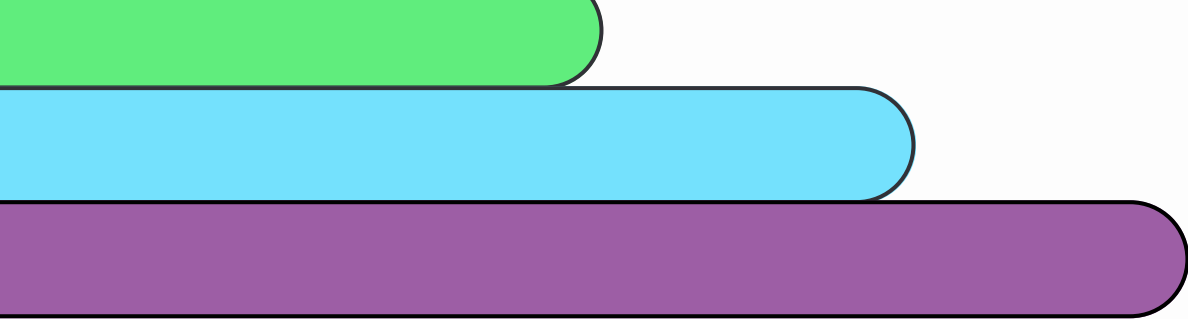




# The Mindful Adventures of Unicorn Island Discussion Guide



headspace



# The Show

When Lilly faces real-life problems, she's transported to Unicorn Island – an imaginary wonderland where life's struggles manifest in fantastical ways. With the help of her imaginary friends, Lilly learns new mindfulness activities to help overcome her troubles and brings those skills back to the “Real World” to deal with real-life problems. This animated series incorporates mindfulness principles to help kids gain emotion-regulation skills to make sense of challenges in their life.

## What's Included



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## A Quick Note

Hey There!

We're so glad you're watching *The Mindful Adventures of Unicorn Island* and are interested in applying some of the tools and exercises Lilly learns in the show to your own classroom! Whether you're feeling inspired to connect more with your students or you're looking for a new way to bring calm to your classroom, this guide can help your class build healthy habits that last a lifetime. Better focus, less stress, and happier thoughts are just a few of the benefits of mindfulness. To help guide discussions around the show, we partnered with kids' mindfulness experts to design this guide and to pair relevant Headspace exercises from the app for you and your students. First, visit [headspace.com/educators](https://headspace.com/educators) to start your free educator's membership and create your personal account.

Watching this series as a class can be both a bonding and learning experience for student and will also help build your classroom's practice and confidence. These lessons and exercises can be used anytime, anywhere. Try them before an exam, after lunch, or before independent work time. You're well on your way to creating a happier, more mindful learning environment. Happy Viewing!

## Getting Started

- Find our series, The Mindful Adventures of Unicorn Island, on Headspace's YouTube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/headspace>)
- After viewing an episode, lead your classroom in a discussion around the problems Lilly faced in that episode and the mindfulness exercise she put into practice to help. Use the discussion questions provided to help facilitate conversations.
- End your time by searching for the chosen exercise in the Headspace app and letting our kids' mindfulness expert lead your class through their own exercise.

## Helpful Tips and Tricks

Bringing Headspace to the classroom is easy, even if you're still learning mindfulness too. Take a second to congratulate yourself for getting started. Here are some tips and tricks to help you build your confidence and enjoy building this new habit with your class.

- Help your students let go of any pressure to “get it right.” There’s no right way to practice mindfulness.
- Practice alongside your students to help everyone feel less self-conscious about trying something new.
- Mindfulness isn’t about forcing your class to be calm. In fact, recognizing when they aren’t calm can help them move through their feelings together.
- Create deeper connections with your class by sharing your experiences with each other. What came up during your practice?
- Some students might just want to rest during mindfulness exercises. Let them!

# Episode One

In this episode, Lilly thinks that the twins don't want to hang out anymore because they didn't text her back right away. But it turns out that they were just at dinner and had to put their phones away. The characters on Unicorn Island paid attention to their senses to calm down and then asked themselves, what else could be true?

## Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of a time when something turned out differently than you thought it would?
2. When can you ask yourself, what else may be true?

## 5-Senses Exercise

Let's practice noticing our senses with 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 noticing.

What are five things you can see where you are? Maybe some things you've never noticed before.

