

## **Notice Your Mind**

### **A script for teaching it to kids**

#### **Introduction**

If you have a picture or model of a brain, show it to the children. Tell them we all have brains and ask them to point to where their brains are.

Every minute of every day your brain makes thoughts, which are pictures and words. We do not always pay attention to all the thoughts and pictures swirling around, but we can.

Noticing your thoughts can help you see that thoughts can help you, or get in your way.

**Clear thoughts** help you because they are encouraging, positive, and make us happy.

**Muddy thoughts** get in your way because they are discouraging, negative and make us unhappy.

#### **Instruction**

Have a jar of clear water, and a jar with muddy water as visuals.

- 1. Clear Thoughts.** Hold up the jar with clear water, and say: clear thoughts are thoughts that help us be positive and happy. They encourage us, even when things are hard. Some examples of clear thoughts:

I can do this  
I will try  
No big deal  
I am proud of \_\_\_\_\_

- 2. Muddy Thoughts.** Hold up the muddy jar, and say: muddy thoughts are thoughts that get in our way and make things harder. They are negative and make us feel unhappy and discouraged. Some examples of muddy thoughts:

I can't do this  
I am not smart  
This is too hard  
I don't do anything right

As we get better at noticing our thoughts we can catch muddy thoughts and try to change them to clear. (Hold up both jars. First the muddy, then put it behind you, then the clear). We can see a muddy thought coming and talk to ourselves, saying "this muddy thought is not helping me, I am going to change it to clear."

## **Practice**

Ask an individual child or have partners be in pairs and think about their favorite clear thoughts and then “favorite” muddy thoughts. Yes, we can have favorite muddy thoughts—the ones that show up every day and we get so used to them, we think they cannot be changed! Have them also discuss how you can change your thoughts (calm or alert breaths, physical activity).