



This simple worksheet provides 4 sections to work through with a class to establish an understanding of 'Mutual Encouragement', why it's important and how we can do more of it.

Section 1: Background

For teacher use or to be shared with the class

What is mutual encouragement?

This is essentially a way of living in a collaboratively positive way with our peers. It's the simple process of giving encouragement to those around us. However, an important factor is that there is often a greater reward in receiving encouragement from our peers rather than our teachers or parents. What's more, it can lead to an increase in self-belief in both the individual receiving the praise and also in the one giving it. The key is that it needs to be authentic encouragement. This can be difficult within a school situation and doesn't come naturally to everyone. A discussion on Mutual Encouragement can enable students to:

- Understand how some might be helped in challenging times by encouragement from their peers.
- Understand the benefits of making sure everyone in our community feels that they belong.
- Understand that looking 'out' and helping others is beneficial to their own wellbeing.
- Understand what makes 'authentic' praise.
- Inflate both our own 'balloons of self belief' and those of others.

Section 2: Vlog from James Shone

Spend a few minutes watching the following video clip on Youtube where James Shone will give his own views on Mutual Collaboration and why it's so vitally important.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qkFfDtpJli4&t=2s>

Section 3: Class Discussion

Begin by summarising the key points from James’s video to ensure that everyone is clear on the terminology:

- Mutual Encouragement
- Sense of belonging
- Collaboration
- Competition

As a class or in small groups, you can now introduce discussion topics along the following lines:

- What is the difference between competition and collaboration?
- Why do you think collaboration rather than competition might help someone’s mental wellbeing and why is it important?
- What might stop us from working collaboratively and encouraging our peers?
- If a friend was to encourage us, how might it make us feel?

Section 4: Class Activity

It’s important to think about ways in which collaboration and mutual encouragement can be introduced in to school life authentically. There are many definitions to the word ‘authentic’ – here we are using it to mean: “not false or copied; genuine; real”

Spend some time individually thinking about areas of school life where we might be able to encourage our peers and to operate more collaboratively. Illustrate or document answers in a way that could possibly be displayed. Ensure that these are authentic ideas that could genuinely promote mental wellbeing in others.