

11. What does it mean to be wise?

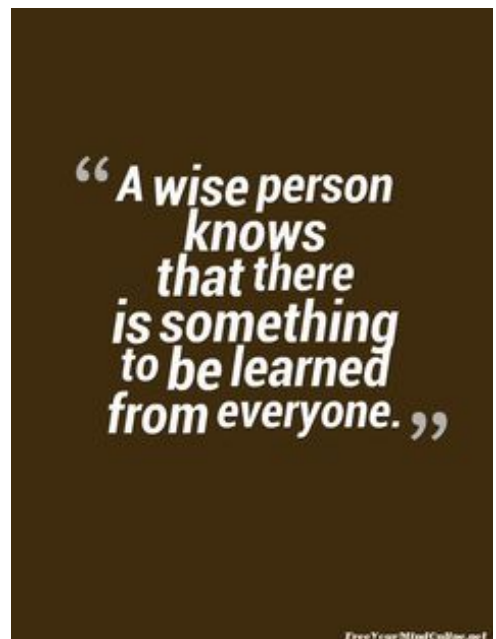
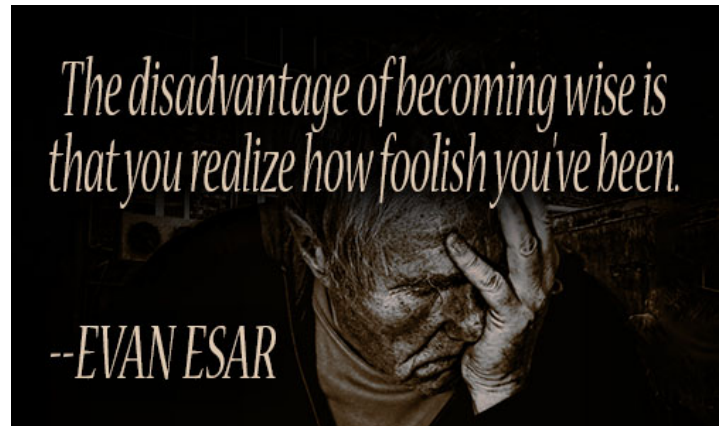
INTRODUCTION

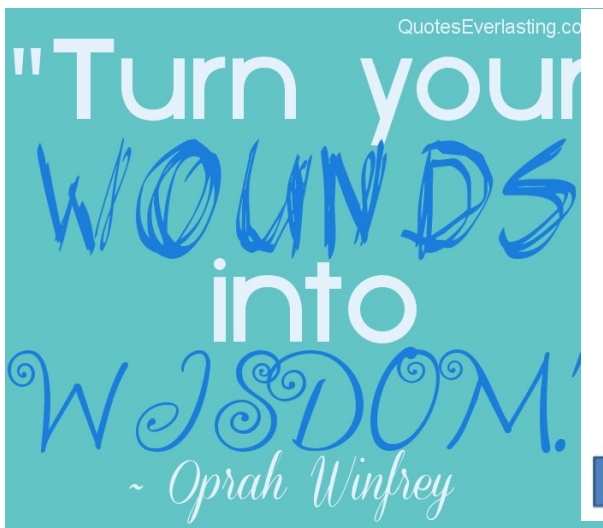
Ask children for their ideas about wisdom: what does it mean 'to be a wise person'? Is it better to be wise than clever? What's the difference? Is there anything better than being wise? What about being generous, honest, brave, or compassionate?

ACTIVITY

Show the children posters such as these, and encourage them to work in teams to say which one(s) they like best and why.

After a few minutes ask them to share their thinking with the rest of the group.

