However, during the "shared expanded reading", the educator will recognise that there is often **no need to conclude** on a subject. This is because learning is a continuous process and what we see, understand, appreciate or disapprove of, in any given situation, is neither right nor wrong (unless this is unhelpful to our learning and development). So, our ideas are just part of our self-development, which is an ongoing process, in constant change and evolution.

Some learners will talk about the *I realise* main character in the third person and attribute a gender to it, while others will talk about themselves in relation to the story, which is all fine. Other learners will choose to listen quietly, so you will not know what is going on in their mind at that time, and this is fine too, as long they are given time for silent reflection.

## E. GUIDED PARTICIPATION

Carefully worded questions are offered in this guide so that educators can direct learners to participate and reflect on the reading content. The effectiveness of such questions is in the asking; how they are answered, or even whether they are vocally answered or not does not matter.

Guided participation in **shared reading**:

You will see that shared reading starts with pre-reading questions (or activities). Pre-reading questions are important as they help prepare learners for participation by contextualising story concepts, raising learners' interest and curiosity, and encouraging personal relevance and identification.

As you read each page, and after having invited, heard and acknowledged any and all learners' reactions, questions and feedback on that page (in an open participation fashion), you may consider asking some thought-provoking questions relating to each specific page (as suggested in the 'Guided participation for each *I realise* story' in part 3).

Guided participation in **expanded reading**:

After reading each book, you may invite more awareness-raising participation from the children or learners. This may be also be done upon a second reading of the same book (not necessarily on the same day). The younger the learners are, the shorter their concentration span may be; however, they are also more likely to welcome re-visiting the same book on many occasions. Not only does repetition strengthen their learning, but it also gives them a feeling of familiarity along with a sense of safety. You will also find in this guide, further activities for guided participation in expanded reading (part 4). These are all designed to support the concepts introduced in the *I realise* books, to further raise learners' awareness, enhance their cognitive skills and the development of their emotional intelligence. While most activities may be performed with a group or with a single learner, a few activities may need to be adapted in one-to-one situations, for example by asking friends or family members to join in.

## 2. ABOUT AGE, MATURITY AND ABILITY

An approximate minimum age is stated on the cover of each book; however, depending on their maturity and linguistic and/or cognitive abilities, each reader/learner will appreciate different concepts differently and at varying levels. Parents and educators will therefore need to use their own judgement to choose the most appropriate expanded reading tasks for their learners. In many of the suggested guiding questions and activities, you may just choose to adapt the language, the way of saying things, so that it is relevant and makes sense to your learner/s.

Many factors contribute to learners' maturity levels and cognitive abilities that cannot only be attributed to their age. Many other aspects and variables, such as personal relevance and experience or learning styles and preferences impact how readers may process new concepts or information. For this reason, the *I realise* series does not indicate clear-cut guidelines based on age. Quite the opposite, the stories portray scenarios immediately relevant to children, which older learners may recognise as simplified metaphors of their own

grown-up struggles or perceived limitations. The author therefore intends to encourage younger and older learners, children and adults, to use these books to learn together.

For adolescents and adult learners, you may also want to check out the Interactive Projectable Classes (IPCs) marked with an asterisk\* (as these focus on key soft skills): <https://languagecommunicationcoaching.com/IPC/>

For adult language learners, the *I realise* stories constitute an easy read which, with the help of this guide, can lead to age-appropriate, interesting, and formative discussions, while working on emergent language.

Due to their simplicity, the *I realise* stories are not directly aimed at, and may therefore not all directly appeal to some older learners – especially pre-teens (11-13 years) and teenagers (14-17 years) who are in the developmental stages of early and late adolescence. However, individuals in these age groups may greatly benefit from reading the *I realise* books to younger learners, and then being given opportunities to participate in expanded reading activities suitable for older learners. Additionally, or alternatively, teenagers may be assigned a project for which they have to write and illustrate their own books, featuring new scenarios related to the subjects and issues in each *I realise* book, but relevant to them and applied to their more grown-up world. They could then turn them into mini plays which they could act and present to an audience.

In keeping with the *I realise* stories, this guide is aimed at a wide range of ages and abilities. Therefore, simple language is used in part 3 (Guided participation with each *I realise* story) and a **hollow bullet point** such as this one indicates the following:

- Questions, exercises or activities **for learners older than the minimum age stated on the relevant book cover**

However, this is a flexible recommendation that may or may not be relevant to all, depending on individualities as already mentioned.

Generally speaking, the older the learner the more expanded reading you can do with them. And conversely, shared reading only (with few guiding questions and no expanded reading) is highly valuable with pre-school children (1-5 years old).

### 3. GUIDED PARTICIPATION WITH EACH *I REALISE* STORY

Below are some suggested questions and activities that aim to guide participation so as to enhance and support the grasping of concepts presented in the *I realise* books, and thereby enable the acquisition of important life skills.

Teachers may print relevant pages of this guide (and maybe clip them to the back of the book if they plan to read to a group of learners) to have them handy during reading.

The questions are for the educator to ask and for **learners to answer in their own way**. Educators may rest assured that even when learners do not answer a question out loud, their cognitive skills are still being used.

Silent realisations are at least as important as verbally expressed comprehension. Furthermore, a question can often sow a seed in each individual that will flourish in its own time and its own way. Therefore, the educator does not provide any answer; each learner's own experience will provide them with answers, after a question has been asked.

## *The Ball* *(feeling good)*

Sometimes, things do not go the way we want, sometimes it seems like one bad thing is happening after another. *The Ball* is about developing our ability to revisit our expectations fast enough so that we can appreciate silver linings and welcome the unexpected, so that our expectations don't get in the way of us noticing other opportunities, so that we can enjoy whatever else might present itself, and understand others. It is really about choosing to feel good above all (including choosing 'being happy over being right' as indeed, the same goes for being ok with having different opinions, different beliefs, or different knowledge and for example asking ourselves: "do I really need my opinion to be validated by that person to be happy with them?").

**Reminder: shared reading only (using few of the suggested guiding questions and no expanded reading) is highly valuable with pre-school children (1-5 years old).**

- Before reading:  
You could choose to read this story just before young learners are given the opportunity to play with other children, for example before recess, or before older learners work together or start team projects. In either case, it may work well to explain to them that you are about to read this story in anticipation of playing or working together.
  - For older learners (approximately 3 and up) – look at the book cover and ask: "How does our character look here?" "Do you think our character is feeling happy?" "What is our character holding under his foot?" "Do you think our character could be happy without the ball?"
- Pages 1 and 2 – Ask: "Do you like balls?"
  - With older learners (approximately 7 and up) – Invite them to imagine that the ball in the story could be anything else that they like, or is important to them, and with the more mature learners, even something abstract maybe (like 'things going according to plan', or 'being right').
- Pages 3 and 4 – Ask: "How does Aya feel now?"
- Page 5 – Invite learners to answer the question.
- Page 6 – Ask: "Can you make a sad face?" "An angry face?"
  - With older learners (approximately 6 and up), ask them to express these emotions with their whole body, using matching posture and gestures.
- Pages 7 and 8 – Ask: "How does Pato feel now?" "Does Aya look happy?"
- Pages 9 and 10 – Ask: "Do you think Pato and Aya are having fun with the ball?"
- Pages 11 and 12 – Invite learners to answer the question.
- Pages 13 and 14 – Ask: "What does it look like when people are all happy?"
- Pages 15 and 16 – Ask: "Would you want Aya to be sad?" "Would you be happy to see Aya sad?" "So, what could you do?"
- Pages 17 and 18 – Ask: "What is our character playing with now?"

