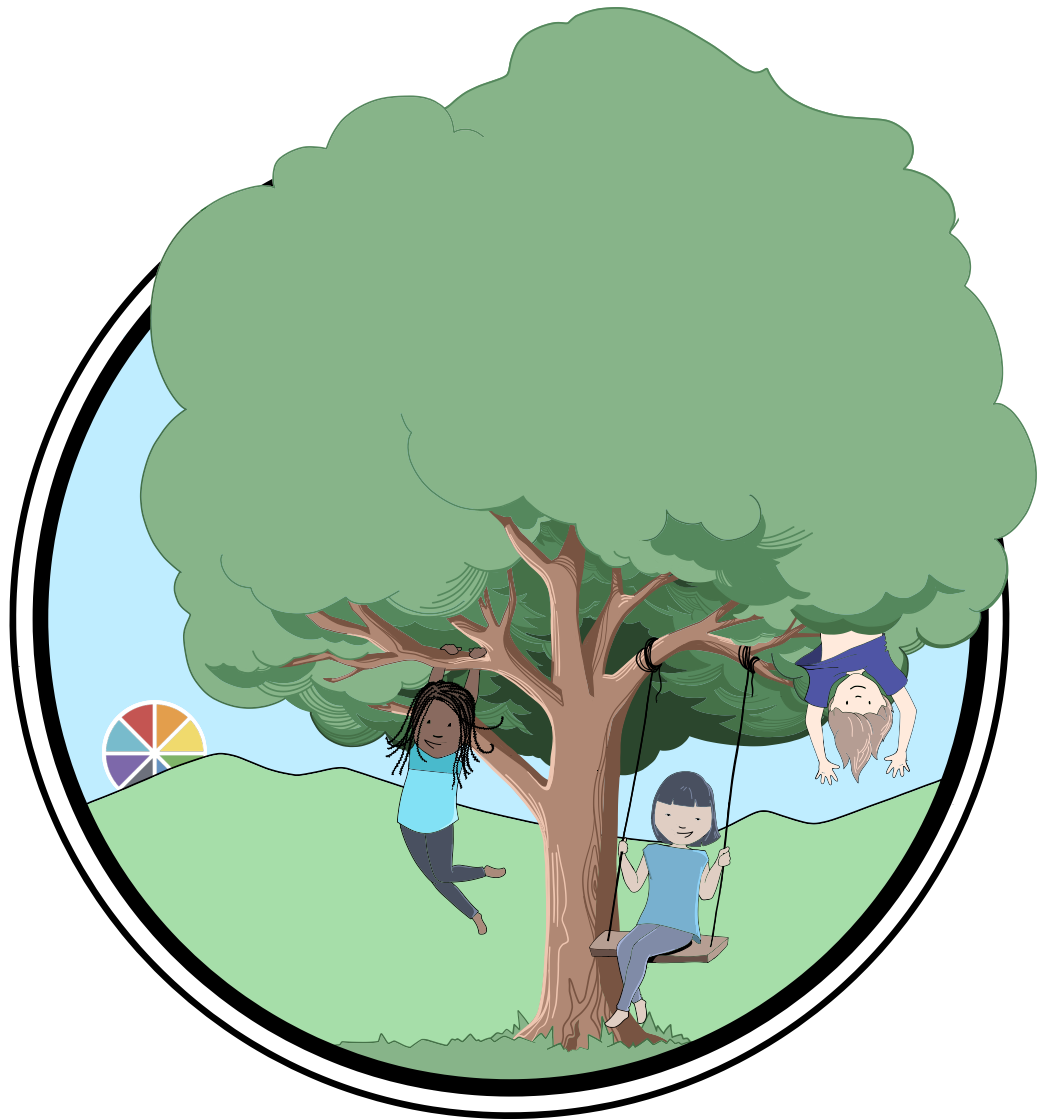




**SOURCES**  
OF STRENGTH



**ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM**  
**3RD-6TH GRADE**  
**SAMPLE**





### **In Gratitude:**

We would like to thank the Sources of Strength team for countless hours dreaming, brainstorming, writing, editing, re-writing, laughing, and encouraging throughout this process, including Jaymie Sheehan Carson, Kristen Musselman, Kelsey Hopstad, Tanya Adams, Olivia Darrington, Timmy Foster, Cody Sletten, Janell Anema, Dan Adams, and Mish Moore.

A special thanks to Carey Franklin and Matt Hofmeister for their tireless efforts in the creation and completion of this curriculum. Sources of Strength Elementary is a result of their vision, passion, diligence, and more hours on Zoom than is medically advisable.

Thank you to Mark LoMurray, the founder of Sources of Strength, who has dedicated his life to spreading Hope, Help, and Strength to communities across the globe. His guidance and wisdom have laid the foundation for this curriculum.

Thank you to Lori Ring and all the Classroom Instructors who helped pilot this program. Their feedback and encouragement were invaluable and what you find within is far better because of each of them.

Lastly, a thank you to all the Coaches, Classroom Instructors, and students who will engage with this curriculum. It is your work, your connection, your strength that will create impact and empower a well world.

With Gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. LoMurray", with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Scott LoMurray**  
Executive Director  
Sources of Strength

### **Sources of Strength**

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### **Curriculum Development**

Carylla Franklin, Matthew Hofmeister, Scott LoMurray, Mark LoMurray, Dr. Rana Razzaque

### **Editing**


Jaymie Sheehan Carson, Kristen Musselman, Kelsey Hopstad, Olivia Darrington, Tanya Adams

### **Illustration, and Layout Design**

Tanya Adams



Our vision is:



TO EMPOWER A  
WELL WORLD

# BUILDING BELOW THE WATERLINE

At the time of its construction, the Brooklyn Bridge was to be one of the largest and most iconic suspension bridges in the world. Enormous sums of money and effort went into the design and construction of the bridge. Years into the construction, residents of Manhattan and Brooklyn began to complain that though they always saw construction crews and apparent work being done, there was yet to be any tangible sign of progress on the bridge. As these grumblings grew louder, more frequent, and more unified, the architect of the bridge began to explain that the reason they saw no bridge was that they had spent years building below the waterline. He and his team had pioneered innovative and revolutionary techniques to provide anchor points in the riverbed and it was only as a result of this work that the bridge would stand the test of time.

Often in this work we can look around and ask ourselves, “Where’s my bridge?” We wonder if we are having any impact, if we are making a difference, if we are building anything of substance and value. Something that will last.

Working with young people is building below the waterline. Working in education, mental health, and public health is building below the waterline. It can be difficult, even frustrating, and might leave us wondering where our bridge is, but this work is foundational. And it is only as a result of that foundational work that we can help build communities, schools, cultures, and young people that stand the test of time.

The time spent with our students on social-emotional health is not just another task; it is foundational work that builds a community of Strength. When students and adults are able to explore and identify their Strengths, discover



healthy coping strategies, learn how to ask for help for both themselves and others, or when we can play, laugh, share, and reflect together, connecting with and celebrating one another, we are building a community of Strength. In this community of Strength, students are empowered to navigate relationships, academics, conflict, life changes, adversity, and big emotions, then meet life's twists and turns with Health and Strength. It is in these spaces where we build anchor points that will stand the test of time.

The truth is, this is a counter-cultural shift to a growth mindset and a Strength-based approach. It is a public health model that moves beyond crisis intervention and towards health and wellbeing as our anchor point. This work is not easy. There will be fits and starts, and there will be both failures and successes. It is vital that we are able to journey alongside our young people through these growing pains if we are to ever see the bridge, so please don't give up. The world needs more people willing to go deep and spend their time, energy, passion, talent, and hope on the foundational work of building Strength below the waterline.

We must also build below the waterline in our own lives. Taking care of ourselves, cultivating our own Strengths and resilience, and doing our inner work is also crucial if we are going to stand the test of time in this field. So, please, build below the waterline in your own life as well. Take care of yourself, practice gratitude, be vulnerable and authentic, ask for and extend forgiveness, and tap into your Strengths so you can be here. We need you here. Our world needs you here, doing the empowering and foundational work of spreading Hope, Help, and Strength.



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Lets begin...



# INTRODUCTION TO THE SOURCES OF STRENGTH ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

The work of prevention is not done solely through focusing on risk factors, warning signs, and intervention. Rather involves discovering, teaching and celebrating resilience, help-seeking, creating connections, cultivating Strength, and belonging.

Sources of Strength is an evidence-based, upstream prevention program that employs a Strength-based wellness approach to improving the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities. This program has been implemented within a variety of settings, cultures, and age groups across the country and internationally.

Our Elementary Curriculum continues our commitment to moving further upstream, increasing health and wellness and decreasing negative downstream outcomes through empowering individuals and communities full of connection, belonging, and resilience.

As Sources of Strength works to give students tools to develop their Strength, resilience, and help-seeking behaviors, we feel it is of utmost importance to ensure we are using evidence-based practices to inspire meaningful outcomes. Below are some core components of how and why we do what we do.

**Evidence-Based:** The Sources of Strength secondary school model has become one of the nation's most rigorously evaluated and widely disseminated suicide prevention programs. The program has shown outcomes in increasing healthy coping, help-seeking, connection and trust toward adults, and utilization of protective factors associated with reduced risk for suicide, substance misuse, and violence. The elementary program is evidence-informed by these outcomes and will undergo rigorous randomized control trials to establish an elementary specific evidence-base.

**Upstream:** Our primary focus is to move upstream in the prevention field in order to build resiliency and wellness. We strive to create a healthy culture around early help-seeking, and promote internalized Strengths at the individual and community levels to prevent the onset of crisis and help people live healthy, thriving lives.

**Strength-Based:** Sources of Strength cultivates the identification, development, and utilization of eight protective factors, or Strengths. These protective factors are Family Support, Positive Friends, Mentors, Healthy Activities, Generosity, Spirituality, Physical Health, and Mental Health. Ultimately, these eight Strengths can empower individuals and communities to lean into their own sense of resilience in order to promote health and wellness in themselves and others.

## Curriculum Structure

Sources of Strength Elementary Curriculum is comprised of 12 units containing several lessons that build upon the unit topic. The lessons can be implemented within grades three through five. Lessons are designed to be approximately 30 minutes in length, and typically facilitated one to two times per week. The lessons can be led by a classroom teacher, social-emotional learning specialist, school mental health professional, or classroom paraprofessional. The classroom teacher is strongly encouraged to participate in lessons for greater integration and application of concepts in the classroom.

## Curriculum Components

It is a driving principle of Sources of Strength to incorporate student voice and active engagement with our teaching practices. We believe that the deepest learning occurs when we approach the subject matter from a positive mindset, and bring awareness to our Strengths while also incorporating interactive learning components. This helps people of all ages fully internalize and apply the concepts to their own lives. Each unit includes the following core elements:

- **Instructor Participation** is written into the curriculum on every level. Social-emotional learning is a lifelong

# INTRODUCTION TO THE SOURCES OF STRENGTH ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

process and is applicable for both students and adults. As the instructor, you are invited to share authentically and participate throughout the curriculum. If the instructor is not a classroom teacher, we strongly encourage you to invite them to participate in the lessons. The classroom teacher will be able to provide continuity and application of the skills and concepts from the lessons throughout the school day. Social-emotional learning happens everyday, all the time, when young people see these skills modeled by the adults in their lives, they continue to internalize healthy strategies for navigating life's ups and downs. This is co-regulation.

Co-regulation is when an adult with a trusting relationship comes alongside, and models healthy emotional regulation strategies to help young people name, understand, and navigate their emotions and actions. These skills are not taught once, but rather modeled and supported regularly, leading to understanding and integration. Just as we learn any skill, practice leads to growth and coaching is the key. Co-regulation looks like being a thermostat rather than a thermometer.

- **Active Learning** is a core component of the Sources of Strength curriculum. We believe that the process is as important as the content. How we engage and are engaged matters. It is important that we understand that games aren't just games. Movement and laughter promote connection, light up critical learning centers in the brain, and help us engage with and internalize information in lasting ways.
- **Talking Circles** facilitate a collaborative sharing time that fosters connection and empathy, empowers student voice, and promotes equity. Every voice has power and deserves to be heard. Talking Circles give students an opportunity to learn from each other while practicing authentic sharing and active listening. This sharing facilitates pro-social conversations and positive social norming between peers. Centering the student voice empowers them to identify and share their own Strengths, as well as learn to empathize while hearing how Strengths show up in others.