What are four sensations you can notice? Maybe the temperature of the room, how your clothes feel and how another surface feels.

Now, close your eyes if you'd like and notice three different sounds.

Now take a deep breath in and notice two different scents. If you don't smell anything, imagine two smells you really like.

And lastly, notice one taste in your mouth or think of one flavor you really like.

**Headspace  
App Exercise:**

Stay Positive

## Episode Two

In this episode, Lilly had a hard time falling asleep because of worries. When she goes to Unicorn Island, she and her friends do a body scan and then send friendly wishes.

### Discussion Questions

1. Can you name some examples of body sensations?
2. How does your body feel when you're angry?
3. How about when you're excited?
4. Noticing body sensations helps our emotions to settle. Can you think of a time when you'd like to try a body scan?
5. Have you ever had trouble falling asleep? Do you think a body scan might help?
6. Who's someone you like or love? Think about three things you like about them and share if you'd like. What's one friendly wish you would like to send them?

### Headspace App Exercise:

Rest and Relax

## Episode Three

This episode is all about being a good listener by using the acronym H.E.A.R which stands for:

**H**alt or pause to listen

**E**njoy a deep breath

**A**sk yourself, “do I know what they’re talking about?”

**R**eflect back what they said

### Discussion Questions

Listening can be hard if we feel bored, anxious, restless or eager to share ourselves. It’s easier when we are interested in what our friends are talking about, like something funny that happened or when they’re sharing tips that we want to know about. Being a good listener takes practice and the HEAR practice can help you get started.

1. When is it hard to listen?
2. When is it easy?
3. What’s one step of the HEAR practice that you’d like to try next time you’re listening to a friend.

### Headspace App Exercise:

Paying Attention

## Episode Four

This episode looks at two ways to find calm when big feelings arise; naming feelings and scanning the body for sensations.

### Discussion Questions

1. What are three feelings you enjoy having or that are easy?
2. What are three feelings that are hard to feel? And what do they feel like in your body?
3. Can you remember a time when you felt disappointed like Lilly Corn? What does it feel like in your body? What's one kind thing you can say to yourself after scanning your body for sensations?
4. Can you name three different sensations that you can feel in your body? (*Teachers/Parents: You can give some examples like hunger, thirst, comfort, tingling, hot and cold*)

### Headspace App Exercise:

Experiencing  
Big Emotions

## Episode Five

This episode looks at ways we can regulate our emotions using the acronym S.T.O.P:

**S**top what you're doing

**T**ake a slow, deep breath

**O**bserve and feelings, thoughts, urges and body sensations that are present

**P**roceed with more calm

After Lilly-Corn practiced S.T.O.P when she was upset, she realized that she felt stuck because of her friends' teasing. She was able to make sense of what happened and how she felt and then access helpful thoughts and even empathy for her brother.

### Discussion Questions

1. When do you think you might practice S.T.O.P?
2. Can you name a feeling that you might have if you were in the following situations?
3. How would you feel if someone teases you about something?
4. What feeling could you have if you received a surprise gift from a friend?
5. What feeling might you have if you won a competition?
6. What feeling might you have if a friend had to cancel a sleepover?
7. What feeling might you have if you helped out someone in your family with chores?

**Headspace  
App Exercise:**

Cool Off

## Episode Six

This episode is about becoming aware of our inner judge, the ways we rehash events that brought up embarrassment or guilt and say unkind things to ourselves. Once we notice our inner judge, we can call upon our inner friend and think about qualities that we have that we feel good about. The characters of Unicorn Island practiced using a kindness filter or saying things that are true and kind about themselves to themselves.

### Discussion Questions

1. Do you feel like you have an inner judge? What does that voice sound like?
2. Can you share three things about yourself that you like/feel good about?
3. Share a story about a time when you were kind, helpful or brave.
4. Think of a friend or family member and two things you like/love about them and share.
5. Feel free to share this with the person and let them know that you appreciate these qualities.

**Headspace  
App Exercise:**

Kindness

## Episode Seven

In this episode Lilly realizes that avoiding problems can make them bigger. It's hard to figure out what to do or how to solve a problem when we're very anxious about it. Lilly-Corn and her friends realize that anchoring to their breath and counting their inhales and exhales helps them to feel calmer and ready to confront problems head on.