- Pages 19 and 20 – Ask: “Does Aya want to play together?”
- Pages 21 and 22 – Ask: “Does Aya want to play with the ball now?”
- Pages 23 and 24 – Ask: “Does Aya want to play together now?”
- Pages 25 and 26 – Ask: “Who has the ball now?” (help learners name it ‘our character’)
- Pages 27 and 28 – Ask: “Who has the car now?”
- Pages 29 and 30 – Ask: “Do all the people on this page look happy?” “Are they all playing together with the same thing?” “What are they playing with?”
- Page 31 – Ask: “Can you make a happy face?”
  - For older children (approximately 4 to 6) – ask again: “How is our character feeling here?” “What is our character holding under his foot?” “Do you think our character could be happy without the ball? Explain.”
  - With older learners (approximately 6 and up), ask them to express happiness with their whole body, using matching posture and gestures.
- End of story:
  - For older children (Approximately 6 to 9) – Explore the following questions:
    - “Do you find it hard sometimes when you cannot have what you want?”
    - “When you find it hard that you cannot have what you want, what do/could you do to feel happy anyway?”
    - “Do you like being happy?”
    - “Can you think of things that make you happy?”
    - “Is there only one thing that makes you happy?”
  - For older learners (Approximately 9 and up)
    - “How important is it for you to be happy?”
    - “Is what we think we want usually more important than being happy?”
    - “When we think we want something, do we sometimes forget to be happy anyway?”
    - “Next time you find it hard to accept that you cannot have what you think you want, what do/could you do to accept it and feel happy anyway?” Invite them to try it this week and agree on a day to report back.
- Expanded reading activities:
  - **Take it to the field**  
Invite learners to ‘see how we can all be happy while playing/working’. Once learners are playing or interacting, you may if needed ask: “Are you all choosing for everyone to be happy?”, or praise: “I see you are all choosing to be all happy”.
  - **My gratitude**  
Cut out a large paper disk and draw a ball. Tell learners to draw or write in the ball all the things they are grateful for (things that make them happy).

## Is It Really True?

*Is it really true* is about being aware of our feelings, and of how these feelings are associated to the thoughts we are having. And with this awareness, we can choose to revisit certain automatic thoughts that do not make us feel good, and replace them with more helpful ones.

**Reminder: shared reading only (using few of the suggested guiding questions and no expanded reading) is highly valuable with pre-school children (1-5 years old).**

- Before reading: Ask about some obviously true and false facts, for example: “Is it true that... we came in through the door? we have walls around us? dogs bark?” and “Is it true that... the chairs are on the table? the pictures are hanging on the floor? dogs have feathers?”
  - For older learners (approximately 8 and up) – Ask: “What is a thought? – Is it words we say to ourselves or a conversation we have with others?” “Do thoughts happen all the time even without us realising, or only when we decide?” “Can two people have different thoughts about the same thing?” and “How do we know when a thought is true?” “How can we prove it’s absolutely true and cannot be any other way?”
- Page 1 – Ask: “What is Nini doing?” “How is Nini looking?” “What could Nini be thinking?”
- Page 2 – Ask: “What is Bubu doing?” “How is Bubu looking?” “What could Bubu be thinking?”
- Page 3 – Ask: “What kind of face is Aya making?” “What is Aya doing?” “What could Aya be thinking?”
- Page 4 – Ask: “What kind of face is Pato making?” “What could Pato be thinking?”
- Pages 5 and 6 – Ask: “Is it really true?”
- Page 7 – Ask: “Do you know that feeling?” “Have you ever had a feeling like that?”
- Pages 8 to 10 – Just read and let learners comment if they will.
- Pages 11 and 12 – Ask: “Could it be true that Nini is busy?” “Could it be true that Bubu is tired?” “Could it be true that Aya is sad?” “Could it be true that Pato needs something else?” “If so, would this mean they are not nice and they shouldn’t be like this?”
- Page 13 – Ask: “How would you feel if you believed that?”
- Page 14 – Ask: “How does our character feel?”
- Page 15 – Ask: “What’s changed now that our character thinks Nini is busy?”
- Page 16 – Ask: “What’s changed now that our character thinks Bubu is tired?”
- Page 17 – Ask: “What’s changed now that our character thinks Aya is sad?”
- Page 18 – Ask: “What’s changed now that our character thinks Pato needs something else?”
- Pages 19 and 20 – Ask: “When can you choose like in this story?”
- Expanded reading activities:
  - **Managing conscious thoughts and feelings**
    - First, practice creating thoughts: Ask learners to think about something that feels good. Then ask them to think of something that doesn’t feel so good. Then ask them to think of their first feel-good-thought again, and then of a second feel-good-thought, and maybe of a third. They may share their thoughts or not, but ask them: “Did you notice how different thoughts made you feel different?”.

- With older learners (approximately 9 and up), you may take this exercise further:
  - Now, help raise awareness of our ability to change our thoughts by asking: “Were you able to change your thoughts and feelings?” and check: “So, are you able to just decide to change your thoughts and feelings?”
  - Use visualisation and ask them “Can you think of a time, an example of when you can change a feel-bad thought for a feel-good thought?” Make sure you get examples from the past and into the future.
  - Help learners distinguish between thoughts and feelings: Ask them to write down examples of feelings or thoughts (from the story or not) on cards and to sort them into two buckets, one labelled with a heart (for feelings) and the other with a head (for thoughts).
  - Help learners distinguish between automatic thoughts and chosen thoughts: Ask them to take all the thoughts out of their head bucket and have sort them into two new buckets, one labelled with a monkey (for automatic unhelpful thoughts) and the other with a person (for chosen helpful thoughts).

### ▪ **Empathy glasses**

Ask learners to try and remember a recent time when someone did not respond to them how they would have liked them to. Then ask them to put on their ‘empathy glasses’ to try and guess how the other might have been feeling at that time (as our character chooses to do in the story).

### ▪ **Caring ideas**

Ask learners to come up with things they could do to show concern or help others with their needs or feelings, and to describe what they would do in specific situations.

### ● **Communication bridges**

This activity (described under ‘Empathy and Acceptance’ in the ‘Further Activities’ part 4.C.b.) helps develop empathy, acceptance and interpersonal communication and relationships.

### ● **Choosing thoughts practice**

Play the game “would you rather”: Each learner comes up with two scenarios that can be serious, wacky, thought-provoking, or just funny, to make up a ‘would you rather’ question such as “would you rather have a ball or be happy?” Make sure every learner gets to voice their choice on each question, as well as ask their own ‘would you rather’ question.

## *My Emotions Are Helpful*

When we ignore a difficult emotion or when we indulge in it, it is likely to get the better of us. Suppressing emotions is bad for our health, and exhibiting them may feel good temporarily but will not necessarily be desirable or helpful. In either case, it is likely to mean that these emotions will increase or linger, or both. So, instead, we can learn to acknowledge and appreciate what our emotions are telling us.

The author presents these emotions under four main groups: fear, anger, sadness and happiness, and shows how each come in many forms and have their own way of helping us. It is interesting to realise, as you can in this book, that an emotion - take fear for example - can give you an exciting or an unpleasant feeling, and it's when we get that unpleasant feeling that the emotion can actually help us the most. For example, fear makes us more alert so we can identify what's actually happening and handle the situation better.

In *My Emotions Are Helpful*, you will learn to recognise and understand how each emotion group is designed to help us, so that you can make good use of how you feel. And when you do that, not only can strong emotions serve you, but they are also less likely to get out of proportion.

- Before reading: Ask: "What's an emotion?"
- Page 1 – Ask: "How can a big sudden noise make us feel?"
- Page 2 – Ask: "When/where do remember feeling 'scared'?" "What does this emotion feel like in the body?" "What does it look like?"
- Page 3 – Ask: "Has this ever happened to you: listening to all noises in this way?"
- Pages 4 and 5 – Ask: "What's another word for scared? "Is xxx (other word) stronger or milder?" "When could you feel xxx?"
- Pages 6 and 7 – Ask: "When you feel xxx, how can you be careful and what can you do to control the situation?"
- Pages 8 and 9 – Ask: "How did fear help here?"
- Page 10 – Ask: "Is closing the window a way of controlling the situation here? Explain."
- Page 11 – Ask: "Can you now thank your fear for helping you concentrate and take control when you need to?" (Give learners time to go inwards and do that).
- Pages 12 and 13 – Ask: "How would you feel?"
- Page 14 – Ask: "When/where do you remember feeling 'angry'?" "What does this emotion feel like in the body?" "What does it look like?"
- Page 15 – Ask: "Has this ever happened to you: Feeling that you need to protect something important to you?"
- Pages 16 and 17 – Ask: "What's another word for angry? "Is xxx (other word) stronger or milder?" "When could you feel xxx?"
- Pages 18 and 19 – Ask: "When you feel xxx, what might you want to protect?"
- Pages 20 and 21 – Ask: "How did anger help here?"
- Pages 22 and 23 – Ask: "Can you now thank your anger for helping you protect what is important to you?" (Give learners time to go inwards and do that).
- Pages 24 and 25 – Ask: "How would you feel?"