There are three types of sharing that happen in Talking Circles: full Circle Share, pair share, and popcorn share. During full Circle Share, every student will have an opportunity to speak and be heard. Pair share allows students to respond and share with a partner or neighbor while sitting in the circle. Popcorn share allows for a few answers or responses to be shared with the large group.

During a full Circle Share, it is OK for a student to pass. It can take time for everyone to feel comfortable and safe sharing with the whole group. Sometimes, students simply need more processing time and are willing to share at the end when given the opportunity. We recommend you use a Talking Piece as it can slow the pace of conversation and encourage thoughtful and reflective interactions. Suggested Talking Pieces could include a smooth stone, seashell, feather, stuffed animal, stress ball, or anything of significance for your class.

There are many opportunities to use the Talking Circle throughout your academic curriculum, especially if you feel that a limited number of voices are being heard in class dialogue. Also, when a class wide situation or conflict arises, the Talking Circle can be used to foster empathy and active listening while sharing possible ways to navigate the situation. Restorative Circle practices are used in classrooms around the globe and more information can be found online.

- **Guided reflection** is practiced in various forms throughout the curriculum. This practice is not intended solely for the students, but also for the instructors/teachers as it increases self-awareness and active engagement. Sources of Strength can serve as a mirror in one's life to reflect and explore the resources and assets that you and your community already possess. Exercises include breathing, sensory, and mindfulness activities that support self-regulation and self-awareness. Reflective practice has huge benefits in increasing self-awareness, which is a key component of emotional intelligence and in developing a better understanding of others.

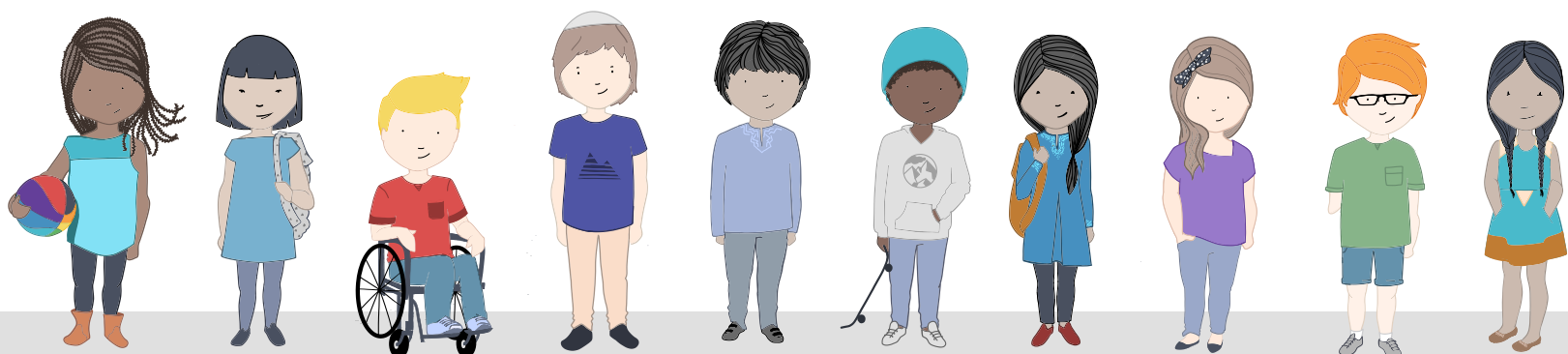
# INTRODUCTION TO THE SOURCES OF STRENGTH ELEMENTARY CURRICULUM

Reflective practice can also help you to develop creative thinking skills and encourage active engagement in work processes.

Reflection questions also appear at the end of each lesson inviting instructors to pause and reflect on the growth of their students and themselves and provide lesson feedback to Sources of Strength.

- **Celebrations of Growth** are an integral part of each unit providing opportunities for students and staff to apply and celebrate a growth mindset in themselves and others. The focus of these celebrations is centered on the process of growth and development of personal and collective resilience. In the academic setting, the focus tends to center on outcomes such as grades, attendance, behavior, etc. In the Sources of Strength curriculum, we are intentionally focusing on celebrating the process of students applying Strengths and strategies to their everyday lives. The class BrainTree is the focal point for these celebrations as we recognize each and every student for their process of growth and unique contributions of Strength to the class. Noticing and celebrating everyone in the class builds stronger connections, belonging, and purpose, supporting the growth of safer, more resilient communities. The BrainTree wall display will have Leaves added to it as a visual representation of your class growth throughout the year.
- **Everyday Applications** are written into various lessons throughout the curriculum. These applications highlight and provide touch points for instructors and classroom teachers to integrate the concepts being learned into everyday interactions, transitions, and relationships in the classroom. Social-emotional learning happens all day, every day. When practiced and applied intentionally it has an incredible impact on the wellbeing, safety, and academic engagement for students and adults alike.
- **The Social-Emotional Focus** section of each unit aligns with the core social-emotional learning competencies in the model developed by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). This curriculum integrates well with many of the practices and programs that schools are already using, such as Restorative Practices, Mindfulness, RTI, MTSS, PBIS, etc.

At Sources of Strength, we wholeheartedly believe in the Hope, Help, and Strength each individual can cultivate in themselves and others. This is as relevant to young children as it is to adolescents and adults. With this Elementary Curriculum, our goal is to help students better understand themselves, their Strengths, and their power to positively influence their world. We are honored to partner with you in empowering a well world!



# SOURCES OF STRENGTH WHEEL





## **FAMILY SUPPORT**

Family Support, whether immediate, extended, or family of choice, are the people who support, nurture, and care for us.

## **POSITIVE FRIENDS**

Positive Friends lift us up and make us laugh. They are honest with us, and are there for us when we need them.

## **MENTORS**

Mentors are people who are cheering for us in life. They listen when we need it, and help us learn new things and navigate life's ups and downs.

## **HEALTHY ACTIVITIES**

Healthy Activities, whether social, physical, or mental, help us regulate our emotions in healthy ways and create opportunities for connection and growth.

## **GENEROSITY**

Generosity can look a lot of different ways. Acts of kindness towards others and ourselves both big and small, can positively impact how we feel about ourselves.

## **SPIRITUALITY**

Spirituality includes many people, places, and practices that can lift our spirit and connect us to something bigger than ourselves.

## **PHYSICAL HEALTH**

Physical Health includes the way we care for our bodies on a regular basis, as well as when we are hurt or sick and need to seek medical access.

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

Mental Health is not the absence of illness, but rather the presence and practice of the Strengths and strategies that contribute to our wellbeing. This includes connecting to Trusted Adults and mental health professionals for support.

# UNIT 1

# INTRODUCTION TO SOURCES OF STRENGTH



*Lesson 1.1: Discovering and Identifying Our Strength* **7**

*Lesson 1.2: Stories of Strength* **11**

*Lesson 1.3: Continued Stories of Strength* **16**

*Worksheets* **170**

# INTRODUCTION TO SOURCES OF STRENGTH - LESSON 1.1

## Discovering and Identifying Our Strength

### Lesson Spotlight

Recognizing and discovering Strengths in our lives can help us be connected, happy, healthy, and strong.

### Materials

- Music playlist for the Wheelhouse Connection Game
- Poster paper
- Markers

### Preparation

- Have music ready for the Wheelhouse Connection Game
- Write out the heading “Talking Circle Norms” on poster paper

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Social-Awareness, Relationship Skills

### Instructor Overview

This lesson introduces the concept of Strengths as protective factors, designed to get the group moving and engaged with a game and an art activity. We want to invite every student to share in a fun, safe, and non-threatening environment as they identify Strengths in their own lives. Remember to laugh and enjoy yourself! The poster activity is designed for both verbal and non-verbal expression of Strengths. Keep the posters from this lesson for use in the following lesson. This is a great way to really get to know your students and to help them get to know you better too.

### Wheelhouse Connection Game (5-7 min)

“Today we are going to start our lessons for Sources of Strength! Sources of Strength helps us discover and grow our Strengths and find new ways to develop resilience, which is our ability to navigate life’s ups and downs. Throughout these lessons we will build a strong and healthy community through sharing, connecting, celebrating, reflecting, laughing, and having fun together. We are going to start off with an activity.” Split the class into two even groups.

“We are going to form two circles. The first group is going to make an inside circle around me, and the second group is going to make an outside circle around the inside circle.” Once the circles are formed, give the next set of instructions. “Now face the person across from you in the other circle.”

Once the two circles are formed and facing each other, start the music and have the outer circle turn and start walking to their right, and the inner circle start walking in the opposite direction. When the music stops, students will respond to the following prompts with the person they stop across from in the circle.

“In a moment, I am going to play some music. When the music is playing, each circle is going to move in opposite directions. When the music stops, you will stop and answer a prompt with one or two people across from

you.” Watch one partner group each round to make sure the music stops at a point where students end up with new partners for all three prompts. If students already know each other’s names, skip that portion of the prompt.

**Prompt 1:** “Share your name and your favorite food.”

**Prompt 2:** “Share your name and your favorite game or activity.”

**Prompt 3:** “Share your name and something fun you’ve done recently or something fun you would like to do.”

### Strengths Posters (4-6 min)

Invite the students to come together in one large circle. “Awesome, we’ve mixed it up a little bit and had a chance to learn a few things about each other. Now, I want you to think for a moment about the good things in your life. Think about the people, places, activities, and things that bring you Strength, bring you joy, lift you up, or make you feel connected. Who has an example of things that bring you Strength?” Get popcorn answers that represent a variety of interests and experiences (family, Xbox, friends, sports, music, pets, etc.).

“Wow! You named so many different things that help you feel happy, healthy, and strong. Let’s work together on an art activity to help us think more about the Strengths we have all around us.”

# INTRODUCTION TO SOURCES OF STRENGTH - LESSON 1.1

## Discovering and Identifying Our Strength

“We are going to break up into groups of three to five people, and each of you is going to draw your Sources of Strength on your group’s poster. Draw the people, activities, places, and things that help you feel strong, connected, happy, and healthy. Everyone in your group is going to draw their own pictures. If someone in your group draws something that is a Strength for you as well, **draw your own picture of that thing too.**” This is meant to be a collage of pictures representing students’ Strengths. There are no right or wrong answers, and the poster does not need to be organized or neat.

Allow the students to self-select into groups of three to five. Help any students who are having a hard time finding a group join in with others (the number of students in each group is flexible). If possible, have an open area where students can sit on the floor.

Hand out poster paper and markers to each group. Give the students 5 minutes to draw, write, and create their posters.

While the students are working, stop by each group and draw one of your Strengths on their poster. Walk around chatting, admiring, clarifying, joking, and building relationships with the students as they complete their posters. Repeat the prompt a few times and help students come up with ideas they can draw (favorite food, people they enjoy, what they like to do with their free time, etc.). You can also hold up one group’s poster to highlight as an example or if you think the group would benefit from positive recognition.

Give a one-minute warning when it is time for groups to finish up.

### Talking Circle Poster Share (10-12 min)

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

For a deeper explanation of Talking Circles and norms, see Introductory Rationale on page 2.

Invite the students to sit in a circle that is wide enough that everyone can see each other’s faces and Strength Posters. **“OK, everyone, come sit in the circle with your poster group.”**

“We are going to use a Talking Circle as a way for us to practice listening and learning from each other. The Talking Circle is a space where we can regularly check-in and share our experiences, use our voices, connect with each other, and practice empathy. We will also be practicing active listening. Active listening is fully concentrating on what someone is saying and listening to understand rather than to respond. When someone is talking in the Circle, we want to look in their direction and listen to what they are saying with an open mind.

“We are going to be meeting in Talking Circles for many of our Sources of Strength lessons. Now, let’s go around the Circle and everyone will have a chance to share one Strength you drew on your group’s poster. **Who would like to start by sharing?**” Make sure as the instructor that you share too! Once everyone has shared, you can have the class give themselves a round of applause.

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

Please leave the posters up, or collect them to be referenced in the next lesson.

“Thank you for sharing, you all have so many great Strengths!”

### Talking Circle Norms (5 min)

“We just had our first Talking Circle, let’s take a few minutes to reflect on that. **What do you like and appreciate when others listen to you?**” Get a few popcorn answers (I feel important, I feel like others see me, I have a voice, I’m not interrupted, eye contact, etc.).

“**What do you value and appreciate when you are listening to others share?**” Get a few popcorn answers (I can hear them clearly, I get to know people better, I learn new ideas, etc.).

