Why Mindfulness?

Introducing the concept of Mindfulness to kids can be challenging, but here's a fun way to help Builders Club members see how being Mindful can make a difference. Ask members to raise their hands if they have ever experienced any of the following.

- Said something you wish you could take back?
- Done something that you later regretted?
- Felt angry and out of control?
- Felt nervous or anxious about something?
- Been in a bad mood but not sure why?
- Felt like you need a break and want everyone to leave you alone?
- Had trouble falling asleep because your mind won't be quiet?
- Been accidentally spacing out when a teacher calls on you in class?

Read this explanation of Mindfulness to the group:
Being Mindful can help with all these things. Mindfulness is paying attention to our experience in a way that allows us to respond rather than react. All the examples above are things that happen when we react instead of pausing, taking a breath and responding. Learning Mindfulness will provide us with a quality of inner-stillness that is always available, even when our life or circumstances feel out of control and chaotic. It is possible to be aware and pay attention to everything in our experience including what we experience through our five senses (sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell) as well as our thoughts and emotions.

The skills we develop when practicing Mindfulness include:

Concentration
Noticing the activity of the mind and how the mind wanders, then bringing the mind back to the current moment when noticing that it's wandering.

Sense experience
The ability to reference emotion within our felt sense experience. (sight, hearing, taste, touch, smell)
Example: My heart is pounding, my breathing is speeding up, my stomach feels queasy, this is what fear feels like. I'm scared. I'll take deep breaths to calm myself.

Equanimity
The ability to be with the experience without over identifying with it, or pushing it away. Existing with our experience and finding balance and neutrality.

Let's try this.