- Page 26 – Ask: “When/where do remember feeling ‘sad’?” “What does this emotion feel like in the body?” “What does it look like?”
- Page 27 – Ask: “Has this ever happened to you: feeling you have to let go of something you have or something wanted or expected?”
- Pages 28 and 29 – Ask: “What’s another word for sad? “Is xxx (other word) stronger or milder?” “When could you feel xxx?”
- Pages 30 and 31 – Ask: “When you feel xxx, what is your disappointment, that thing that you need to give up or accept?”
- Page 32 – Ask: “How did sadness help here?”
- Page 33 – Ask: “Can you now thank your sadness for helping you move on when you need to?” (Give learners time to go inwards and do that).
- Page 34 – Ask: “What are you happy that you learnt in this book?”
- Page 35 – Ask: “When do you enjoy the feeling of being scared?” “What does this emotion feel like in the body?” “What does it look like?” and “When do you NOT enjoy the feeling of being scared?” “What do you think makes fear enjoyable or not?”
- Page 36 – Ask: “What is funny about anger here?”
- Page 37 – Ask: “How would sadness feel then?”
- Page 38 – Ask: “Have you ever laughed so much you had tears?” “What is that like?”
- End of story – Summarise by asking: “In what way is fear/anger/sadness helpful?”
- Expanded reading activities:

- **Trigger an emotion**

Ask learners:

- What can trigger fear/make them feel scared?
- What can trigger anger/make them feel angry?
- What can trigger sadness/make them feel sad?

If needed, ask them how someone might feel in certain situations (for example: when their favourite game is over, or when someone took something of theirs without asking, or if they couldn’t find their way home).

- **Get to know an emotion**

Ask learners: “Sit back, close your eyes and imagine a (scared) situation. Where is your (fear) in your body? How does it feel? Does it have a texture? A movement? A size? A shape? A colour? A smell? A taste? Does it make a noise? Now that you know how (fear) is really wanting to help you to (e.g. Be alert and know what to do), how do you respond to what (fear) tells you? What does your (fear) help you do? Can you thank your (fear) in your body for helping you do the right thing? Can you let it go? Can you feel how it passed through you and the feeling is now gone?”

Do this with all 3 emotions types (fear, anger and sadness).

- **Shape and thank each emotion type**

Ask learners:

- 1) “Make out of playdough a shape that represents each emotion for you”
- 2) “Thank it for being there to help you in that way when you need it”.

- **See also** ‘Emotional Awareness’ and ‘Emotional Control’ in the Further Activities part 4.B.c.&d.

## **No, Thank You – Yes, Please!**

Sometimes, saying NO does not seem like an easy thing to do, maybe because we feel pressured or because our emotions are confusing us and making it harder to think straight. In any case, a simple “No, thank you” is all that is needed. We can say “No, thank you” because we do not like or do not want something, or we can say “No, thank you for thinking of me, but no”. Just as it is equally important to express appreciation “Yes, please” to everything we like and feel thankful for. And we can train our mind to think “No, thank you” or “Yes, please” in our internal self-talk, so that we are clear about our own needs and about the nature of our intentions.

**Reminder: shared reading only (using few of the suggested guiding questions and no expanded reading) is highly valuable with pre-school children (1-5 years old).**

- Before reading: Ask: “When do we say ‘yes, please’ or ‘no, thank you’?”
  - For older learners (approximately 5 and up) – Ask “Give examples of when you like to say ‘yes, please’ or ‘no, thank you’? And add “What could happen if you didn’t say it clearly?”

For younger learners, keep questions simple, even if only inviting yes/no answers, as the primary aim here is to help little ones realise how to deal with their likes, dislikes, wants or needs.

- Page 1 – Ask: “Would you like that?”
  - For older learners (approximately 5 and up) – Ask: “What do you like (or not) about a hug?”
- Page 2 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 3 – Ask: “Would you like that?”
- Page 4 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 5 – Ask: “Would you like that?” and “What presents do you like to give?”
- Page 6 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 7 – Ask: “Would you like that?” and “What can be the problem with throwing sand at someone?”
- Page 8 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 9 – Ask: “Would you like that?”
  - For older learners (approximately 5 and up) – Ask: “How could asking before taking work better?”
- Page 10 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 11 – Ask: “Would you like that?”
  - For older learners (approximately 5 and up) – Ask: “What do you like about playing together?”
- Page 12 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 13 – Ask: “Would you like that?”
- Page 14 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 15 – Ask: “Would you like that?” and “What could be the problem with pushing?”
- Page 16 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 17 – Ask: “Do you like that?”
  - For older learners (approximately 5 and up) – Ask: “How can it help to get angry?” (answers may vary as learners may, or may not, be familiar with *My Emotions Are Helpful*)
- Page 18 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 19 – Ask: “Do you like that?”

- For older learners (approximately 5 and up) – Ask: “What feeling can we have when we sulk?” and “How can it help to be sad?” (answers may vary as learners may, or may not, be familiar with *My Emotions Are Helpful*)
- Page 20 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 21 – Ask: “Do you like that?” Invite your learners to try it.
  - For older learners (approximately 5 and up) – Ask: “How can it help to use calming techniques?” “Do you know any?” b(see Further Activities part 4.B.c. Emotional Control)
- Page 22 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 23 – Ask: “Would you like that?” and “What do you like doing?”
- Page 24 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Page 25 – Ask: “What do you sometimes not feel like doing?”
- Page 26 – Ask: “Would you say that?”
- Pages 27 and 28 – Ask: “Can you do that?” Invite learners to try saying both ‘No, thank you’ and ‘yes, please?’ nicely, clearly and assertively while doing the gestures illustrated on these pages.
- Page 29 and 30 – Ask: “And how do you feel now?”
- End of story:
  - For older learners (approximately 5 and up) – Ask: “Are there some times when you don’t know what to say, and you think it could work to just say ‘yes, please’ or ‘no, thank you’ in the right tone?” Practice the right tone in various situations.
- Expanded reading activities:
  - **Drawing for visualisation**  
Instruct learners to draw some things they would say ‘No, thank you’ to and some things they would say ‘Yes, please!’ to.
  - **Show and tell assertively**  
Being assertive is also being clear and confident about our own thoughts and feelings. Ask all learners to show something to the class (a toy, a book, something they made, drew or wrote) and tell the class about it in three sentences starting with:
    - 1- I have ....
    - 2- I think ...
    - 3- I feel ...
  - **Stand up for yourself**  
Ask learners to think of any times when someone may have done or said something that made them feel uncomfortable but they did not speak up. Ask them what they would like to say to that person in that situation. Guide them to use clear and kind language and to be assertive. Have them practice it out loud (role play).
    - If the learner is old enough, ask them to write it down, and then work in pairs. Tell them to keep practicing until they feel like they can say it to the person it is meant for. Assure them that they will feel better if they can stand up for themselves.
  - **When and how to say “No”**
    - 1- Ask learners to match the following words: Gossip, Tease, Cheat, Bully, Steal and Lie with the following definitions:
      - Making fun of someone
      - Trying to harm or intimidate someone

- Sharing private, mean, untrue or unverified things about other people
  - Taking something that is not yours without permission
  - Saying things we know are not true
  - Acting dishonestly to gain an advantage
- 2- And then with the following statements:
- "If you don't do this, I will..."
  - "Hahaha, you missed!"
  - "This does not belong to anyone, let's take it!"
  - "Have you heard what they say about Lea?"
  - "Nobody will know we didn't follow the rule."
  - "We are allowed to stay up and eat sweets all night and we don't need to do our work"
- 3- Invite learners to discuss what some bad consequences might be for each behaviour.
- 4- Ask them to come up with ways to refuse joining in any of these behaviours, for example: "No, thank you... - I don't like that – I can't/will not do that – I don't think this is true, or fair, or kind, or our business – I don't want to [... call it what it is from the list above]"
- 5- Ask them also what they would say if they were just unsure and maybe uncomfortable about what someone is suggesting or about the situation (for example: "No, thank you... - not right now – you can, not me – I won't be able to help you).

### **I am I**

All my choices have consequences. When I am not happy with the consequences, that is my opportunity to act differently, and possibly more responsibly, next time. Rather than behaving like a victim, blaming the world for what is happening TO me, I recognise I am in control of me.

*I am I* is about observing what the consequences might be and about taking responsibility for our own actions.