“We all did a great job sharing and listening to each other’s Strengths today. That was active listening. We could use active listening as a norm for our Talking Circles.

# INTRODUCTION TO SOURCES OF STRENGTH - LESSON 1.1

## Discovering and Identifying Our Strength

### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

Active listening is the ability to focus on the speaker and understand what they are saying without feeling like you need to respond.

“Norms are routines and practices that help us know what to do and how to act in a situation. An example of a norm would be when we walk into the lunchroom. We all know, or learn very quickly, what we need to do if we brought our lunch or if we are buying lunch. Norms help us know what to expect and make sure that everyone has an opportunity to get what they need. We can use norms to help us know what we can do when we are in a Talking Circle to help create a space where everyone feels seen, heard, and respected.

“Give a thumbs up if you would like to participate in a Talking Circle where active listening is a norm.” Allow the students to help you tailor the norm for active listening to be used. Remember to phrase the norm as a positive action statement. Write out the norm on the piece of poster paper that will be added to in the subsequent lessons, and can be displayed for the first couple of units during the Sources of Strength lessons.

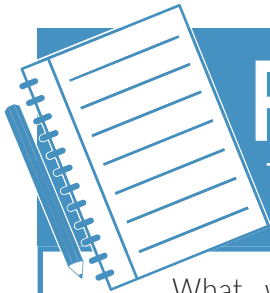
While consensus is the goal, we know not everyone will agree. Take note of any students that don't give a thumbs up and make a point to connect with them and hear more about what they are thinking and feeling.

### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

Use this as an opportunity to connect with and understand the student's perspective. Some follow-up questions could be:

- "I noticed you didn't raise your thumb for the norm. Could you tell me more about your decision?"
- "What is an alternative or change to this norm that you would feel comfortable with?"

“This was our first Sources of Strength lesson, and I'm looking forward to hearing more stories of Strength as we move through the curriculum this year.”



# REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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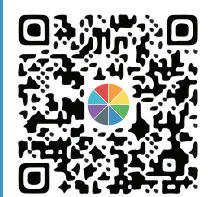
Other thoughts or reflections?

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We would love your feedback on what worked well and what could improve to help Sources of Strength continue to grow.

Scan this QR code or visit [www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback) to give feedback on this lesson!



### Lesson Spotlight

Sharing our personal stories of Strength and resilience allows us to explore the meaning of the Strengths on the Sources of Strength wheel

### Materials

- Sources of Strength wheel, one per student (page 15 & 170)
- Personal Sources of Strength Wheel Worksheet, one per student (page 171)
- Strength Posters from Lesson 1.1
- Norms poster from Lesson 1.1

### Preparation

- Display Strength Posters from Lesson 1.1 or make available for reference
- Make copies of the Personal Sources of Strength Wheel Worksheet, one per student (page 171)
- Fill out a Personal Strengths wheel as an example for the group

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Social-Awareness

### Instructor Overview

This lesson introduces the Sources of Strength wheel. We will define Family Support, Positive Friends, Mentors, and Healthy Activities, and then invite students to share personal stories of these Strengths in their lives. Students will fill out their own personal Strength wheel drawing connections to their group posters from Lesson 1.1 and the specific Strengths on the Wheel. As students share their stories, draw out more than one-word answers by prompting them to share what or why that Strength is meaningful for them. Get a variety of students from diverse backgrounds to share.

We will continue to collaborate on the development of class norms to be used throughout the Sources of Strength curriculum. This process allows for student voice in the development of class norms. While our goal is consensus, we recognize that this can be a challenge. The important thing is to follow up and hear from anyone who does not agree with the norm. They may have meaningful input that would make the norm better for everyone.

### Strengths Wheel Talking Circle (15-20 min)

Invite students to the Talking Circle and have them bring a writing utensil. Reference the Strengths Posters the groups created in the previous lesson.

**“Remember in our last lesson we drew what gives us Strength on our posters. Take a look at our posters.”** As you ask the following questions, get a show of hands from students. **“Who drew pictures of your family? Who drew pictures of your friends? Who drew activities or things that you enjoy?”**

Hold up the Sources of Strength wheel for everyone to see. **“This is the Sources of Strength wheel. You’ll notice that many of the things you wrote on your posters are a part of the Wheel. The Sources of Strength wheel is made up of eight Strengths that help us be healthy and navigate life’s ups and downs.”** Pass out copies of the Personal Strengths wheel.

**“We’re going to talk about the first four Strengths on the Wheel today. After we hear a few stories for each**

**Strength, we are going to fill in our own Strengths wheel with examples from our own lives.”**

The curriculum briefly explains each Strength and asks for a couple of examples from students via popcorn sharing about what these Strengths look like in their lives. Try and get a variety of students from diverse backgrounds to share. If the students give one-word or short answers, try draw out an explanation as to how that is a Strength for them by asking follow-up questions. Each time you ask students a poll or survey-style question, raise your own hand to non-verbally model for students to raise their hands.

### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

Students are generally excited to share during this portion of the lesson, however it is scripted, to be able to cover four Strengths of the Wheel in 15 minutes.

# INTRODUCTION TO SOURCES OF STRENGTH - LESSON 1.2

## Stories of Strength

### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

If you have flexibility in your lesson length, you can allow more students to share or create other times during the school day where students can share.

### Family Support

“The first Strength on the Wheel we’ll talk about is Family Support. A lot of you put family members on the posters from the last lesson, and now, we are going to take a moment to share about those people and how they show up as Strengths in our lives.

“Who is close to their grandma or grandpa?” Get one or two popcorn answers and have them briefly share about their grandparents, what they are like, and why they feel close to them. If students need more thinking time, you can share an example of your own.

“Is anyone close to a brother or sister?” Get a show of hands. “Cousins or aunts or uncles?” Get a show of hands. “What about a parent?” Get one answer and ask the student to share what makes their parent a Strength for them.

“Who has people that aren’t related to you, but still feel like family? We call these people our chosen family, and they can be really special and protective for us. They might be your best friend’s parents, a neighbor, or someone else who shows up as family in your life.” Get one or two answers from the group.

“Now, take one minute and draw or write down some of the people who show up as Family Support for you in that section of your Personal Sources of Strength wheel.” Hold up your own example of the Wheel for students to see.

### Positive Friends

“The next Strength is Positive Friends. Positive Friends lift us up and make us laugh. They are honest with us and are there for us when we need them. Turn to a neighbor and pair share about a friend who has helped or encouraged you.” It is OK if there are groups of three. Keep an eye out for anyone that does not pair up with a partner, and connect them to a group. Give students one

minute to pair share.

“What are some things that make a person a Positive Friend?” Get a few popcorn answers naming some of the characteristics of a Positive Friend (good listener, kind, shares, cheers me up, etc.).

“We’re going to talk about this more throughout the year. We want to practice these characteristics so that we can be Positive Friends for one another.

“Now, take one minute and draw or write down some of the people who show up as Positive Friends for you, or some of the characteristics you appreciate in a Positive Friend.”

### Mentors

“Next is Mentors. A Mentor is someone older who is cheering for us in life. Mentors listen when we need it, help us learn new things, and can help us with life’s ups and downs. They help us to be the best version of ourselves. Who has a teacher, coach, parent, sibling, cousin, or an older student who encourages you and cares about you?” Get two stories from the group.

“Now, take one minute and draw or write down some of the people who show up as Mentors for you.”

### Healthy Activities

“The next Strength is Healthy Activities. You all had a lot of different types of Healthy Activities on your Strength Posters from our last lesson.”

Get a show of hands for the following questions.

- “Who likes sports?”
- “Who likes outdoor activities, like taking walks, fishing, or swimming?”
- “Who loves to read or write?”
- “Does anyone here like playing video games or building with Legos?”
- “Who likes drawing, painting, or coloring?”
- “Who likes to play, listen, or sing along to music?”
- “Who likes to spend time with their pets?”
- “Who likes to cook or bake?”

“We just raised our hands for so many different kinds of activities. What do these activities do for us? What



makes them a Healthy Activity?” Get a few popcorn answers (they are fun, they calm me down, I get to be with my Positive Friends, they help me get my energy out, it is something I am good at, etc.).

“Now, turn to a neighbor, and pair share what some of your go-to Healthy Activities are and what they do for you.” Give students one minute to pair share.

“No matter what Healthy Activities you choose, this is a Strength that can help us navigate our feelings and emotions. Healthy Activities can calm us down if we’re too fired up, they can pump us up when we’re feeling too down, and they can make us feel happy and strong.

“Now, take one minute, and draw or write down some of your Healthy Activities. The Strengths of Family Support, Positive Friends, Mentors, and Healthy Activities can be powerful, helping us grow stronger and healthier both inside and out. We’ll talk about the other four Strengths in our next lesson. Thanks for sharing how these Strengths show up in your lives.”

### Rock, Paper, Scissors Game (3-4 min)

This Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament is single-elimination, rather than best two out of three. The winner will go on to the next round and the loser will become the winner’s cheering section. If the pair ties, then they will continue until a winner is determined. The winner will then raise their hand to find and face off with another winner. Eventually, there will be two finalists, each having roughly half of the room cheering behind them.

#### ACCOMMODATION

This is a loud, energetic game. If you have any students who have sensory needs, or if you are worried about being too loud for nearby classrooms, you can instruct students to cheer silently by using their hand movements and facial expressions.

“OK, We’ve been sitting and talking for a while. Let’s play a game to energize our bodies. We’re going to have a Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament. This is single elimination, not best out of three. For this tournament, we are going to add in a little twist. If you lose, you will

stand behind the person who won and cheer for them. If the person you are cheering for loses, your whole group stands behind the person they lost to and now cheers for them. This will continue until we have two finalists left with about half the room cheering for each of them.”

Get two students to demonstrate how to play the game (clarify if players throw their hands on “scissors” or “shoot”). Remind the winner to put their hand up in the air and quickly find a new opponent to face off with. If the pair ties, have them continue until there is a winner.

### Talking Circle Norms (6 min)

Invite the students back to the Talking Circle after the game. “Thank you all for the ways that you have been respectful as we’ve listened to each other’s stories today.”

The purpose of this next activity is to collaboratively agree on two more Talking Circle norms. See examples below of potential norms.

“Last time we talked about the norm of active listening where we focus our attention on the speaker and listen to understand. Let’s take some time to think about some other norms that we could have in place that will help everyone feel seen, heard, and respected.

“What kinds of things can others do and say to help you feel seen, heard, and respected?” Get a few popcorn answers. Capture student responses on the whiteboard (don’t interrupt, look at me, ask about my perspective, don’t share my story without my permission, etc.).

“What kinds of things can we do and say to help others feel seen, heard, and respected?” Get a few popcorn answers. Continue to capture student responses on the whiteboard (speak from your own perspective, allow others time to share by not talking too much, take responsibility for my words or actions, speak for myself not for others, don’t interrupt, etc.).

“Are any of these ideas similar and we can combine into one statement?” Highlight the ideas that are similar and can be combined and put into a positive action statement.

For example:

- “Listen actively” rather than “don’t interrupt”

# INTRODUCTION TO SOURCES OF STRENGTH - LESSON 1.2

## Stories of Strength

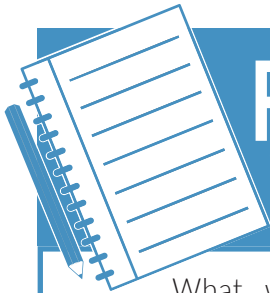
- “Allow equal sharing for everyone” rather than “don’t hog the speaking time”
- “Respect others’ ideas” rather than “don’t be mean”

Once two norms have been identified and phrased as a positive action statements, allow students to vote for the norms using a thumbs up vote. Take note of any students that don’t give a thumbs up, and make a point to connect with them later and hear more about what they are feeling. Add the two norms to the Norms Poster from Lesson 1.1.

### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

We are looking for as close to class consensus as possible.

“Thank you for working together on the norms and for sharing your powerful stories of Strength today.”



## REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you’d like to capture or remember?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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We would love your feedback on what worked well and what could improve to help Sources of Strength continue to grow.

Scan this QR code or visit [www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback) to give feedback on this lesson!





# INTRODUCTION TO SOURCES OF STRENGTH - LESSON 1.3

## Continued Stories of Strength

### Lesson Spotlight

Sharing our personal stories of Strength and resilience allows us to explore the eight Strengths on the Sources of Strength wheel.

