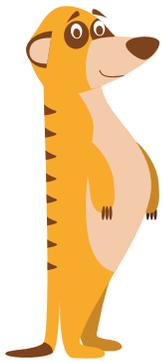


Activity: The Animals Inside Me

SCRIPT:

Today I want to teach you about how your body responds to various experiences. The best way I have found to teach kids about this is to have them think about three animals. I am sure you have heard about tigers and owls, but there is another less common animal. Let's talk about the animals now.



MEERKAT

Have you ever heard of a meerkat? They are cat-like animals that live in Africa. Meerkats live in groups and one of them is always watching out for the others. They take turns being the watch guard for their pack. They keep a look out for predators like hawks and eagles. When the meerkat sees, hears, smells or feels something suspicious they let out a big bark to alert the others. When you think about a meerkat, think about them as watch guards.



TIGER

Tigers are part of the cat family. They love to eat, sleep and play. They are excellent hunters and can be very ferocious when they feel threatened. They are always ready to run or fight.



OWL

Owls are wise and able to see things from a long distance. They are good problem solvers and decision makers.

Let's review, the meerkat is a watch guard, tiger is always ready to run or fight but really loves to play and the owl is a good decision maker.

Think about your body as having three animals, a meerkat, tiger and owl living inside.

All three are present all the time. The meerkat is quiet but it is always on the lookout and is responsible for alerting the tiger and owl if they sense danger, worry or hurt. The meerkat will let out a loud sound to let the tiger and owl know when something looks, smells or sounds suspicious. The more bad things that happen, the more the meerkat will be on the lookout. Think of the meerkat as the watch guard.

If the meerkat is quiet and not sounding an alarm, the tiger plays with friends, gets a good night of sleep and eats when he is hungry. The owl will be busy reading books, learning new things, making good decisions and plans.

What we need to remember though is if the meerkat sounds an alarm, then the owl will immediately fly away and hide because he gets scared! If the meerkat sounds an alarm, the tiger feels threatened and gets ready to run and fight.

This example can help you understand why when you are really worried or scared or angry you may want to run away or fight instead of paying attention in school, listening to a parent and being with friends. It is also the reason why you might have a hard time sleeping, eating or remembering things.

When the meerkat is not sounding an alarm and is calm, so is the tiger. When this is the case, the tiger, just like you when you are calm, can eat, sleep and play. When the meerkat is not sounding an alarm, the owl, just like you when you are calm can think, make good decisions and pay attention. However, when the meerkat is worried, the tiger comes out to run and fight and the owl flies away.

ACTIVITY

THE ANIMALS INSIDE ME



HOW ARE YOU LIKE A MEERKAT WHEN YOU'RE CALM? STRESSED?



HOW ARE YOU LIKE A TIGER WHEN YOU'RE CALM? STRESSED?



HOW ARE YOU LIKE AN OWL WHEN YOU'RE CALM? STRESSED?