**Reminder: shared reading only (using few of the suggested guiding questions and no expanded reading) is highly valuable with pre-school children (1-5 years old).**

- **Before reading:** To clarify the purpose of the use of the first personal pronoun, ask learners: "Who do we talk about when we say 'I'?"
  - With older learners (approximately 8 and up), ask: "Who is most responsible for me?" And add: "What do you think being responsible can mean? Can you give examples?"
- Page 1 – Each learner says "My name is" followed by their name + "and I am I".
- Page 2 – Ask: "Have you ever felt fresh air and rain drops?" "What was it like?" and "How about right now, what can you feel?"
- Page 3 – Ask: "Where do you feel it when you are hungry?"
- Pages 4 and 5 – Ask: "Can you point at yourself and say 'I am I'?"
- Pages 6 and 7 – Ask: "What useful thinking is our character doing here?"
- Pages 8 and 9 – Model and invite all readers to point at themselves.
- Page 10 and 11 – Ask: "What does our character choose not to do?"
  - For older learners (approximately 7 and up) – Ask: "When in your life do you think it's a good idea to not always do what you are tempted to do? and "What alternative actions can you take then?"

- Pages 12 and 13 – Model and invite all readers to point at themselves.
- Page 14 – Ask: “What can you see when you look around, for example on this page?” “What does the person in the blue dress say?”
- Page 15 – Ask: “What can you see here?” “What does the person with the red shirt say?”
- Pages 16 and 17 – Model and invite all readers to point at themselves.
- Pages 18 and 19 – Ask: “Can you think of other reasons for not jumping in the muddy puddle, or not eating cakes just before dinner?”
- Pages 20 and 21 – Model and invite all readers to point at themselves.
- Pages 22 and 23 – Ask: “What else do you think our character could do?”
- Pages 24 and 25 – Ask : “While our character is thinking this way, what could they do until dinner?”
- Pages 26 and 27 – Model and invite all readers to point at themselves.
- Pages 28 and 29 – Ask: “When do you ‘think and choose’ what to do?”
- Page 30 and 31 – Ask: “Who is responsible for you?”
- Page 32 and 33 – Model and invite all readers to point at themselves.
  - For older learners (approximately 7 and up) – Ask: “In what way/s are you ‘you’?”
- Expanded reading activities:
  - **Construct yourself**  
In order to allow young learners to assimilate the concepts in this book, you can suggest they make a model of themselves out of playdough or another suitable construction toy. After having given them some quiet time to do so, you may offer them each the opportunity to show and tell how they constructed themselves, by asking: “Can you show us/me your construction and tell us/me about yourself?”
  - **The monster in me**  
Introduce the concept of ‘the monster in me’ as the one being responsible for ‘sometimes making me want to do something without thinking, or for giving me bad ideas’. Ask learners what they can tell you about their monster. Invite them to draw it and then describe it. Ask them what their monster sometimes tells them to do and how they respond to it.
  - **I am good**  
Ask learners to say one thing they like about each person in the room (for example “she is funny”, “he is helpful”). And then ask them to each say at least three things they like about themselves.
  - **I am I flowchart**
    - For older learners (approximately 8 and up)  
To help learners develop self-confidence and reliability, ask them to fill a spider flow chart from a centre of ‘words I’m proud to be called’, for example: “you are always *kind*”, “you are *funny*”, “you are good at *sharing*”, “you are someone I can *trust*” or “you are *thoughtful*”.
  - **I am I journals**  
To help learners take responsibility for their behaviour, instruct them to create and decorate journals in which they write and/or draw about their week’s wise decisions or how they handled problems that came up. Give them regular opportunities to hand in, show you, or share some of their journal entries with the class.
  - **I am I comic strips**  
Draw three empty squares to make a three-window comic strip. In the window on the left, ask learners to draw a picture of an unhelpful behaviour (something we sometimes want to do but

know we had better not). In the centre window, ask them to draw their self-portrait. In the window on the right, ask them to draw a picture of a helpful behaviour (something better they could do as an alternative to the unhelpful behaviour – if needed, you may help them here by asking other learners for suggestions). Repeat and make more comic strips to find alternatives to other unhelpful behaviours.

▪ **'If, then, but'**

- With older learners (approximately 8 and up), ask them to use examples of unhelpful behaviour (something we sometimes want to do but know we had better not) and make “if, then, but” statements with each one, starting with an idea for something to do, then identifying its motivation, and anticipating its consequence (for example: **If** I take my sister's bike without asking, **then** I could get to my friend's house faster, **but** my sister will be upset and she will never want to lend it to me again).

▪ **Stop-think-do**

- With older learners (approximately 8 and up), ask them to answer 'yes' or 'no' to the following statements:
  - Do you ever make a decision without thinking?
  - Have you ever rushed something and not done it very well?
  - Have you ever forgotten to listen and then didn't know what you were supposed to do?
  - Do you ever feel influenced to do something and then regret it?
  - Have you ever refused to listen to someone because you were already feeling angry with them?
  - Do you sometimes start to talk and realise you don't really know what you are saying?
  - Have you ever started telling a joke and realized you didn't remember how to say it?
  - Do you ever say things without thinking and then regret it?
  - Do you ever do something without thinking and then regret it?
  - Have you ever wondered why you did or said something?

If they have answered 'yes' to one or more of these questions, ask them to think how things could have been different if they had stopped and thought first. Some learners may be happy to discuss examples of how these questions may apply to them and how using a 'stop-think-do' method would help in particular situations.

**I can!**  
***(One step at a time)***

We so often avoid, or have a hard time, doing things because we only consider the sheer size of the task rather than the process. When we take one step at a time, not only does it seem a lot easier to focus on friendly sized chunks we can handle, but we also give ourselves the time and opportunity to enjoy, in each moment, every part of it, even if we are not able to complete the whole task at once. The book *I can!* shows us how we can train ourselves to take 'one step at a time' on a daily basis.

- **Before reading:** Ask learners to finish the sentence "I can ..." with at least five things they can do, and then ask them if there was a time in the past when they "couldn't" do these things they can do now.
- Page 1 – Ask: "How would you feel if you had that thought?"
- Page 2 – Repeat the question: "How would you feel if you had that thought?"
- Page 3 – And again: "How would you feel if you had that thought?"
- Pages 4 and 5 – Ask: "What do you see that needs to be done?" "And again in this situation: how would you feel if you had that thought?"
- Page 6 – Ask: "How is our character feeling with the thought 'I can't'?"
- Page 7 – Ask: "How is our character feeling with this thought now?"
- Page 8 and 9 – Ask: "Does our character like these thoughts?" "Would you choose to think like that?"
- Pages 10 and 11 – Ask: "Would you? (like it)" "Do you think it's helpful?"
- Page 12 – Ask: "What is helpful about this way of thinking?"
- Page 13 – Ask: "How is this a different thought from before when looking up the mountain?" (if needed, go back to page 1 to allow learners to compare)
- Page 14 – Ask: "How is this a different thought from before when looking at the room?" (if needed, go back to page 4 to allow learners to compare)
- Page 15 – Ask: "How is this a different thought from before when looking at the calculation?" (if needed, go back to page 8 to allow learners to compare)
- Page 16 – Ask: "What do you think of that way of thinking?" "How does it make you feel?"
- Page 17 – Ask: "What do you think about that idea?"
- Pages 18 to 28 – Just count and read and let learners comment if they will.
- Page 29 – Ask: "How come our character feels able to maybe do it now?" "How would you encourage our character to do it?"
- Pages 30 to 34 – Just count and read and let learners comment if they will.
- Page 35 – Ask: "How would you feel now?"
- Pages 36 to the end – Just read and let learners comment or ask questions if they will.
- End of story – Ask: "Can you think of something you'd like to do but think you can't?" "After reading this book, what you like to do about it?" "Will you feel better if you just try doing a little bit of it, or if you never try at all?" and "What will be different for you should you do this more often?"

- Expanded reading activities:

- **I can Now**

Ask each learner to draw two columns and write in the left what they couldn't do before and in the right column how they are able to do it now. For example, "before I needed stabilisers on my small bike, now I can ride a big two-wheel bike".

- **I can Star**

Ask each learner to draw a large star (or give them one already traced on a sheet of paper) and then ask them to write (or draw) four things they can do (or achievements) in four of its points. In the fifth point, ask them to draw something they want to be able to do (something to work on).

- **I can Plan**

Now is a good time to each pick something we don't want to do, or think we can't, and commit to when and how we are going to go about it. Ask each learner to identify what their first step might be. Agree on a date to report.

### *Judging Me*

"I am scared people are going to judge me" – Is that something you have ever heard or thought? *Judging me* is me judging that other people judge, just like me. And as you will see in this book, judgement is not only inevitable but necessary to make sense of things. We are all judging, intelligent and opinionated, but judgement is also paradoxically our biggest fear when it comes to interacting or presenting something to other human beings... until we get the humour behind this paradox and we can relax about it.