### Materials

- Sources of Strength wheel, from the previous lesson (page 15 & 170)
- Personal Sources of Strength wheel worksheet, one per student (page 171)
- Writing utensils
- Talking Piece (optional)

### Preparation

- Instructors should complete their own Personal Strengths wheel prior to this lesson as an example to share.
- Take pictures of students' completed Personal Strengths wheels for use in Unit 12: Mental Health, Lesson 2.

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social-Awareness, Responsible Decision-Making

### Instructor Overview

This lesson is designed to give students an opportunity to identify and draw out their own Strengths using the Source of Strength wheel. The Personal Strength wheels will serve as a visual for students to continue to connect Strengths to their daily lives. This is an opportunity for students to expand and uncover their own Strengths that could otherwise go unnoticed. This lesson deepens the understanding that we all have Strengths in our lives, and it teaches students that when we are going through rough times, it is important to use our Strengths and connect to the help and support around us. After students have completed their Personal Strength wheel, snap pictures, or photocopy them for use in Mental Health Unit, Lesson 2.

### Introduction (3 min)

Invite the students to the Talking Circle and have them bring their Personal Sources of Strength wheel from the previous lesson and a writing utensil.

**“In our last Sources of Strength lesson, we talked about Family Support, Positive Friends, Mentors, and Healthy Activities. Turn to a neighbor and share a way you have used one of these Strengths since our last lesson.”** Give the students one minute to pair share.

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

If you feel like your students would benefit from more of a review of the Strengths, you can review the definitions of the four Strengths covered in Lesson 2 on page 12.

Put up the Class Norms Poster. **“In our last lesson, we also created a list of class norms for our Sources of Strength lessons so that everyone feels seen, heard, and respected.”** Ask for volunteers to read the norms.

### Strengths Wheel Talking Circle (18 min)

**“Today, we are going to cover the remaining four Strengths on the Sources of Strength wheel.”** As you ask questions, try and get a variety of students from diverse backgrounds to share. If the students give one-word or short answers, try to draw out more explanation by asking follow-up questions as to how practicing that Strength helps them experience belonging, connection, Strength, or resilience.

#### Generosity

**“The next Strength we are going to talk about is Generosity. Generosity can look a lot of different ways: volunteering our time, being kind to other people, helping others, donating money, and many more examples. These acts of kindness towards others, big or small, can make a big difference in how we feel about ourselves. Who has a story about a time you were generous, and how that made you feel?”** Get a few popcorn answers. Highlight that practicing Generosity can make a difference in our mood and spirit and how well we feel about ourselves.

**“Generosity is a superpower Strength that can be especially helpful when we’re feeling down because it helps us feel connected to others.”**

“Now, take one minute and draw or write down on your Personal Strengths wheel some of the ways you practice Generosity. This might include people you are generous to or how practicing Generosity makes you feel.”

### Spirituality

“The next Strength on the Wheel is Spirituality. Spirituality can be practiced in several ways. Many people, places, and practices can lift our spirit and connect us to something bigger than ourselves. One way that we can practice Spirituality is by being thankful. Practicing thankfulness over time helps us notice more good things around us. Let’s practice some thankfulness now. We are going to go around the Talking Circle, and everyone will have a chance to share one thing you are thankful for. If you need a moment to think, that’s OK. You can pass and we will come back to you. Is there a volunteer that would like to start us off?”

Give each student a chance to share briefly in a full Circle Share; these can be one-word answers. Make sure to share what you are thankful for as well. Feel free to remind them of the norms your class has developed in the first two lessons. To learn more about running a Talking Circle turn to page 2.

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

If a student is reluctant to share, that is OK. The purpose here is to give everyone an opportunity to share, and for some, there may not be enough safety to share in front of the group just yet.

“As we listened to one another share, what did you notice or feel happening in yourself or in the room? Take a moment to think. For me, I felt like it gently lifted the spirit of our class.” Get a few popcorn answers (I felt happy, it was cool, I felt warm inside, I felt connected to others, etc.).

“Now, take one minute and draw or write down some of the things that lift your spirit, like people, places, and practices. You can also write or draw things you are thankful for.”

### Physical Health

“The next Strength is Physical Health. We can work to build our Physical Health every day, and also take care of our bodies when we get hurt or sick. When we get hurt or sick, what are the things that help us?” Get a few popcorn answers (doctor, medicine, bandaid, having a family member take care of us, school nurse, etc.).

“When we are hurt, we don’t have to stay in pain. We can get better when we get the help we need and deserve.”

“What are the things that we do every day to keep our bodies healthy?” Get a few popcorn answers (hydrate, sleep, exercise, brush teeth, take vitamins, eat healthy, etc.).

“Now, take one minute and draw or write down some of the ways you take care of your Physical Health. You can also draw or write down the people or places that help you when you are hurt or sick.”

### Mental Health

“The final Strength on the wheel is Mental Health. Just like Physical Health strengthens our bodies, Mental Health strengthens our minds. There are things we can do every day to strengthen our Mental Health, like going for a walk outside, sitting in a quiet space, spending time with Positive Friends, and talking to people in our Family Support. There are also things that we can do when we are struggling, or if our emotions feel really big and overwhelming, that help us connect back to our Strengths. Supporting our Mental Health is an important part of living healthier lives.” Hold up the Sources of Strength wheel.

“If our emotions get really big and we get really angry, worried, or sad, we can use a combination of our Strengths to bring those emotions back down to size and help us feel better.”

“What are some things you do to feel better if you are angry, worried, or sad?” Get a few popcorn answers (talk to a parent, read a book, create art, talk to a friend, take a moment to breathe, exercise, sit quietly, etc.). As students share, connect their answers to the different Strengths on the Wheel.

# INTRODUCTION TO SOURCES OF STRENGTH - LESSON 1.3

## Continued Stories of Strength

“Sometimes, when our emotions get really big or overwhelming, there are professionals who can help us too, like a counselor, a social worker, or a therapist. When we get the help we need and deserve, we can get better at navigating big emotions in healthy ways.

“Now, take one minute and draw or write down all of the things that help you when you experience one of the big emotions of anger, worry, or sadness.”

### Walk Around Cool Game (8 min)

“We’ve been sitting for a while, so let’s play a game.” You will want to move to a larger area in the room, or move desks back so you have enough space for students to play the game.

Have the students stand in a circle around the periphery of your space. Ask for five volunteers to help demonstrate the game with you in the center of the circle.

Once you have the volunteers in the center, ask them to demonstrate different silly ways to walk. “First, when I say ‘Walk Around Cool,’ show off your coolest, swaggiest, silliest walk. Then, while you are walking around cool, like these volunteers, I might say one of five prompts. Based on what I say, you jump into that action until I say ‘Walk Around Cool’ again.”

Have the volunteers demonstrate each action. “Let’s demonstrate. OK, ‘Walk Around Cool.’” Students start walking around using their silly walks. “When I say ‘Bicycle,’ five players will form a straight line and put their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them.” Have volunteers demonstrate the prompt, then return to “Walk Around Cool” until you call out each of the five prompts.

#### Prompts:

**Bicycle:** Everyone gets into a line of five people with their hands on the shoulders of the person in front of them.

**Huddle:** A group of four people pull together, linking arms in a closed circle.

**Tepee:** Three people jump into a group with their arms raised above their heads and hands touching; together, they should form a triangle.

**Knuckles:** Two people will create fists with both hands and hold a “fist bump” position with each other.

**Selfie:** Every player should stop and freeze as if they are taking a photo of themselves.

Invite all of the students into the space and begin the game **Walk Around Cool**. Call out each of the prompts in a random order, so students won’t anticipate what the next prompt will be. Play several rounds.

The last round should end with “Knuckles” so that everyone has a partner. If you have an odd number of students, the instructor will be their partner. This sets up the closing pair share.

### Pair Share (1 min)

Hold up a copy of the Sources of Strength wheel. “With your Sources of Strength wheel, let’s take a moment to pair share with your ‘Knuckles’ partner one Strength you are feeling strong in right now and one Strength you want to grow in.” Give everyone a few moments to share.

If time allows once their conversations are wrapped up, ask for a couple of students to share what they are feeling strong in.

Remember to take a picture or photocopy the students’ Personal Strengths wheel for use in the Mental Health Unit, Lesson 2.

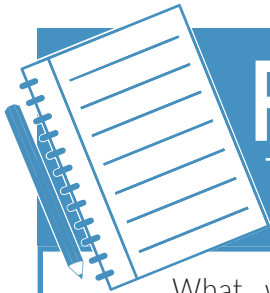
### ADAPTATION

If you have a few extra minutes, it is helpful to do a poll of your students to gauge their Strengths. Ask: “who is feeling stronger in...” for each Strength and have them raise their hands. Then, have a couple of students share specific examples. This will let you know if there are certain Strengths that the majority of the class is doing really well in, and also if there are any Strengths where the majority of students don’t feel strong in.



### EVERYDAY APPLICATION

Have the students put their Personal Strengths Wheel in a place where they can reference it later. You can use this as a conversation piece for future discussions or to help a student who is feeling dysregulated or dealing with conflict identify some Strengths they can use to help them navigate their situation. Teaching students to honor and acknowledge hard things and turn towards the Strengths they have in their lives helps build resilience.



## REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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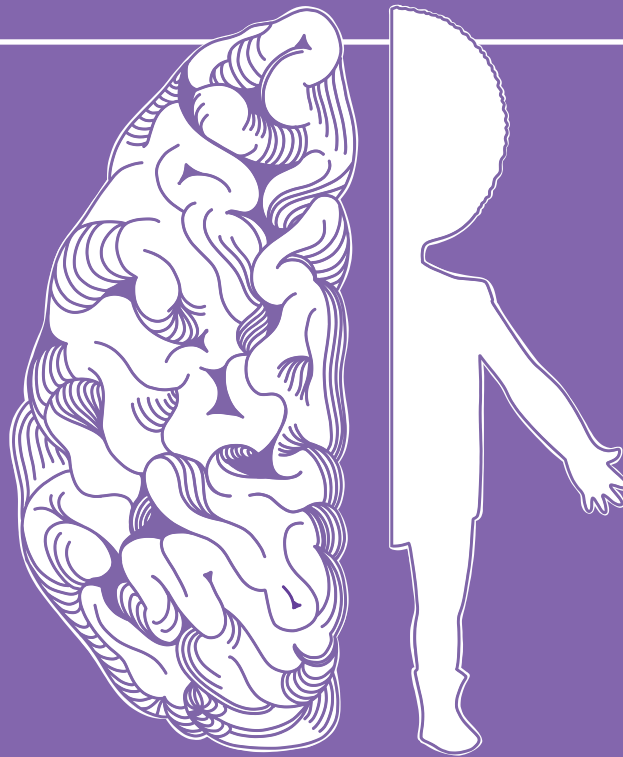
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# UNIT 2

## BRAIN AND BODY SCIENCE



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*Lesson 2.3: Stuck and Unstuck* **32**

*Lesson 2.4: Strengthening our Branches and Leaves* **36**

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Understanding how our brain works is a core component in better understanding and regulating our emotions and behaviors. Our brains are not static, but rather continue to develop, heal, rewire, and grow throughout our lives. The expanding field of Neuroscience continues to reveal ways to increase agency in our lives in how we respond to the world around us. When students understand the relationship between their brain and body, they are empowered to move toward Strength and resilience and to grow in healthy ways.

This unit focuses on three primary areas of the brain using the metaphor of the BrainTree: the Brainstem (Roots), the Limbic System (Trunk), and the Frontal Lobe (Branches and Leaves). Each of these areas of the brain has a distinct role in our day-to-day functioning physically, socially, emotionally, and academically. Our brains are continually growing with the different parts working together to support a healthy and balanced BrainTree. The more these areas of the brain can develop and increase communication with each other, the better we are able to care for our physical needs, navigate emotions, learn, grow, and make healthy decisions throughout our lives.

In education, the focus is often on developing critical thinking skills, a function of the Frontal Lobe (Branches and Leaves). While these skills are important in setting students up for success, there is a hierarchy of needs within the brain. The Brainstem (Roots) provides information related to our basic needs, which if unmet, inhibits our ability to learn new skills, absorb new information, and make informed decisions. The Limbic System (Trunk) houses our emotions and memories, which if continually activated, can override our ability to access the Frontal Lobe (Branches and Leaves). Healthy Roots and a healthy Trunk are foundational for our Branches and Leaves to grow and flourish.