### Discussion Questions

1. Has there ever been a problem you tried to avoid like Lilly did in this episode? What happened?
2. Can you think of some times when taking deep belly breaths may help you feel calmer?
3. How does the feeling of calmness feel in your body?
4. What are some activities and places that bring you a feeling of calm?

**Headspace  
App Exercise:**

Calm

## Episode Eight

In this episode, Lilly struggles to clear her mind so she can get stuff on her to-do list done. Dora and her friends help her learn a new mindfulness tool and practice ones she has already learned.

### Discussion Questions

1. Who's someone you feel safe talking to when you have a lot of thoughts swirling around?
2. What mindfulness activity from Unicorn Island do you like the most?
3. Think of three ways you try your best at home, at school and with your friends. As you name them/talk about them, send yourself a silent/quiet "thank you" for all of your efforts.

### Headspace App Exercise:

Settling Down

## Episode Nine

In this episode, Lilly-Corn learns how to name her emotions with more granularity, or specificity. She also learns how to welcome her emotions and speak to them with kindness and compassion. *(Teachers/Parents: ask children to identify a few feelings that could come up during certain scenarios. Here are some to get you started: arriving late to school, not understanding a math lesson in class, wanting to have something that someone else has)*

### Discussion Questions

1. What's something kind you could say to your big emotions when they come up?
2. Imagine your friend is having a bad day. What's something you might say to them to help them feel better?
3. Think of someone that you may not get along with or don't know that well yet. As you think of them, think of some things you might have in common, starting with the phrase "just like me..." (you can provide some examples like these, "Just like me, they want to have fun or just like me, they want to have friends")

**Headspace  
App Exercise:**

Appreciation

## Episode Ten

In this episode, Lilly deals with some difficult emotions that come up from being in the middle of a conflict between two people she cares about. She learns how her thoughts and feelings can get shaken up like a snow globe and how taking time to breathe and note thoughts allows the chaos to settle.

### Discussion Questions

1. What are some situations that shake you up sometimes?
2. What are some things you like to do that allow your thoughts and feelings to settle?
3. When is it hard to share your feelings?
4. What makes it easier to share hard feelings with others?

### Headspace App Exercise:

Finding  
Positivity

# Common Questions

## How is this show helpful in the classroom?

This show centered around mindfulness and social emotional learning. The show was developed with a science backed curriculum designed to help kids build skills of self-compassion, and being present. When paired with exercises from the Headspace app, kids will develop the curiosity and confidence to understand their thoughts, focus better, and stay resilient to things they can't control.

## How do I get started?

You can find every episode of MAOUI on Headspace's YouTube page and can use the discussion questions in this guide for reflection after the episode. From there, you can search for the paired mindfulness exercise in the Headspace app to help your students start to develop a practice and put what they've learned into practice. Just encourage your class to approach mindfulness with curiosity and an open mind.

## Do we have to keep our eyes closed?

Students can keep their eyes open or closed, depending on what's comfortable for them. Sometimes resting your gaze on a spot in front of you can improve focus.

## How do I sit during a mindfulness exercise?

It's about what's most comfortable for each student. But for starters, we recommend sitting comfortably in a chair with legs uncrossed, feet flat on the floor, and hands resting on the legs or lap. Some students may prefer standing, or shifting their weight from side to side. There are no hard and fast rules with mindfulness.

## School is already so busy. How do I find the time?

These episodes and short exercises are meant to be short breaks in your day, maybe for use when the class is especially wound up or if everyone needs a breather. It's a fun and powerful way to teach kids about themselves and their emotions. To ensure consistency, it may be helpful to link them to another part of your classroom routine, like before silent reading time, at the start of class, or after lunch.

## What if my students have a hard time with mindfulness?

It can be uncomfortable to sit with your thoughts and emotions. For kids who've had difficult life experiences, it can be especially overwhelming. To make sure everyone enjoys these mindful breaks, give your students the option to just rest. Remind your class that mindfulness takes practice, just like learning an instrument or playing a sport.

## **Book Recommendations for Exploring Emotions**

Anh's Anger by Gail Silver

Moody Cow Meditates by Kerry MacLean

Visiting Feelings by Lauren Rubenstein

Steps and Stones by Gail Silver

Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda by Lauren Alderfer

## **Contact**

Series: <https://www.youtube.com/headspace>

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