- Before reading: Ask "What can 'judging' mean?"
- Page 1 – Ask: "In what circumstance could you feel like that?" "Where in your body would you feel it?" "What might go through your mind when you feel that way?"
- Pages 2 and 3 – Ask: "Do you recognise some of these thoughts and feelings?" "How could these thoughts and feelings affect your performance?"
- Pages 4 and 5 – Ask: "Have you ever experienced anything like that?"
- Pages 6 and 7 – Ask: "Have you ever experienced anything like that?"
- Pages 8 and 9 – Ask: "Have you ever experienced anything like that?"
- Pages 10 and 11 – Ask: "Have you ever experienced anything like that?" "What would you do?"
- Pages 12 and 13 – Ask: "So, instead of worrying about yourself, where would you direct your thinking?"
- Pages 14 and 15 – Ask: "What does our character's body language tell you here (on page 15)?"
- Pages 16 and 17 – Ask: "So, if the people in the audience are the same, what has changed?"
- Pages 18 and 19 – Ask: "How can you explain that?"
- Pages 20 and 21 – Ask: "Can you give an example of how you may judge something?"
- Pages 22 and 23 – Ask: "Is judgement always negative?" "Can you make a sentence in which the word 'judging' does not mean something negative?"
- Pages 24 to 33 – Read and invite learners to answer the questions.
- Pages 34 and 35 – Ask: "Who can stop us judging?" "Can we even stop ourselves?"
- Pages 36 and 37 – Ask: "How can feeling a little nervous help you perform well?"
- Pages 38 and 39 – Just read and welcome any comments.

- Expanded reading activities:

- **Practice performance skills**

At almost any age, performance can be practiced in a 'Pecha Kutcha' style where each learner chooses 20 pictures (these can be used to make 20 slides, on Power Point for example) and then shows each picture (or slide) for 20 seconds of prepared or improvised commentary on each (6 minutes and 40 seconds total). This is a great way of practicing speaking to a group of people, and can be adapted to suit your learners. More fun can then be had coming up with alternative personalised commentaries while re-using other people's slides.

- **The 30 second monolog**

Ask all learners to stand in a circle and one learner at a time to come and stand in the centre to improvise and say anything they want about themselves, without stopping talking for 30 seconds. Ask them to also make sure that they turn their body as they talk in order to make eye contact with everyone during that time (this can all be done sitting if you can use a swivel desk chair in the centre). Time them, stop them after 30 seconds and make sure everyone gets a turn. If you need to add variety to their talk, you may ask them each more specific questions about themselves (for example to describe their favourite activity or sport, or food, or time of the day; or what they do during their holidays; or their morning routine; or what their house, bedroom or neighbourhood looks like; or what their real or imaginary friend or pet is like).

- **Get on stage quickly**

Ask all learners to sit in a circle and one learner at a time will come and stand in the middle, ideally on a fake stage such as a small carpet, a sturdy box or low table, or just a mark on the floor (it needs to be safe). Give a story starter such as "Once upon a time..." or "The other day..." and on the count of 3, a designated learner will jump 'on stage' and burst out a sentence to follow, then sit back and the learner on their left will do the same, and so on.

## *Loving Me*

Self-love is generally sensitive and often in question: "Am I doing the right thing? Am I good enough? What do others think of me?" And self-love gets hurt unexpectedly, putting us in this vulnerable space, where it is not just hard to be loved, it is also hard to extend love and support to others. This book, *Loving Me*, is about loving oneself so that we can truly be a loving person.

**Note: If working with more than one learner, you may want to make photocopies of pages 17-20 of the book *Loving Me*.**

- Before reading: Ask "What is love?" "Can you describe it?" "What do you think 'loving me' means?"
- Page 1 – Ask: "Do you know someone you love?"
- Page 2 – Ask: "In what way are you a loving person?"
- Page 3 – Ask: "Do you know someone who loves you?"
- Page 4 – Ask: "Do you love yourself too?" "What is it like loving you?"
- Pages 5 and 6 – Ask: "In what way do you listen to, or connect with, yourself?"
- Pages 7 and 8 – Ask: "In what way do you connect to your surroundings?"
- Pages 9 – Invite learners to hold their own hands in that way.
- Page 10 – Ask: "How do you feel when you know you've done something well?"

- Pages 11 and 12 – Ask: “What do you see in these illustrations?” and “What kind of mistake could you make and how could you repair it?”
- Page 13 – Ask: “How are efforts and rest different?” and “In what ways are they both important?”
- Page 14 – Ask: “What do you see in this illustration?”
- Page 15 – Ask: “What do you see in these illustrations?” and “Can you think of a time when it’s hard but you continue anyway?”
- Page 16 – Ask: “What do you see in this illustration?” and “What do you like about your kindness?”
- Pages 17 and 18 – Invite each learner to write or say their name in the sentences on each page (or photocopy).
- Pages 19 and 20 – Tell learners to do what is suggested on each page (or photocopy).
- Pages 21 and 22 – Ask: “What feelings do you recognise here?”
- Pages 23 and 24 – Ask: “What wants and needs do you recognise here?”
- Pages 25 and 26 – Ask: “What thoughts could these be?”
- Pages 27 and 28 – Ask: “How does that make sense to you?”
- Pages 29 and 30 – Ask: “What do you understand the other character wants on these two pages?”
- Pages 31 and 32 – Ask: “What do you see in these illustrations?”
- End of story – Ask:
  - “How do you like loving and being a good friend to others?”
  - “What can you do to show someone that you love them?” and “Can you do that to yourself?” If not, “What loving thing could you do for yourself?”
  - “What can you say to show someone that you love them?” and “Can you tell yourself that too?” If not, “What loving thing could you say to yourself?”
    - For older learners (approximately 10 and up) – Ask also:
  - “Can you think of good reasons to love yourself?”
- Expanded reading activities:
  - **Listen around and inside**  
Speak SLOWLY and PAUSE after giving learners each of the following instructions:
    - 1) “Sit back (or lie down) and close your eyes so that you can just listen to the noises around you”, first in the room or immediately around them, then outside or a little further away, and finally extremely far away – each time asking them: “Notice and maybe identify (but silently) everything you can hear”.
    - 2) Tell them: “Now ignore the noises in the room or outside, and instead notice any noise you can detect inside your body. What can you hear inside your body?... Inside your head – what does it say?... Inside your heart, your veins, your breathing – how does it sound?... Your tummy – is it gurgling? Your shoulders, your arms and legs – what do they tell you?... Your hands and feet – do they have a message for you?... Can you hear or detect anything else in your body?”
  - **My talents**  
Ask each learner to recognize and list their own gifts and special talents (something they do well, for example a sport, or playing a musical instrument, or a particular subject like math, or even being good at making friends). These may then be illustrated by means of drawings or collage and/or live presentation to the class.

- **Connect with self-love**

- 1) Tell learners to do the following: "Hold your own hands together, just as you would hold someone else's hand, and bring them close to your chest, and feel how you love yourself deeply, how you know you are a good person, and how beautiful this is." Pause here.
- 2) Then, add: "Now that you feel the love you have for yourself. Can you identify where you feel it the most in your body? Is it everywhere or more concentrated in one area of your body?" (Speak slowly and mark pauses in between each question) "And how does it feel?" "Does it have a texture, is it soft? Is it solid? ... Does it have a movement or a rhythm, is it still? Regular? Random? Calm or excited? Does it breathe with you?" (pause) "What it is like? Does it have a size, shape, colour, smell, or taste that you love? ... Does it make a beautiful noise? Does it tell you something nice?" – Just feel your love and know it's there.

- **Love from inside out**

- 1) Ask learners to draw, model or describe the similarities and differences between self-love and love for others and the world.
- 2) Then direct them to "Breathe in self-love, and breathe out love to others and the world".
- 3) Ask them if it is possible to breathe out without breathing in first?

- **Loving Me Chain**

Keep a basket with strips of paper and a pencil somewhere in your classroom or your home. Each time learners perform an act of kindness towards themselves or others (request they note both), ask them to write it on a strip of paper and tape the ends together to form the link of a chain. Display your chain along a wall somewhere.