When the parts of our brain do not work in harmony, our BrainTree can become lopsided. When a person's Roots are unmet due to basic needs (lack of safety, food insecurity, dehydration, not being able to use a restroom, lack of shelter, etc.), they can become overactive. Similarly, when a person's Trunk is continually activated by big emotions (fear, anxiety, sadness, etc.), the Trunk can become oversized. This is also true of the Branches and Leaves; when a person focuses solely on learning and performance while neglecting the Roots and Trunk, the tree can become lopsided and lack the Strength to stand when the storms of life come. Having a healthy and balanced BrainTree helps us to be more resilient, and possess the skills to navigate our emotions and needs when difficult things happen. Focusing and engaging in higher-level thinking like reading and math is far more accessible with a balanced BrainTree.

When a person feels overwhelmed, threatened, or is in a heightened state of stress, the Fight-Flight-Freeze responses can be activated in the brain. These responses are important in certain survival-oriented situations. However, these responses can also become overactive, causing a person to become stuck in a cycle of fear or stress. In the classroom, this activation may manifest in different ways; Fight can turn into a power struggle, Flight may look like a student leaving the room or not coming to school, and Freeze could look like a student not getting a pencil out for a test or being unable to remember what they have learned. Caring relationships with Trusted Adults who model and practice regulation skills with students can be one of the most powerful tools in integrating the different parts of their brains to foster health and wellbeing.

# BRAIN AND BODY SCIENCE - LESSON 2.3

## Stuck and Unstuck

### Lesson Spotlight

Using the Strengths on our Sources of Strength wheel can help us get unstuck when we experience Fight-Flight-Freeze and move through stress in healthy ways.

### Materials

- BrainTree Loops image (page 33)
- Printed visuals of the three Lopsided Trees from Lesson 2.2 (page 174-176)

### Preparation

- Ensure adequate space for the two games in this lesson.

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making

### Instructor Overview

As students continue to gain an understanding of the brain, this lesson will expound upon the three highlighted regions of the brain/BrainTree: the Brainstem/Roots, Limbic System/Trunk, and Frontal Lobe/Branches. In this lesson, students will learn about the Fight-Flight-Freeze response and its impact upon our nervous systems when it becomes overactive. Students will play a game (Jump In, Jump Out) to demonstrate the ways the brain can act without thinking. We can tap into our Strengths and find healthy ways to respond to stressful experiences without automatically falling into the Fight-Flight-Freeze response. Students will discuss and identify what helps us get unstuck when we experience stress in life.

### Talking Circle (4 min)

**“In the last few lessons, we talked about how our brains are much like a tree. Who remembers what the Roots of our brain do? Who remembers what the Trunk does?”**

Take one or two answers for each and remind them of the following if they need support: Roots communicate about our physical needs (bathroom, nutrition, hydration, sleep, safety), and the Trunk houses our emotions and memories.

**“Today we are going to be talking about how our Roots and Trunk deal with stressful experiences. Our brains are designed to keep us safe. One of the ways our brain does this is through something called the Fight-Flight-Freeze response. For example, if we were walking through the jungle and we saw a tiger, our brain might trigger a response to Fight and try to confront the tiger, Flight and run away, or Freeze and stay still so the tiger didn’t see us.**

**“However, when we experience stress or when something scares us, our brain can still jump into the Fight-Flight-Freeze response even if there is nothing dangerous or unsafe.**

**“So when people experience stress they can sometimes get upset or angry (Fight), they can sometimes want to**

**hide or run away (Flight), and they can sometimes shut down or not want to do anything at all (Freeze). These are normal responses that all people have and may at times even keep us safe and healthy. We also know that if we get stuck in those responses there are things we can do to get unstuck.”**

### Jump In, Jump Out Game (5 min)

**“Let’s play a quick brain game. This game is called Jump In, Jump Out. Everyone stand in a circle, shoulder to shoulder. Now, I’d like you to say what I say and do what I say.**

- **“Jump in”** (everyone jumps into the circle while saying “jump in”)
- **“Jump out”** (everyone jumps backward while saying “jump out”)
- **“Jump left”** (everyone jumps left while saying “jump left”)
- **“Jump right”** (everyone jumps right while saying “jump right”)

Repeat one time. **“Great job! This time, say what I say, but do the opposite.”**

This is difficult and will result in students jumping in the wrong direction and possibly bumping into one another.

This is part of the teaching point.

- “Jump out” (everyone jumps in while saying “jump out”)
- “Jump in” (everyone jumps backward while saying “jump in”)
- “Jump right” (everyone jumps left while saying “jump right”)
- “Jump left” (everyone jumps right while saying “jump left”)

Repeat one time.

If you choose, you can also do a round where everyone needs to do what you say, but say the opposite of what you say. For example, If you say “jump in” everyone would say “jump out” while jumping in.

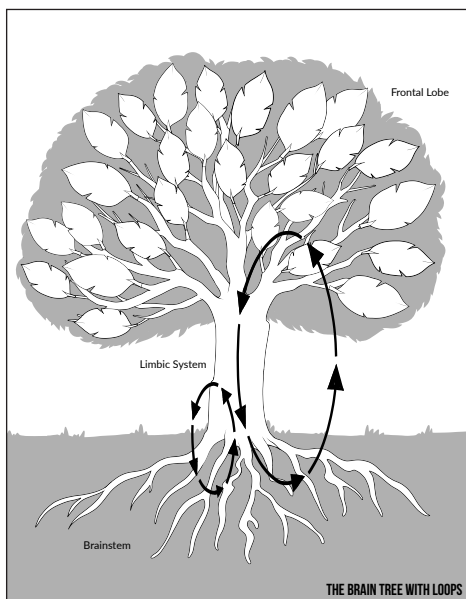
“Did any of you have a hard time in the second round? Who automatically did the thing you were saying? Sometimes we do things that feel automatic, meaning we do them without even thinking. Our Fight-Flight-Freeze response is an example of this. We can react to things very quickly by just using our Roots and Trunk rather than bringing in our Branches and Leaves. However, we can grow in our ability to manage those first reactions.”

### Automatic Responses and The BrainTree

(10 min)

Invite the students to the Talking Circle.

Show the students the image of the BrainTree with loops.



“Notice how this first loop goes from the Roots to the Trunk and back down.

“Now notice how the second loop goes from the Roots, to the Trunk, up to the Branches, then back down to the Roots. Which of these loops would be faster to go around? Which would be slower?” Get one or two answers from the group (the smaller circle would be faster).

“This is what can happen to us in big or scary situations. When we are in our Fight-Flight-Freeze response, our bodies and brains are reacting quickly to a situation, and they don’t have time to communicate to our Branches and Leaves, or our Frontal Lobe, about what we should do. Has anyone ever been surprised and screamed without thinking?” Get a show of hands, but do not ask for students to share at this point.

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

The purpose of this question is to normalize that we all experience one or more of these reactions, We do NOT want the students to be sharing stories of moments when they have experienced Fight-Flight-Freeze.

“That’s because your Roots and Trunk are talking to each other without communicating with your Branches. In many cases, this can be really helpful to keep us safe. However, if we always react very quickly, or we get stuck in our Fight-Flight-Freeze response, we might miss the chance to make the healthiest choice by not using our Branches and Leaves. Let’s imagine we are walking together and saw a snake. What would you do?” Get a few popcorn answers (I would run away and scream, I would call an adult, or I would try to run after the snake). If a student answers that they like snakes or would pick it up, you can highlight how everyone is different, and we aren’t always afraid of the same things.

“The next day you are walking and you see a garden hose, and mistake it for the snake you saw last time. You might grab a stick and chase after the hose, you might run away from the hose, or you might freeze and hold still hoping the hose doesn’t see you. If you used your Branches and Leaves, you could pause and notice that the hose might look like a snake, but it is actually safe and you don’t have to worry about it.”

# BRAIN AND BODY SCIENCE - LESSON 2.3

## Stuck and Unstuck

“In the same way, our brains sometimes go into Fight-Flight-Freeze response when it is unnecessary and unhelpful. For example, maybe we are stressed about taking a test. Our stress response might make us want to argue with the teacher (Fight), pretend we are sick and avoid the test (Flight), or make it difficult to remember anything we’ve learned (Freeze). However, if we can bring in Branches and Leaves, we can take a few deep breaths, calm ourselves down, and remember what we have learned.”

### Using the Wheel to get Unstuck (5 min)

Reference the printed visuals of the Lopsided Trees.

“When stressful situations come up, we can get stuck in big emotions or in our Fight-Flight-Freeze response. Like we talked about in the last lesson, if our emotions stay too big for too long, the Trunk of our BrainTree can get really big. When this happens, our BrainTree can become lopsided which makes it difficult for us to access our Branches and Leaves to help us learn, grow, and make healthy decisions. The Strengths on the Sources wheel can help us get unstuck and bring those emotions back down to size. Sometimes the people on the Strength wheel can be really helpful with that, like a Trusted Adult, a counselor, or someone from your Family Support.

“Turn to a neighbor and share one thing on the Sources of Strength wheel that has helped when you have felt stressed.” Pair share. Give students a couple of minutes to share.

“Is there anyone who would like to share what helps when they are stressed out?” Get two or three students to share.

### Human Knot Game (6 min)

“All right, we are going to get into small groups of four or five students. Once you have your group together, I want you to stand shoulder to shoulder in a circle.”

Once the small groups are formed, continue with the instructions. “First, take two baby steps toward the middle. Reach your right hand out into the middle of the circle. Now use your right hand to grab the right hand of someone across from you in the circle. Make sure you don’t grab the hand of the person next to you.” Help facilitate everyone getting connected to someone across the circle.

“Now reach your left hand out into the middle of the circle, and grab the hand of another person across the circle from you. Has everyone found a hand to hold? Great!

“When I say ‘GO,’ your goal as a team is to untangle yourselves from this knot and work until you are back into a circle again. The only rule is that you aren’t allowed to let go of the hands you are holding. Ready...GO!” Offer help to students if they seem to stay stuck.

After the groups have untangled their human knots, gather back together in the Talking Circle, “What were some of the things you did to become unstuck?” Get a few popcorn answers.

“Those are great answers. We didn’t get overwhelmed or stuck; we all worked together, using our Branches and Leaves to be creative, communicate, and problem solve. Great job.”



# REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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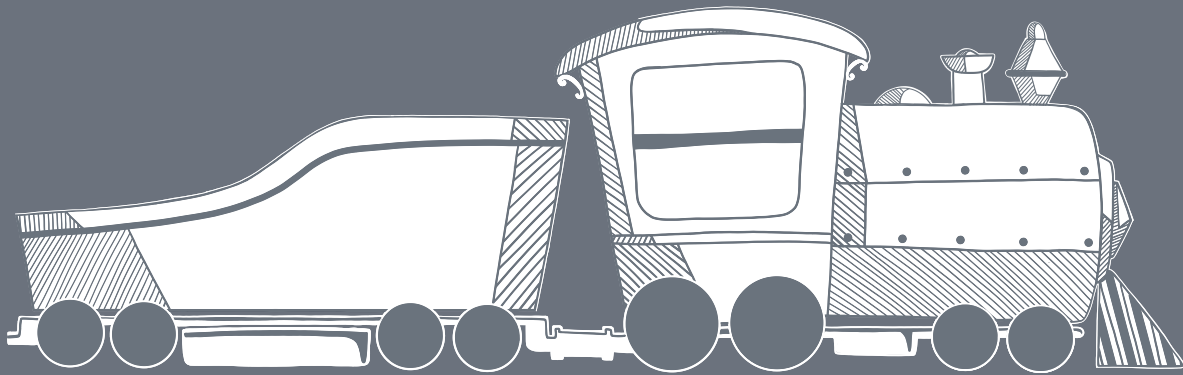
We would love your feedback on what worked well and what could improve to help Sources of Strength continue to grow.

Scan this QR code or visit [www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback) to give feedback on this lesson!



