**Nepal - Primary School Lesson Plan**

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| **Coping with trauma** |
| **Overview:**  The students have all experienced trauma in the form of the earthquakes; and they survived. Trauma is a part of all of our lives. Using their experiences of the earthquakes, students can understand the emotions, skills and strategies associated with surviving traumatic situations. |
| **Objectives:**   * To understand that everyone goes through trauma in life * To develop some basic strategies to cope with different emotions and trauma |
| **Prerequisites:**   * An open trusting environment and strong relationships with students. |
| **Hook:**   * Ask the students if they remember what they were doing on 25 April 2015. Then discuss what they were doing at the time of the earthquake and how they felt. |
| **Activities:**   1. Read aloud OR Silent reading - Choose three of the personal reflections from students on the Heartquake website – one from immediately after, one from 3 months after and one from 6 months after. Read these aloud to your class. 2. Discussion – Ask the students to discuss how the feelings have changed since the quakes, over time. How are they different as time passes? How do they feel now? How have their feelings changed? 3. Drawing – Tell the students that they are all survivors. They survived 2 earthquakes and hundreds of aftershocks. Not many people outside of Nepal have experienced that. They are now superheros. Ask them to draw themselves in their superhero outfit. Ask them to include as much detail as possible – what colour is their outfit (which colour makes them feel strong?), what is their personal superhero logo on the front? Etc If your class is junior, you might show them some photos of superheros first to give them some ideas but make sure they don’t just copy them! 4. Group discussion - Once they have their superhero sketches, discuss in small groups how they feel in their superhero costumes. Have each class member come up and write a feeling on the board. 5. Explanation – Explain to the students that trauma is a part of life. They will have more experiences in their lives which create stress. But they know they can survive – they already have. They know that the feelings get easier after time as their earthquake feelings have. 6. Meditation – Ask the students to get comfortable and close their eyes. If you have room, they can lie down or put their head on the desks. Ask them to focus on their breathing – long breath in counting to 5, hold it for 5, breathing out over 5. Do this 3-4 times until the students are relaxed and calm. Ask them to imagine putting on their superhero outfit, slowly, carefully, firstly slipping their legs into the pants, etc, ending with putting the superhero cape around their shoulders. Ask them to imagine standing up straight in their superhero pose – shoulders back, hands on their hips. Tell them to imagine now they feel strong and confident and all the other emotions they wrote on the board. Slowly call their attention back to the classroom. 7. Superhero pose – Ask the class to all stand in superhero pose – shoulders back, hands on their hips, feet apart. Now tell them, any time they feel stressed or if they experience trauma, to close their eyes, imagine themselves putting on their superhero costumes and feeling safe, strong and all the other feelings. They are superheros. They can survive. |
| **Resources:**  A4 paper, coloured pencils, print outs of the Heartquake reflections, whiteboard markers, Heartquake website |
| **Assessment/home work:**  Ask the students to write a comic strip or short story about a trauma and how they put on their superhero costumes to handle it. |

**Teacher Notes**

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| **Duration of the Lesson:**  2-3 x 40 min periods | | |
| **Topic:**  Heartquake | **Lesson Heading:**  Coping with trauma | |
| **Background of the importance of the topic:**  All people will experience trauma and stressful periods throughout their life. It is important for students to develop a range of skills and strategies to cope with these periods in a healthy manner. The students have already experienced massive trauma. They can use this experience to show they have developed skills to cope already. | | |
| **Things to think about when preparing your lesson:**  Trauma is traumatic. Bringing up these issues is sensitive and should be done with compassion. If students are feeling overwhelmed or scared at their memories of the earthquakes, be gentle with them. Never force a student to share a personal issue with the class. | | |
| **Challenges which may be faced and coping strategies:** | | |
| Potential Challenges:   * Students might feel emotional or overwhelmed with their earthquake memories | | Coping Strategies:   * Remind students that it is okay to feel upset and allow them to have some time and space. |