## *Right Now*

In this book, we get to experience how our thoughts are placed in time (past, present or future) and how where our thoughts are placed in time can affect how we feel. Happiness is really in the present. The past can often give us sad or melancholic feelings because what happened in the past is over, and there is nothing we can do about it now, except dwell on it, regret it or miss it. And because of the way our memory works, there is a risk we can distort past reality. However, we can learn from it. The future can give us feelings of fear or worry because of its uncertain nature. We can plan for the future but we can never know for sure what will happen. It can work well to look forward to a bright future and have goals or projects that motivate us in the present - as long as we do not project into the future so much that we are not actually living the present moment, and as long as we can keep our expectations flexible enough so we do not get disappointed and unable to see and grab opportunities.

- **Pre-reading self-grounding activity:** Instruct learners to sit while keeping both feet on the floor and invite them to feel the contact of the soles of their feet with the ground. Ask them to notice how it feels to do just that. Leave a moment of silence for them to connect inwards.
- Pages 1 and 2 – Ask: "What happened?" "Is it still happening now?" "How is our character feeling now?" "How can you explain this?"
- Pages 3 and 4 – Ask: "What is happening now?" "What is our character doing on page 3?" And "What is our character doing on page 4?"

- Page 5 – Point at the thought bubble and ask: “What is our character thinking?” and “How is our character feeling now when thinking about that?”
- Page 6 – Ask: “How is our character feeling now?”
- Pages 7 and 8 – Ask: “How is our character looking now when thinking this way?”
- Pages 9 and 10 – Ask: “How is our character feeling now?”
- Pages 11 and 12 – Ask: “When does our character feel good here?” “How does he or she know it only took 12 minutes yesterday?” “What is our character wearing on their wrist here [inside the thought bubble on page 12]?”
- Pages 13 and 14 – Ask: “How is our character looking now?” “How can you explain this on each of these two pages?”
- Page 15 – Ask: “Is our character eating yet?” “How does he or she know it’s snack time?”
- Page 16 – Ask: “How about now, is our character eating?”
- Page 17 – Ask: “What thought is bothering our character now?”
- Page 18 – Ask: “What did our character do with that thought?”
- Pages 19 and 20 – Ask: “What is our character doing and feeling now?”
- Page 21 – Ask: “Do you know that feeling?” “What kind of feeling is that?”
- Page 22 – Ask: “What made the feeling change here?” “You see the stopwatch for timing how long something takes, have you seen or used one before?”
- Page 23 – Ask: “Do you sometimes think about what happened before or what to do later?” “Are you thinking now?”
- Page 24 – Ask: “What is it like for you now?” “What is different about each moment?”
- Page 25 – Ask: “What do you notice now on this picture?”
- End of story – Ask: “And what do you notice here now?” “And what else do you notice if you close your eyes?”
- Expanded reading activities:
  - **Square breathing**
    - 1) Breathe in, to the count of four.
    - 2) Hold the breath for four counts (as if you were under water)
    - 3) Breathe out to the count of four.
    - 4) Count to four before taking in your next breath.
  - **Feeling one’s internal movements**  
Ask all learners to stand up straight with both feet touching and arms by their sides. Then ask them to simply close their eyes and feel their body’s internal movements and the tiny adjustments they are having to make to stay still.
  - **Balancing**  
Balancing is an exercise that requires presence. Challenge learners to see how long they can stay standing on one leg (you may use a stopwatch). Tell them to focus on a still point in front of them to help their balance. Then tell them to try standing on their other leg, and challenge them further by asking them to sing a song while balancing, or look right then left, or even harder, close their eyes.
  - **Mind your surroundings**
    1. Ask learners to look at the room carefully, trying to notice all the details around them.

2. Ask them to close their eyes while you change something (remove or move something obvious) without them seeing you do it.
3. Ask if they can notice what has changed when they reopen their eyes.

- **Observe and memorize**

Ask learners to take turns saying the name of one thing they can see around them, after having listed in order everything else that has been listed so far by others, using the following words "In this 'room' (or 'place', 'garden', etc), I see... [everything listed so far, in order] and ... [a new thing each learner sees and adds to the list].

The last two games both target awareness, language and memory but this one becomes increasingly challenging as each person adds another thing to remember.

## Sharing

Sharing does not come naturally. Small children often experience difficulties sharing toys. Yet, it is important to realise that we can meet many of our needs (for safety, connection, personal development, contribution, or variety) through sharing. At any age, when someone begrudges or feels protective about something, they may find comfort in considering in what way sharing may apply. This book helps readers explore the wide variety of things we can share.

**Reminder: shared reading only (using few of the suggested guiding questions and no expanded reading) is highly valuable with pre-school children (1-5 years old).**

- Before reading: Ask "What can 'sharing' mean?" "What do you like about sharing?" "What do you not like about sharing?"
- Pages 1 and 2 – Ask: "What do you think is nice about sharing a meal together?" "What is everyone doing here?" "Are they looking like they are enjoying it?" "Would you want to give everyone the same amount on their plate?"
- Pages 3 and 4 – Ask: "How is it nice to share a room?" "What do we have to do for it to work well?" "What is everyone doing here?"
- Pages 5 and 6 – Ask: "In what way are they sharing a happy time?"
- Pages 7 and 8 – Ask: "What are they doing here?" "How can it be nice to share pain?"
- Pages 9 and 10 – Ask: "How can you share an idea?" "When one person talks, what does the other person do?"
- Pages 11 and 12 – Ask: "Do you like to be introduced to new friends?" "Do you sometimes introduce your friends?" "How do you do it?"
- Pages 13 and 14 – Ask: "When do you take turns?" "Do you like lending your possessions?" "Do you like borrowing from others?"
- Pages 15 and 16 – Ask: "Have you ever laughed so much that it made you cry?" "Do you think this can happen when you are by yourself?"
- Pages 17 and 18 – Ask: "In what ways are the children sharing on this picture?"
- Pages 19 and 20 – Ask: "What kind of thing can we say or do to someone to encourage them?" "How do you feel when you encourage someone else?"
- Pages 21 and 22 – Ask: "In what ways do we share the world?"
- Pages 23 and 24 – Ask: "How do you feel about sharing now?"

- Pages 25 to 28 – Provide pens, and paper if needed, for learners to draw as suggested.
- Expanded reading activities:
  - **One each**  
Distribute to learn to share: When you want to distribute something to everyone in the class (or the family), ask one learner to do it.
  - **Pass the hot potato**  
To teach young children to share, you can play this game using a ball. Pretend the ball is a hot potato and ask learners to pass the ball from one to the next quickly so they don't burn their hands.
  - **Co-singing**  
Learn a simple song and sing a word each.
  - **Co-constructed story**  
Make up a group story where one starts a sentence and everyone adds a piece. This usually adds up to a lot of funny nonsense.
  - **For more activities** relevant to sharing, look under 'Listening and Connecting' in the 'Further Activities' part 4.C.a.

## 4. FURTHER ACTIVITIES

### for guided participation in expanded reading

**As part of expanded reading, after reading any of the *I realise* stories,** you may (depending on the age and maturity of your learner/s) use the following activities to guide more participation, raise more awareness and increase emotional intelligence.

As a guideline, unless stated otherwise (and marked with a hollow bullet point), the following activities can benefit most learners from 6 years old to adulthood.

### A. FACILITATING SELF-EXPRESSION

#### a. TARGETTING CRITICAL SKILLS AND SELF-DEVELOPMENT

**Ask open-ended questions** that invite learners to think for themselves and thereby process their own learning. In particular, after reading any of the *I realise* stories, you may ask these questions:

- What happened in this book?

Possibly followed by:

- How? How come?
- What does this mean for you?
- What did you like?
- What did you not like?
  - Alternatively, with older learners (approximately 8 and up), you may ask:
    - What is this story about for you?

- Does this story give you any useful advice that you want to remember?
- How does this story help you?

To encourage learners to talk, ask **'what' and 'how' questions** rather than 'why' questions.

As mentioned in part 3, all questions are for the educator to ask and for **learners to answer in their own way**. Educators may rest assured that even when learners do not answer a question out loud, their cognitive skills are still being used. Silent realisations are at least as important as verbally expressed comprehension. Furthermore, a question can often sow a seed in each individual that will flourish in its own time and its own way. Therefore, the educator does not provide any answer; each learner's own experience will provide them with answers, after a question has been asked.