# UNIT 3

# EMOTIONAL REGULATION



*Rationale* **41**

*Lesson 3.1: Understanding and Normalizing Sensations, Emotions and Thoughts* **42**

*Lesson 3.2: Big Emotions* **46**

*Lesson 3.3: Regulation Railroad* **49**

*Lesson 3.4: Practicing Regulation* **55**

*Worksheets* **178**

Emotional regulation is a critical skill for all people to continually cultivate throughout a lifetime. Regulating our emotions requires first becoming aware of and understanding what we are experiencing physically and emotionally. This awareness allows us to slow our thinking, and reduce the reactivity from our Fight-Flight-Freeze response by integrating the different regions of our brain. We are then able to draw upon Strengths and strategies to help us reduce activation and navigate our emotions in healthy ways. These skills are critical for developing and maintaining relationships, engaging in healthy coping strategies, and creating ideal conditions for learning and growth. Emotional regulation is not just about managing difficult emotions or behavior modification. Neuroplasticity research has shown that using a growth mindset and a Strength-based lens through which we view the world can rewire our brains for greater resilience and wellbeing. This leads to improved social, emotional, and academic outcomes.

Co-regulation is a critical component of emotional regulation that happens through trusting relationships. When a Trusted Adult comes alongside and models healthy emotional regulation strategies, it helps students understand and navigate their own emotions. Co-regulation looks like being a thermostat rather than a thermometer, helping regulate the temperature in the room rather than simply reacting to it. These skills are not taught once, but rather modeled and supported regularly, leading to greater understanding and integration. Students and staff enter the classroom with varying degrees of experience with regulatory skills. It is critical that adults practice these skills side-by-side through co-regulation throughout this unit, across the entirety of the Sources of Strength elementary curriculum, and in our everyday interactions with students. As adults, we do a disservice to young people by projecting that we have it all together when we experience challenges or big emotions. This can leave young people feeling isolated, insecure, and overwhelmed by their own big emotions. Through relationship building and co-regulation, we create connection, understanding, and shared Strengths and strategies that help us all regulate in healthy ways.

In the Brain and Body Science Unit, students gained a better understanding of how our brains and bodies communicate. The Emotional Regulation Unit builds upon that foundation by moving from theory to practice. Students will develop greater fluency in understanding emotions and their connections to the brain and body. Throughout the unit there are opportunities to practice and explore the Strengths and strategies for healthy emotional regulation.

We will introduce the Regulation Railroad tool. The Regulation Railroad helps us notice our physical response to emotions, identify and name our emotions, become aware of how big the emotions we are experiencing are, and help us identify Strengths and strategies we can use to regulate our emotions in healthy ways.

Understanding and continually modeling emotional regulation can be a crucial skill for an educator. Disruptions to the school day are persistent and common in elementary schools, and can be highly dysregulating for some students. These disruptions may look like transitions to assemblies or recess, field trips, safety drills, or emotional and behavioral outbursts. It is important that we model and teach healthy emotional regulation and de-escalation when these disruptions occur. For example, if students are experiencing fear or anxiety following a lockdown drill, taking time to create a space to process and regulate through these experiences can be a healing practice for both students and staff.

Thank you for engaging in the work of emotional regulation in your own life and with your class. The fruit of the time invested in developing these skills is abundant and far-reaching in your students' lives, in the classroom, in your school culture, and in our world.

# EMOTIONAL REGULATION - LESSON 3.4

## Practicing Regulation

### Lesson Spotlight

Practicing the Regulation Railroad stops will help us notice our emotions and identify Strengths and strategies to regulate in healthy ways.

### Materials

- Regulation Railroad poster (page 54 & 180)
- Regulation Railroad worksheet from Lesson 3.3
- Plastic cups or other objects that a student can grab for the Head, Toes, Cup Game, one per pair
- Pre-cut Leaves, one per student (page 177)
- Talking Piece (optional)

### Preparation

- Cut out the Leaves

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making

### Instructor Overview

Students should now have a sense of how their emotions can be regulated using various Strengths and strategies from the Regulation Railroad. This helps slow their thinking in order to make healthy decisions when their emotions get big. This lesson is an opportunity to put regulation skills into action in real time. As students become more comfortable identifying what they need when big emotions arise, they are better able to advocate for those needs. The more opportunities students have to practice these skills when they are in a safe space, the more likely they are to use them when their emotions get unexpectedly big. It is important that the instructor models and practices alongside the students, as some students may need coaching and support through co-regulation with a Trusted Adult.

### Opening Talking Circle (7 min)

Invite students to the Talking Circle. Ask students to bring their Regulation Railroad worksheet from the previous lesson and a writing utensil to the Circle.

“So far in this unit, we have been learning how to regulate our emotions with the help of the Regulation Railroad. Sometimes we need to regulate with energizing activities and sometimes we regulate with calming or relaxing activities. Let’s go around the Circle, and each share one thing we have done in the last week that was either calming or energizing. If someone shares an activity that would be a helpful regulation strategy for you, add it to your worksheet. I’ll start.” Full Circle Share. Share an example from your own life, and then have each student briefly share. These examples don’t need to be regulation strategies, but rather calming or energizing activities they have done recently (went fishing, watched a movie, played with friends, slept in, etc.).

If students share Strengths and strategies that could be added to the classroom Regulation Station, highlight this to the class and add them to the Regulation Station. “Thanks for sharing. Let’s keep exploring how we might use the Regulation Railroad in our lives.”

### Regulation Railroad Example (8 min)

“Let’s walk through a scenario where we might be able to use the Regulation Railroad. Imagine that you are walking down the street, and you see a person coming towards you with a huge dog! Let’s look at the first stop of the Regulation Railroad.”

Show the Regulation Railroad poster. “*What do you notice in your body?*” Get a few popcorn answers.

“**This is Stop 1.** You may notice that your breathing gets faster or your heart beats quicker. This is your Roots communicating with you.” Give students a few seconds to think about their answer.

“Next, think about what emotion you might feel when you see this huge dog. **This is Stop 2.** *What emotion do you feel?*” Get a few popcorn answers.

“Your heart might be beating faster because you are feeling nervous or afraid, or maybe you are feeling excited and happy because you love dogs.” Give students a few seconds to think about their answer.

“Next, think about how big the emotion you are feeling is on a scale of 1-5. 1 being ‘I don’t feel much at all’ and



5 being 'I'm really excited or scared!' **This is Stop 3. How big is the emotion?** This is your Trunk communicating with you." Give students a few seconds to think about their answer.

"Now that we have all this information, you can use your Branches and Leaves to make a decision. **This is Stop 4. What will you do to regulate yourself?** What are some things you could do?" Get a few popcorn answers.

"Some of you might take a deep breath and approach the dog slowly, or some of you might say 'no thanks' and cross to the other side of the street. This is an example of your Roots, Trunk, and Branches and Leaves working together to regulate your emotions in healthy ways.

"Let's do one more example together. Think of a time during the school day when you might feel tired, low energy, bored, or down." Give the students a few seconds to think about their answer.

"**Stop 1: What do you notice in your body?** How might you be physically experiencing that emotion?" Get a few popcorn answers (eyes feel heavy, yawning, eyes watering, your body doesn't want to move).

"**Stop 2: What emotion do you feel?** Maybe you feel sad, frustrated, worried, annoyed, impatient, confused, or bored." Give students a few seconds to think about their answer.

"**Stop 3: How big is the emotion?** Rate it on a scale of 1-5" Give students a few seconds to think about their answer. "Raise your hand if you feel like your emotion would be big, like a 4 or 5? Raise your hand if you feel like your emotion would be small, like a 1 or 2?"



"**Stop 4:** The last stop is the Regulation Station. **What will you do to regulate yourself?** What are some ideas of how you might regulate in this situation?" Get a few popcorn answers (get a

drink of water, play a game, go to recess, stand up and stretch, etc.). Remind the students they can look for ideas on their Regulation Station worksheets.

### Head, Toes, Cup Game (4 min)

Instructions for this game are in Lesson 3.2 if you need a reminder.

"Those are great ideas for regulation! Sometimes practicing an energizing activity can help, let's do that as a class now. Let's play the Head, Toes, Cup Game again! Everyone find a partner and get a cup" (or marker or other object).

"Once you have a cup, find an open space in the classroom, and set it on the floor between you and your partner. Everyone ready? HEAD...BIG TOE...LOWER BACK...FOREHEAD...CUP!" Play a few rounds with students switching partners between each round.

"All right, we just played a pretty energizing game. Just like sometimes we need to regulate to bring our energy up, we also might need to regulate to help us calm down. Let's run through the Regulation Railroad one last time." Move quickly through the Regulation Railroad stops, giving students a moment to reflect but do not take answers at this time (refer to The Regulation Railroad poster).

"**What do you notice in your body?** Maybe you are feeling energized, restless, out of breath, or your heart is beating really fast.

"**What emotion do you feel?** Maybe you feel excited and happy, or maybe you are feeling frustrated or disappointed.

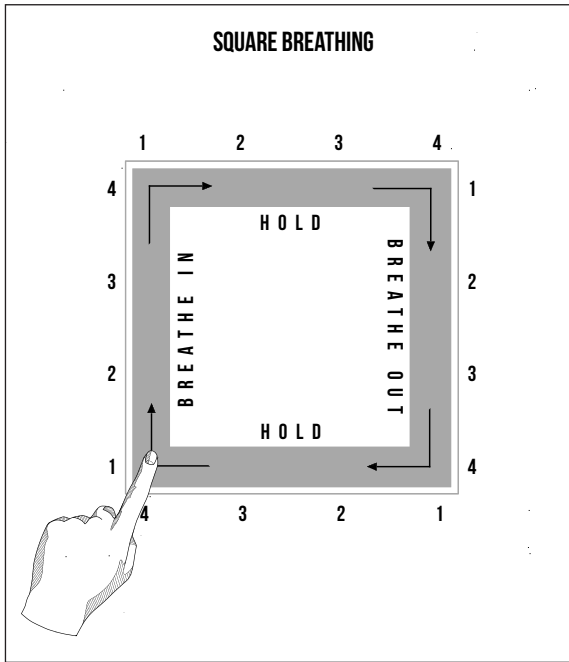
"**How big is the emotion?** Rate it on a scale of 1-5. Maybe you are feeling something very strongly, or maybe you don't feel much at all right now. Either is OK.

"Last, **what will you do to regulate yourself?** Do you need a calming activity or an energizing activity? Would using one of your Strengths be helpful?

"Let's practice a calming regulation strategy together."

### Square Breathing Exercise (4 min)

"Now that some of us are feeling energized, let's practice Square Breathing."



Model the Square Breathing actions as you give instructions.

"To do Square Breathing, you will draw a big square in the air in front of you or on your lap.

"I am going to count to four several times. Each time I count, you will draw another side of the square.

"As I count to four, slowly breathe in and draw one side of the square.

1...2...3...4...

"Now, hold your breath as you trace the next side of the square.

1...2...3...4...

"Now, breathe out as you draw the third side of the square.

1...2...3...4...

"Now, hold your breath as you complete the square.

1...2...3...4...

"Let's do this a couple more times. You may feel as though you need to take several breaths to fully calm yourself.

"Strategies like the ones we practiced today can be tools in our Regulation Station. The Regulation Railroad helps us understand when we might need to regulate and what Strengths and strategies that would be helpful for us."