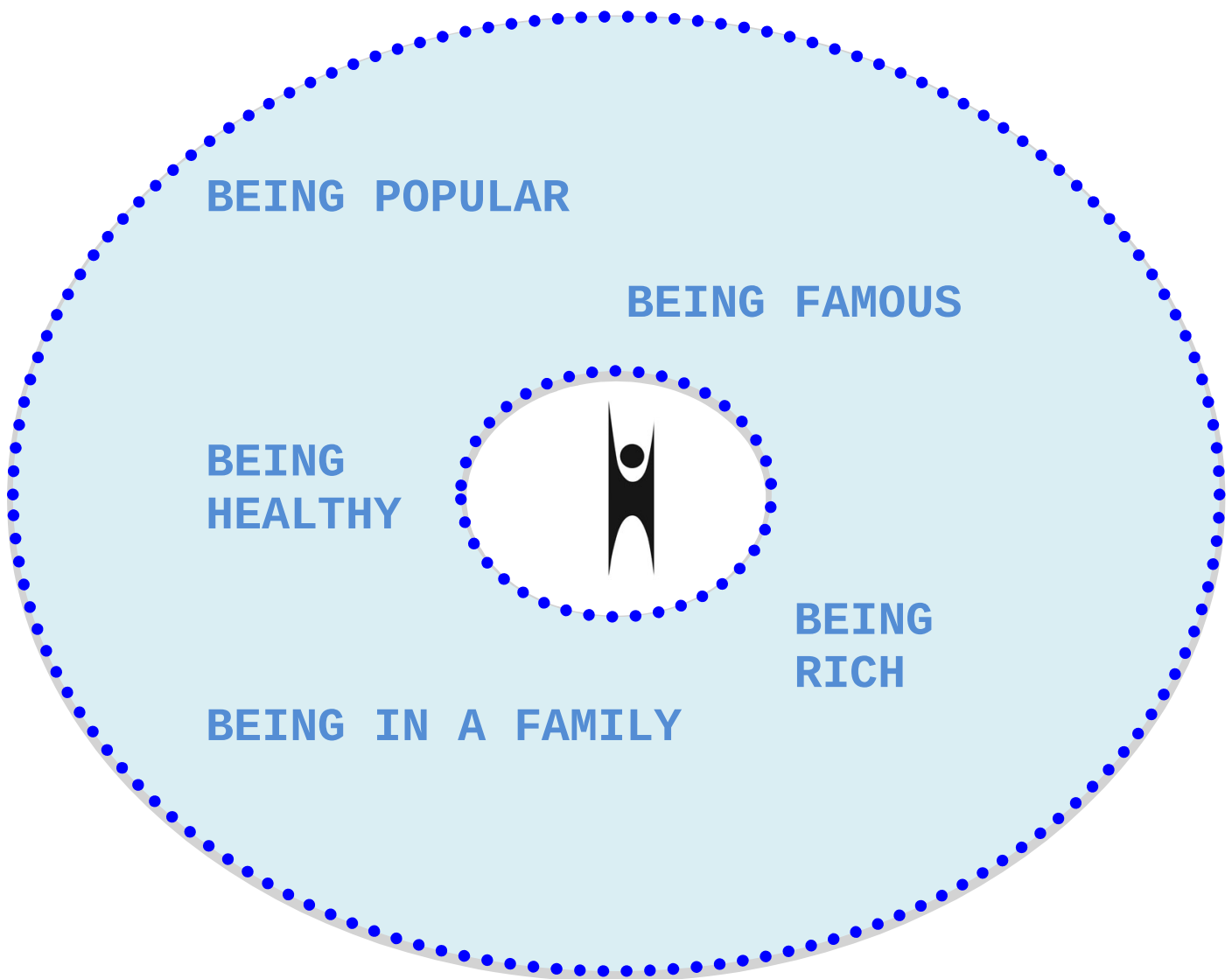




ACTIVITY

Explain that one modern thinker, Alain de Botton, says that "The wise are, first and foremost, realistic about how challenging many things can be."

Provide the children with a large copy of this diagram below, based on one provided on Alain de Botton's website, or pin it up on a wall or board:



Ask the children to say what they think the advantages and disadvantages of going after each of these things might be.

Provide them with some sticky notes and ask them to add to the diagram some other things that the wise person might find contentment in. [Do they suggest more basic things like food, water, shelter? What about 'Good Judgement', 'Creativity' or 'Imagination'?]

CONCLUSIONS

After a little discussion time, encourage the children to think about the idea of being CALM. Challenge them to consider whether a '**commitment to being calm**' might be the wisest thing of all. Are there times when it is better to be *passionate* about something? They might then design some posters in the style of 'Keep Calm and ...' by finishing the slogan with their own ideas.