## b. EXPRESSING DIFFICULT THINGS

Use non-verbal activities and the senses to encourage expression. To help learners explore any idea, in particular to enable them to describe abstract concepts, or to facilitate bringing subconscious aspects into their awareness, you may find it useful to ask them do the following:

- Use **play dough** or some **construction toy** to make the 'thing' they want to tell you about, and give you details about it.
- **Draw or paint** that 'thing', and maybe everything in and around it too, and then describe their drawing to you.
- **Make a collage** as a way to express themselves (provide home décor, gardening, cooking, nature, travel, sport and fashion magazines with scissors and glue for this).
- Make **gestures** to accompany expression, and **show or mime** if appropriate.
- Role play using animal soft toys or **puppets**.
- **Use all the senses** (look, smell, taste, sound, touch/feel) to describe size, shape, odour, scent, aroma, melody, rhythm, movement, texture, etc.

## B. INTRA-PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

### a. BODY AWARENESS

- **Feeling in the body**
  - Instruct learners to sit or lie down in a comfortable position and close their eyes.
  - Ask them to notice how their body is feeling right now. Are there parts of their body that feel more or less comfortable, and how? Give them time to answer silently.
  - Guide them to do a body scan, simply by directing their attention slowly to one body part at a time, starting with their head, neck, shoulders, upper back, chest, lower back, tummy, hips, arms, hands, legs, and ending with their feet.
  - Ask them to feel the weight of their body on the ground or the chair that is supporting them, and then to identify every point or surface of contact between their body and that support.
  - Ask learners to put their left hand on their heart and their right hand on their tummy and feel them move up and down with their breaths.

- **Sensation charades**

Depending on the size of your group, select a number of different sensorial items (for example: soap, dough, wood fire, candy floss, snow, wind, rain, seaweed in the water, a pine cone, a cushion, a sandwich, an apple, a flower, a door mat, orange juice, soup, getting into bed, waking up, running, etc.) and write or draw them where everyone can see the pictures and/or the words. Ask your learner/s to use only sensations to describe and make others (you or their partner or their team) guess an item. Instruct them to use their imagination and start their description with one of the following phrases:

- When I touch it, it feels/I feel ...
- When I see it, it feels/I feel ...
- When I hear it, it feels/I feel ...
- When I smell it, it feels/I feel ...
- When I taste it, it feels/I feel ...

- **See also** the expanded reading activities suggested for the book *Right Now* in the 'Guided participation' section.

## b. EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

- **A day of emotions**

Feelings come and go and we are often not aware of them. Ask learners to make a list of all the things that have happened in their day so far today, or yesterday, or in the last week, and then to try and identify how they felt at the time. Have them illustrate and share.

- **Distinguish Body/Emotion/Thought**

- With older learners (approximately 8 and up)

Draw a stickman to represent body or physical feelings, a heart to represent emotional feelings, and a cloud shape above a head to represent thoughts. Ask learners to take their 'day of emotions' list (see above) and identify and mark each emotion with a stickman, heart or thought symbol. If possible, ask them to add to their description of each emotion with missing symbols (for example, to the stickman "I felt shaky", they could add the heart "I was so nervous" and the thought "I didn't want to look silly").

- **Body-emotion connection awareness**

- **Facial expression:** Draw emoticons to illustrate basic emotions and write down the list of emotions represented by the emoticons (for example: a regular smiley for happy, a smiley with star-shaped eyes for excited, a regular sad face for sad, a straight mouth for ok, a frowny face for angry, big round eyes for surprised, big round mouth for scared) and ask learners to match each face (emoticon) with an emotion.
- **Do the feelings walk:** Name a feeling and ask learners to walk around the room in a way that embodies that feeling – using their bodies and faces. Use contrasting feelings (sad-happy, scared-confident, angry-pleased, anxious-relaxed, bored-excited, safe-unsafe) so they can notice the differences in their body.
- **Emotion triggers:**
  - 1- You can also list scenarios and ask learners to match them with an emotion (for example: I felt something crawl up my leg in the dark, I won a prize, my friend is leaving, I'm going on holiday tomorrow, my brother takes my toy when I told him not to, I fall but I don't hurt myself, someone jumps in front of me and goes 'boo!').

- 2- Tell learners to make a list of physical needs and how they can affect their moods and feelings, for example: Needing sleep-cranky, needing food-shaky, needing hydration-lightheaded, needing exercise-fidgety, needing rest-fatigue. See how many they can come up with and maybe ask them to illustrate each physical state.
- Mismatch body and emotion: for example, ask learners to take a big deep breath of fresh air in, raise their chest, look up, smile and try and feel sad; or ask them to sit curled up with their heads down and shoulders rolled in and try and feel excited. Invite them to share what they experience.
  - Influence your emotion: Ask them to make big huge smiles and tell you how they feel, then ask them to make big frowns and tell you how they feel.
  - Balance your life: Introduce a sign to represent the different types of things we do in our lives, (for example a star for occupying myself alone, a horizontal line for relaxing, a cross for doing something social, a square for screen time, a circle for looking after my body, a climbing line for learning, a triangle for working, a wiggly line for traveling). Then suggest that learners keep a journal and use these signs for a whole week, and agree on a date to report.
- **Thought-emotion connection awareness**
    - Pictures and thoughts: Cut out pictures from travel, sports, nature, home décor, cooking, gardening, and fashion magazines and ask learners to say how each picture makes them feel. Ask them to explain how: “what do you think, or what goes through your mind when you look at the picture and feel that way?”
    - Interpretations as thoughts: Describe a couple of events that could easily be viewed differently by different people, for example ‘it suddenly starts snowing a lot’ or ‘a sports team loses’; ask learners how different people could interpret these situations differently, and how their points of view might make them feel. Then ask each learner to come up with more events and how they could be viewed and experienced differently.
    - Metaphors as thoughts: In a group guided relaxation, experience the power of metaphors to access different feelings: “your chest is as light as a feather”, “your arms feel like jelly” or “your legs are heavy tree trunks...”
  - **Emotions vocabulary and identification**
    - With older learners (approximately 8 and up)

Make an Emotions vocabulary list and ask learners to do the following:

    - Separate the desired resourceful emotions from the stressful ones (they may notice that many could be classified in either group, depending on the situation).
    - Attribute or invent an emoticon for each emotion.
    - Categorise them under four groups: happiness, sadness, anger and fear (some may belong to more than one group).
    - In each group, organise them in order of intensity.

### c. EMOTIONAL CONTROL

- **Self-grounding practice**
  - Instruct learners to sit while keeping both feet on the floor and invite them to feel the contact of the soles of their feet with the ground. Leave a moment of silence for them to connect inwards. (This activity is also suggested in pre-reading ‘Right Now’).

- **Breathing techniques**

- Use any breathing technique you know to slow down breathing and calm the body (such as square breathing, alternate nostril breathing, ujjayi or ocean breathing, or simply 'in through the nose into the belly and out of the mouth'.
- Then ask learners to use the power of their imagination to breathe in new air and resourceful feelings, and breath out old air and anything that doesn't serve them anymore (or to breathe in happiness, and breathe out any trouble or tension).

- **In and out of emotion practice**

- Tell learners to sit or lie down in a comfortable position and then guide them to tense and release all their body parts, using all muscle groups, one at a time.
- Encourage them to do relaxation breathing after each muscle group is relaxed.

- **Leading with posture**

Using the face/body-emotion connection (as described in Emotional Awareness activities part 4.B.b.), practice purposely adopting a physical expression or posture to access desired emotions – it's ok for each learner to choose to experience any emotion they want here.

- **Using our rational brain**

- Internal language (self-talk) and cognition

Ask learners to share something they are thinking or feeling right now.

Depending on whether a learner is aware of a thought or feeling first, you may help them make the connection by asking: "What goes through your mind when you feel this way?" or "How do you feel when you have this thought?"

- And for older learners (approximately 8 and up), you may add:

"How would you feel without this thought?" and "Can you think of a good reason to hang on to this thought?"

- Positive and negative

Ask each learner to think of two examples of what they consider to be a 'good' and a 'bad' thing. Then, open a discussion and guide them to find positive and negative aspects in both. Doing this helps to develop cognitive flexibility.

- Interpretation challenge

This activity allows learners to understand that we all see different things first: Have a set of photos of landscapes, animals, indoor settings, or people, depicting more than one thing – maybe cut out from travel, sports, nature, home décor, cooking, gardening and fashion magazines – give one to each learner.

With young children (approximately 5-7 years old), ask them to name the first thing they see on their picture. In turns, ask them to list all the other things they can see on their picture that they had not immediately noticed. When they run out of ideas, instruct them to show their picture and ask everyone if they can see anything else on it.