### Celebration and Closing (7 min)

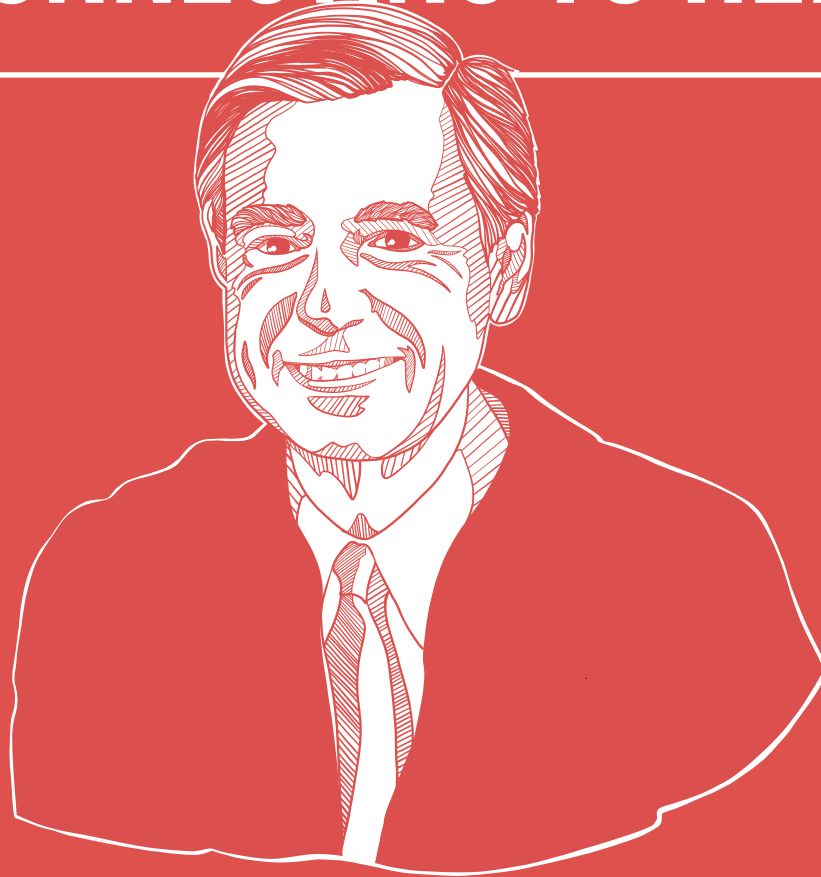
"As we finish this unit, let's take some time to add to our BrainTree how we want to grow in emotion regulation. Everyone is going to get a Leaf and write down one emotion that can get big for you and one Strength or strategy that helps you regulate that emotion in healthy ways." Pass out Leaves. Give the students a couple of minutes to fill out their Leaves, be sure to fill out one for yourself as well.

"Let's hear what everyone put on their Leaves as we do a full Circle Share. Is there a volunteer that would like to start?" Full Circle Share. If you are running short on time in this lesson, you can have students pair share instead.

"Thanks so much for sharing." Have the students place their Leaves on the class BrainTree.

# UNIT 4

## CONNECTING TO HELP



*Rationale* **61**

*Lesson 4.1: Who are the Helpers* **62**

*Lesson 4.2A: Connecting to Help* **65**

*Lesson 4.2B: Connecting to Help: Suicide Specific Adaptation* **68**

*Worksheets* **183**

Connecting to Help is a crucial life skill and protective factor for each one of us. Everyone experiences physical, mental, and emotional hurt at some point in their lives. Just as we need support when we are physically sick and injured, receiving help for mental and emotional pain is incredibly important. Help-seeking is a critical component of effective prevention. The field of prevention has shown that healthy help-seeking Norms and the presence of a Trusted Adult in a young person's life to be profoundly protective. A culture where young people trust adults and where asking for help is seen as a sign of Strength rather than weakness fosters a community in which fewer students struggle in silence and isolation. Within this culture, young people are able to connect to the help they need and deserve. Healthy help-seeking Norms are not only instrumental in effectively intervening in a crisis, but also in preventing such a crisis in the first place by connecting people to help and protective factors further upstream.

The Connecting to Help Unit normalizes help-seeking, and invites students to identify the helpers within multiple contexts of their lives. The unit also explores how students can be connectors to help when they see someone who is hurting, whether physically, mentally, or emotionally.

Lesson 4.2 has two versions: 4.2A explores what connecting to help looks like when we see a friend who is hurting physically, mentally, or emotionally. Lesson 4.2B provides an adaptation that specifically introduces the topic of suicide, discusses warning signs, and teaches the importance of connecting to help. The lesson is designed to strike a hopeful tone, focusing on connecting people to the help they need and deserve. Many students are familiar with the topic of suicide by the time they reach upper elementary. It is valuable to provide a safe and open environment for students to learn about the importance of connecting to help for themselves and others when they are struggling. Classroom instructors are encouraged to invite school Mental Health staff to be present for this lesson to help answer student questions and address what help-seeking at the school can look like.

Thank you for being Trusted Adults in the lives of young people in your school. Your presence is a vital protective factor in their lives.

**Lesson Spotlight**

Noticing when others are hurting and connecting them to the help they need and deserve is a powerful and protective way to provide support and care.

**Materials**

None

**Preparation**

- Ensure adequate space for the Quick Change game.

**Time**

30 minutes

**SEL Focus**

Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-Making

**Instructor Overview**

In this lesson, we expand upon the importance of getting help when we are hurt, whether physically, mentally, or emotionally. We explore signs that could indicate someone is hurting, and ways we can create a classroom and school culture where it is OK to ask for help for ourselves and for others.

**Quick Change Game** (5 min)

“Let’s play a quick game. In a moment, you will find a partner, and form two lines facing one another about one arm’s length apart. Now find a partner, and form two lines.” You may need to help the students get into two parallel lines, with partners facing one another.

“Now give your partner a high five, and then turn around so your back is to your partner. Now, everyone change three things about the way you look right now. You might change the way your hair looks, switch your shoes, or rearrange your clothes.” Give them a moment to make their changes. If some are struggling to think of changes, give them advice (take off your shoes, mess up your hair, etc.). Use this time to joke around, laugh, and be silly with the class as they make changes.

“Give me a thumbs up when you have made your three changes. When I say GO, you will turn around, face your partner, and try to name the three changes they made. When you both identify all three changes, give your partner a high five! OK, 3...2...1...GO!” Give them a minute to identify the changes. After a few moments, ask students to give their partner a hint if they haven’t guessed yet.

“OK, if they haven’t guessed the changes you made, tell them what they were.

“Thanks for playing that game. Now, we are going to transition into a Talking Circle, so have a seat in the Circle.”

**Talking Circle** (5-7 min)

“Sometimes in life we get hurt accidentally, sometimes we get hurt by others, and sometimes we can hurt ourselves. We want to be able to notice when our friends are hurting in any of these ways and connect them to help. We just played a game trying to pick out changes or differences in one another in a silly way. Sometimes though, we might see changes or differences in our friends, family, or classmates that might mean they need some help. Let’s think of some changes we might see if we had a friend that was feeling really sad, or lonely, or hurt.” Get a few popcorn answers (crying, worrying a lot, being mad all the time, not taking care of themselves, not hanging out with friends anymore, or not wanting to be alone).

“That’s very insightful! Often when someone is going through a hard time, there can be some signs or changes that we might notice. What do you think we can do if we see some of these signs or changes in our friends?” Get a few popcorn answers. Highlight examples that talk about showing empathy, extending kindness, asking them how they are doing, and connecting them to help.

“Thanks for sharing. If we see a friend struggling or we see any of these changes, we can reach out to connect them to help. Remember the conversation we had in the last lesson about how if we get hurt or sick there are people who can help us, like Trusted Adults, teachers, parents, counselors, doctors, therapists, and so many others. Just like we need help when our bodies get hurt or sick, we need help when our minds get hurt or sick too.

# CONNECTING TO HELP - LESSON 4.2A

## Connecting to Help

Sometimes, we might see these changes in our friends, and it can be really helpful to not only be a Positive Friend, but also to connect them to an adult who can help.

“Can you think of a time when someone saw that you were hurt or sick, and connected you to an adult who helped you get better?” Get a few popcorn answers (getting hurt at recess, having a bloody nose, getting sick at school, breaking a bone, etc.).

“Thank you for sharing those examples. Asking for help is a sign of Strength and courage, and connecting a friend to help is a way of being a good friend.”

### Building a Culture of Help (15 min)

“Do you think we can create the kind of classroom and school, where when we see someone hurting, we reach out and get them help?” Give a thumbs up to prompt students to give a thumbs up if they agree.

“Has anyone ever gotten hurt, and had someone get an adult to help you?” Get one or two popcorn answers.

“We are going to look at a couple of different scenarios of how we can help someone who is hurting. You are going to work with a partner to figure out how you would help the person in each scenario and connect them to help.”

### Write these questions on the whiteboard:

1. What may the person be thinking or feeling?
2. What are some Strengths from the Sources of Strength wheel that might help?
3. How can you help connect this person to the help they need?

Choose one scenario that resonates with your students. Read the scenario to the class, and have them work with a partner to answer the three questions, then gather to share some of their ideas with the whole group.

- “You see someone who is not being included in a class activity or project.”
- “You see the person sitting next to you is more fidgety than usual, and you think they might be anxious or worried about the upcoming quiz.” This is a great connection to the Emotional Regulation Unit to discuss Strengths and strategies.
- “You see a classmate who is being teased on the playground during recess.” Be sure to highlight that when there are instances of bullying, it is really important to get an adult involved.
- “You see a student from another class crying in the bathroom.” While students might come up with examples of how they might step in as individuals to help that person feel better, you will also want to emphasize that it would be helpful if they got connected to adults at school, like a teacher or a counselor.

Invite students back to the Circle, and share their ideas. “You all came up with some great ideas to support one another when someone is struggling. Can we all agree that if someone is hurt mentally, physically, or emotionally, we will connect them to help?” Give a thumbs up to prompt students to give a thumbs up if they agree.

“Awesome, let’s work together to make this a reality in our classroom and school. Thanks so much for sharing today. This is a really important topic, and it is inspiring to see how much you care about one another.”

### Rock, Paper, Scissors Tournament

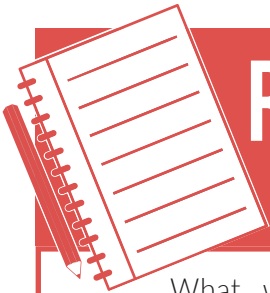
(3 min)

“We’ve been talking about the different ways that we can help others and ourselves. We’ve also talked about how we can create a classroom culture where we support and celebrate one another. So, let’s play a quick game where we get to cheer for and support our classmates. Are you all ready for another Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament?!”



This game was played in Lesson 1.2 of the Introduction to Sources Unit. Clarify that it is just one round with each opponent, unless you tie. If you lose, you will stand behind the person you lost to and chant their name. If the person you are cheering for loses, your whole group

stands behind the person who won and now cheers for them. This continues until you have two people left with roughly half the room cheering for each of them with a final showdown to determine the winner.



## REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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We would love your feedback on what worked well and what could improve to help Sources of Strength continue to grow.

Scan this QR code or visit [www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback) to give feedback on this lesson!



# CONNECTING TO HELP - LESSON 4.2B

## Connecting to Help: Suicide Specific Adaptation

### Lesson Spotlight

Noticing when others are hurting and connecting them to the help they need and deserve is a powerful and protective way to provide support and care.

### Materials

None

### Preparation

- Ensure adequate space for the Quick Change game.
- Invite the school mental health professional to be present as you deliver this lesson.

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-Making

### Instructor Overview

In this lesson, we expand upon the importance of getting help when we are hurt, whether physically, mentally, or emotionally. We explore signs that could indicate someone is hurting and ways we can create a classroom and school culture where it is OK to ask for help for ourselves and for others.

This adaptation of Lesson 4.2 addresses the topic of suicide. We can all grow more comfortable in talking about this topic, the ways we can live healthy lives, and how to connect our friends to help when they are struggling. You are strongly encouraged to invite school mental health staff to participate in this lesson alongside you, as they can be a resource in talking with students about what seeking help at the school can look like. Students may have additional questions about this topic, and having a mental health professional available to answer questions can be helpful.

As the instructor, we encourage you to take time preparing for this lesson by reflecting on your own experience, as well as, the experiences your students may have had with suicide or trauma. Consider what strategies you might use to regulate should big emotions arise for yourself or students. The intent of this lesson is not to be overly heavy or stir up trauma; however, this is a serious topic that can be activating for some people, in particular, if suicide is a topic that hits close to home. The lesson is designed to strike a hopeful tone, focusing on connecting people to the help they need and deserve.

Many students are familiar with the topic of suicide by the time they reach upper elementary age. It is valuable to provide a safe and open environment for students to learn about the importance of connecting to help for ourselves and for others when we are struggling. You will want to lead this conversation in an open, inviting, and non-judgmental way without an overly dramatic tone. This is not a time for personal stories about experiences with those who are feeling suicidal or those who have died by suicide. Instead, it is intended to emphasize the importance of connecting to help and normalizing the ways we get help when we feel stuck or see a friend who is stuck. Follow up individually with students with lived experience with suicide to check in and offer support. We encourage you to read and get comfortable with the script before delivering this lesson.

### Introduction (5 min)

Invite students to the Talking Circle.

"Throughout our Sources of Strength lessons we've been talking about emotions and how they can get really big. When a person gets overwhelmed with hard things, or they feel really angry, anxious, sad, or hurt, they might start to feel stuck. Sometimes, a person's brain can even begin to think there is no way to get unstuck, and they start to feel hopeless, thinking that things won't get

better. This feeling of being stuck or hopeless, like there is no way out of their pain, can lead some people to think they want to die. When a person has thoughts about killing themselves, that is called being suicidal. However, feeling suicidal doesn't necessarily mean that a person actually wants to die, they just might feel alone, or afraid, and not know how things could get better.