- With older learners (approximately 7 and up), you could ask them what feeling or message they get from their picture, and then instruct them to pass their picture to the person on their right so that everyone now has a new picture, and ask the next person to challenge all previous interpretations of that picture.
- For older learners (approximately 12 and up), after playing the Interpretation challenge, you could:

- Watch a nature movie with animals in the wild (such as one of David Attenborough's) and ask them to identify when animals respond in one of three ways: fighting, running away or hiding/playing dead.
- Explain that we humans also have these kinds of responses and ask your learner/s to identify times when they remember behaving in one these ways (or being aware of wanting to).
- Explain a bit about the human brain: Everything we feel starts at the amygdala (at the back of the head, show roughly where), our 'sensory brain' which functions like an animal survival instinct and sometimes tells us that we are in danger and that we need to 'fight, flight, or freeze' to save ourselves. But we also have a large prefrontal cortex (at the top of the head behind our forehead, show roughly where) our 'rational brain' that makes a decision on what our 'sensory brain' tells us, so that our behaviour can be thoughtful, or mindful. So, when we feel overwhelmed with a feeling sent by our 'sensory brain', we can use our 'rational brain' to assess the situation and decide what to do. And then, ask them: "so which brain part did we use to interpret things in a different way, as we did with our pictures?"

- **How emotions help us**

Encourage learners to express different emotions they may have in various situations, and to acknowledge the helpful role of each emotion type (see the expanded reading activities suggested for the book *My Emotions Are Helpful* in the 'Guided participation' part 3).

## C. INTER-PERSONAL COMMUNICATION

### a. LISTENING AND CONNECTING

- **Mirror hands**

Ask learners to work in pairs and take it in turns to mirror each other's gestures. This activity helps develop connection and attention.

- **Hand squeeze current**

Ask all learners to form a circle and hold hands and tell them to wait until they feel a squeeze on one hand to squeeze with their other hand so as to pass the current around the circle. Be in the circle yourself and start the current by squeezing with one of your hands; wait until the current goes around the whole circle and comes back to your other hand to start a new one, perhaps in the other direction this time. This activity helps develop connection and attention.

- **Contact chain writing**

- With older learners (approximately 7 and up), ask everyone to form a circle and hold hands. Name two learners who will start, and when you say a word, their connecting hands will spell the first letter of that word in the air together. The second letter of the word is then spelt by the next pair of hands, and so on, anti-clockwise (because we write from left to right) until the whole word has been spelt correctly, and you can then say another word. As well as teaching connection and focus, doing this activity is a great way of practicing spelling, or getting their attention on the content of a short text or statement.

- **Connecting challenge**

- With older learners (approximately 7 and up), ask all learners to form a circle and two of them to come and sit in the centre. One will be the 'doer' and the other the 'copier'. The 'doer' will

make gestures and take postures as if these were part of a conversation but he or she will remain silent. The 'copier' will copy all the 'doer's' gestures and positions, and both of them will keep constant eye contact with each other. Once they have started doing this successfully, every other learner around them will in turn ask the 'copier' an easy question – something the 'copier' knows the answer to (for example: what is the colour of your hair? What is 4+4? Or what did you have for lunch?) When the 'copier' has answered six questions successfully without disconnecting with the 'doer', then he or she picks a new 'doer' and the previous 'doer' becomes the new 'copier'. This game challenges the 'copier' to stay connected in communication while answering questions, and it creates a lot of fun.

## b. EMPATHY AND ACCEPTANCE

- **The scarf's versatility**

This is a game that can be played with young learners when presented this way: "Let's see how many things we can pretend this is" – show them a square or rectangle scarf and tell them it will be passed around the circle as everyone comes up with an idea and tells and shows what the scarf could be. If needed, give one or two examples: "I'm pretending it's... a baby carrier, a bag, a bull fighter's cape, it can be anything". This game invites learners to give each other attention while sharing creative ideas.

- If the learners are old enough (7 and up), you may turn this into a memory game in which one has to repeat every possible use given for the scarf so far before adding their own.

- **The association train cards**

○ With older learners (approximately 7 and up). This activity aims at considering other people's points of view: You can use A4 size card paper to play this game on the floor: Write a word on one card (for example: train, wind or work), place it on the floor and ask a learner to write on another card the first word that comes to their mind in association with your word. Ask them to attach it to your card while explaining the link in their mind (for example "travel because I like to travel by train" or "trees because they dance in the wind" or "fun because I love my work"). In turn, all learners will repeat all the previous words and association links before adding their own. In so doing, everyone will: notice that we don't all make the same immediate associations, give each other attention, and work their memories.

- **Communication bridges**

○ With older learners (approximately 7 and up). This activity aims at gaining an understanding of other people's communicative styles and preferences: Show learners that there are many different types of bridges (floating bridges, suspension bridges, lifting bridges, pedestrians' bridges, road bridges, utility bridges, railway bridges). Ask learners to invent and draw their own bridge to represent how they like to connect with others. Ask them to make up rules and maybe come up with a password for crossing their bridge. Invite them to share their drawing and explain it to the class.

## D. LANGUAGE FOCUS

### MASTERING VERBAL AND NON-VERBAL LANGUAGE

All activities listed so far in this guide will help learners develop language skills naturally through content learning. The following activities focus on specific linguistic aspects and can be used to develop language accuracy and clarity skills in communication.

○ Invite learners (7 to adulthood) to do any of the following things:

- **Change the tone** of the voices (for example cheerful or resigned) to see how it may alter the meaning of what is being said by the character/s in the story.
- **Change the intonation** to identify what questions, exclamations or simple statement sound like.
- **Practice reading punctuation** where relevant: Stretch out the last sound of the last word before ellipses (three dots) to express suspense or thoughtfulness. Mark a mini pause for commas and a longer one for full-stops.
- **Change the emphasized word** to see how it may alter the meaning of any sentence, and discuss what may be implied with different emphases.

For example: *"I would choose to all be happy"* (from *The Ball*)

1. This sentence could be read with an emphasis on the word 'I': *"I would choose to all be happy"* may express that although not everyone would, that is what I would do.
2. An emphasis on the word 'would': *"I **would** choose to all be happy"* may, if '**would**' is said slowly, express some uncertainty, that although I would choose to do this, I may still feel a little upset and therefore not entirely happy straight away. Or, if '**would**' is said fast, it may sound more like a commitment, or a promise.
3. An emphasis on the word 'choose': *"I would **choose** to all be happy"* may imply that it is something I would do on purpose, not automatically.
4. An emphasis on the word the word 'all': *"I would choose to **all** be happy"* suggesting the idea of including everybody.
5. An emphasis on the word 'be': *"I would choose to all **be** happy"* may suppose that it may be a question of attitude and behaviour.
6. An emphasis on the word 'happy': *"I would choose to all be **happy**"* stresses that particular way of being.

You can do the above activity with any sentence.

- **Observe both verbal and non-verbal language** used to convey messages in each book. How does one support the other? Ask your learner/s to analyse and explain.
- **Discuss the particularities and purposes of the language used:** How else could we say one thing or another? Explore the learners' own resources. In a group, let them learn from each other. If appropriate, add your input and participate too.
- **Tell a story from the pictures:** Ask learners to describe what the pictures alone say to them – to work on self-expression, develop fluency, and possibly take notes in order to target relevant aspects of linguistic accuracy afterwards.
- **Find different ways of conveying the same message:** Ask learners to describe different scenarios or draw their own pictures to convey the same messages.

- **Take turns reading aloud:** Dramatize and/or role-play relevant scenarios or situations, using any language technique learnt to make the meaning clear.
- **Silent reading, reporting and expanding:** This is an activity where the learner is asked to do four things:
  1. Read one book silently with a view to then perform steps 2, 3 and 4.
  2. Report the story or a scenario (some stories are made of several scenarios) in their own words, without interpreting it at this stage. Just tell it as it is.
  3. Expand by sharing their interpretation of it, for example explaining any message, conclusion, advice, moral or lesson they drew from the story or scenario.
  4. Give a real-life example of how their interpretive message may apply, by drawing from their personal experience.

Before starting this activity, make sure all learners understand the difference between reporting (re-telling as is in your own words) and interpreting (giving it a meaning).

- **Work on emergent language:** Offer any vocabulary that immediately enables learners' expression. Be mindful to help, not hinder, self-expression. If needed, take notes and come back to working on vocabulary or accuracy after the communicative activities.

I hope this guide and activities are useful to you. Feel free to email me:

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I would love to hear from you,  
answer your questions,  
and consider any constructive feedback you may have.

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