"Remember in our BrainTree, how when the Trunk gets really big, we can have a hard time accessing our Branches and Leaves? When the brain gets overwhelmed, it can have a hard time problem-solving. We've been spending a lot of time talking about the Sources of Strength wheel. When a person is feeling stuck and has feelings of suicide, the Strengths of the Wheel can help them get back in balance and get unstuck. The truth is, people who feel suicidal are able to get better and get unstuck, but they need other people to help them do that.

"You all have tremendous power to help save people's lives. Sometimes a person who is feeling suicidal can have a hard time asking for help. They may even ask others to keep it a secret, but keeping that secret doesn't help them get better. It is really important that when we get stuck in life, we are able to get the help we need and deserve. If you are ever feeling that way, we want you to be able to ask for help. Or if you have friends that are having thoughts about suicide, we want to connect them to help. We can be a part of helping others get unstuck. We want to help them use their Sources of Strength and get some adults involved to support them. You all have the power to be connectors to help.

"As classmates and friends, you may notice that someone is struggling before an adult does. Across the country, many students your age have helped save their friends' lives by connecting them to a Trusted Adult and by helping them connect to the Strengths on the Sources of Strength wheel. Many of the most powerful and resilient people have felt stuck, overwhelmed, and sometimes even suicidal, but they used their Strengths and supports to get through the hard times. Each of us can be a Positive Friend, encourage others, and speak up to break the silence when someone is hurting and connect them to help. We can connect them to caring adults that are able to help and keep them safe."

### **Quick Change Game** (5 min)

"Let's play a quick game. In a moment, you will find a partner, and form two lines facing one another about one arm's length apart. Now find a partner and form two lines." You may need to help the students get into two parallel lines, with partners facing one another.

"Now give your partner a high five, and then turn around so your back is to your partner. Now, everyone change

three things about the way you look right now. You might change the way your hair looks, switch your shoes, or rearrange your clothes." Give them a moment to make their changes. If some are struggling to think of changes, give them advice (take off your shoes, mess up your hair, etc.). Use this time to joke around, laugh, and be silly with the class as they make changes.

"Give me a thumbs up when you have made your three changes. When I say GO, you will turn around, face your partner, and try to pick out and name the three changes they made. When you both identify all three changes, give your partner a high five! OK, 3...2...1...GO!" Give them a minute to identify the changes. After a few moments, ask students to give their partner a hint if they haven't guessed yet.

"OK, if they haven't guessed the changes you made, tell them what they were.

"Thanks for playing that game, now we are going to transition into a Talking Circle, so have a seat in the circle."

### **Warning Signs** (10 min)

"Sometimes in life we get hurt accidentally, sometimes we get hurt by others, and sometimes we get hurt ourselves. We want to be able to notice when our friends are hurting in any of these ways, and connect them to help. We just played a game trying to pick out changes or differences in one another. Sometimes we might notice changes or differences in our friends, family, or classmates that could mean they need help.

"What are some changes you might notice if you had a friend that was feeling really sad, lonely, or hurt?" Get a few popcorn answers.

"Can you think of signs of what it could look like if a friend is thinking about hurting or killing themselves? What might they be saying or doing?" Get a few popcorn answers.

Be careful not to let this conversation drag on for too long. If students are struggling to answer the question, simply mention some of the following warning signs (losing interest in things they used to enjoy, withdrawing or isolating, doing poorly in school, being aggressive,

# CONNECTING TO HELP - LESSON 4.2B

## Connecting to Help: Suicide Specific Adaptation

giving possessions away, looking sad or mad or worried, crying a lot, big changes in the way they act, look, or dress, making comments or jokes about suicide, talking about not wanting to be here anymore, making comments about “when I’m gone,” etc.).

“When someone is going through a hard time there may be some signs or changes we might notice. What do you think we can do if we see some of these signs or changes in our friends?” Get some popcorn answers, and highlight examples that talk about showing empathy, extending kindness, asking them how they are doing, or connecting them to help.

“Great answers. If we see a friend struggling or we see any of these changes, we can reach out to connect them to help. Remember the conversation we had in the last Sources lesson about how if we get hurt or sick there are people who can help us, like caring adults, teachers, parents, counselors, doctors, therapists, and so many others. When someone is thinking about suicide they need help to get better. Just like we need help when our bodies get hurt or sick, we need help when our minds get hurt or sick too.

“Can you think of a time when someone saw that you were hurt or sick, and connected you to an adult who helped you get better?” Get a few popcorn answers (getting hurt at recess, having a bloody nose, getting sick at school, breaking a bone, etc.).

“Great examples. Asking for help for ourselves or for others when we see they are hurting is really important. Asking for help is a sign of Strength and courage and connecting a friend to help is a way of being a good friend.”

### Building a Culture of Help

(5-7 min)

“Do you think we can create the kind of classroom and school where when we see someone is hurting, we reach out and get them help?” Give a thumbs up to prompt students to give a thumbs up if they agree.

“Pair share with a partner and come up with ideas of things we can do in our classroom that would make everyone feel OK to ask for help or get help for a friend?”

Pair share for a minute.

“Who felt their partner had a good idea? What are some ways we as a class can make it OK to ask for and provide help?” Get a few popcorn answers from the pairs (having a pass to be able to see the school counselor, tell stories about getting connected to help, give our friends permission to ask for help if they see us struggling or hurting, talk about how we get better after being hurt or stuck, etc.).

“You all came up with some really incredible ideas to support one another when we are struggling. Can we all agree that if someone is hurt mentally, physically, or emotionally, we will connect them to help?” Give a thumbs up to prompt students to give a thumbs up if they agree.

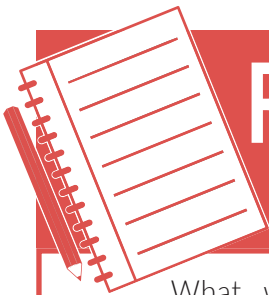
“Awesome, let’s work together to make this a reality in our classroom and school. Thanks so much for sharing today. This is a really important topic and it is inspiring to see how much you care about one another.”

### Rock, Paper, Scissors Tournament (3 min)

“We’ve been talking about the different ways that we can help others and ourselves. We’ve also talked about how we can create a classroom culture where we support and celebrate one another. So, let’s play a quick game where we get to cheer for and support our classmates. Are you all ready for another Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament?!”

This game was played in Lesson 1.2 of the Introduction to Sources Unit. Clarify that it is just one round with each opponent unless you tie. If you lose, you will stand behind the person you lost to and chant their name. If the person you are cheering for loses, your whole group stands behind the person that won and now cheers for them. This continues until you have two people left with roughly half the room cheering for each of them with a final showdown to determine the winner.





# REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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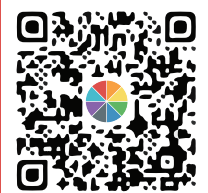
Other thoughts or reflections?

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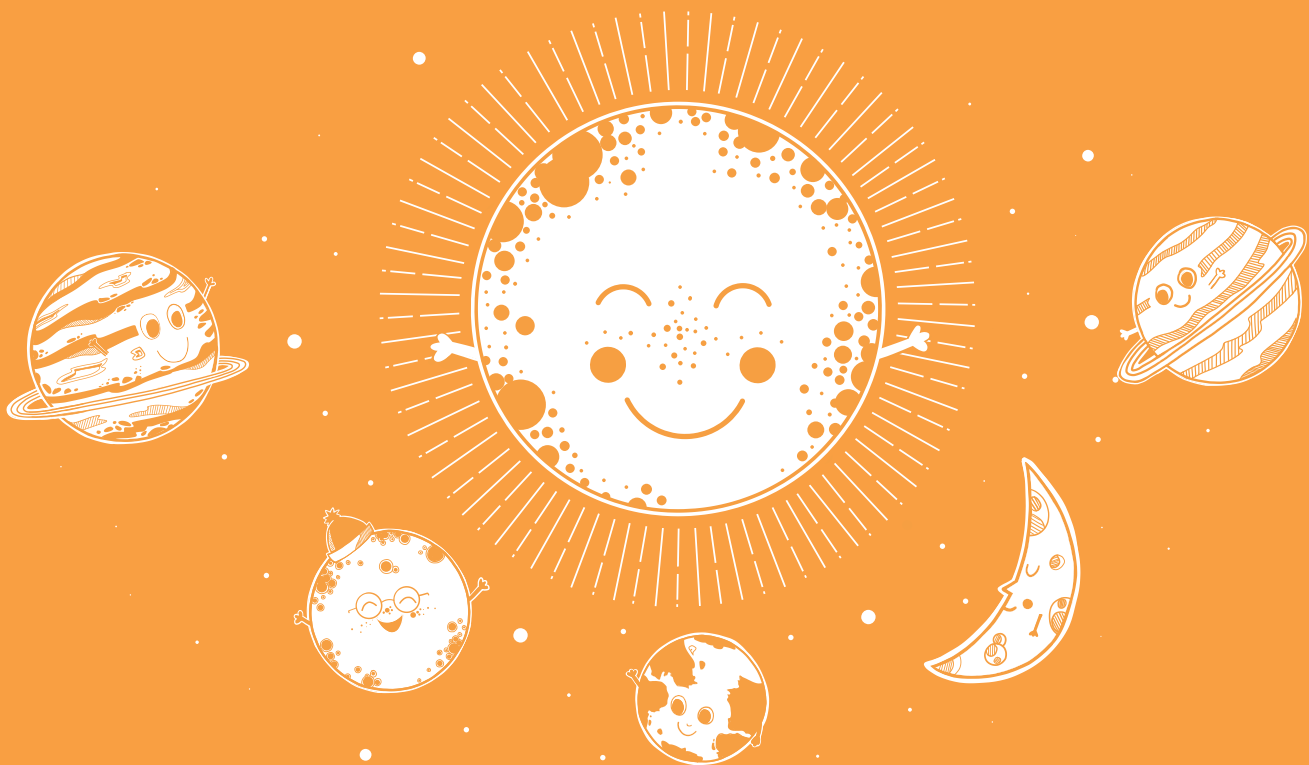
We would love your feedback on what worked well and what could improve to help Sources of Strength continue to grow.

Scan this QR code or visit [www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback) to give feedback on this lesson!



# UNIT 5

# FAMILY SUPPORT



*Lesson 5.1: Solar System of Support* 79

*Lesson 5.2: Growing Our Family Support* 82

*Worksheets* 187

# FAMILY SUPPORT - LESSON 5.2

## Growing Our Family Support

### Lesson Spotlight

Growing and Strengthening our Family Support through connection with others and by being a support for them can deepen our relationship with them.

### Materials

- Stapler or tape
- Three paper chain strips per student
- Take-Home Family Support activity sheet, one per student (Page 187)

### Preparation

- Prepare three paper strips per person, including yourself
- Copy Take-Home Family Support activity sheet (one per student)

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Growth Mindset

### Instructor Overview

In this lesson, students will explore ways they can grow the Strength of Family Support in their lives. This lesson gives students an opportunity to consider ways they can be a support for their families, as well as how they might deepen relationships and connections with their Family Support. The lesson concludes with an activity exploring how customs, routines, and traditions can be one way to build family connectedness. In order to engage students' Family Support in this unit, students will have the opportunity to lead several of the activities from this lesson at home.

### Talking Circle (10 min)

Invite the students to the Talking Circle.

“In the previous Family Support lesson, we explored how our families all look and feel different. Families can be big or small, they could be family of choice, our extended family, or our immediate family. We all might experience different emotions with our families. Today, we are going to explore how we can grow our Family Support in different ways. Just like our family members can be a support for us, we can also be a source of Family Support for them through the ways we interact and build relationships together. What are some of the positive ways you connect with and support your family?”

Get a few popcorn answers (helping a sibling, calling a grandparent, helping with chores, playing games, asking family how they are doing, listening to others, etc.).

“Those are great ways to be supportive. Things like helping to make dinner, listening when someone is upset, playing games together, and all of your answers are powerful ways to build Strength within your family.

“Another way that families can grow is by connecting with family we don't see or talk to as often, or by identifying and reaching out to people that could be family of choice for us. Think about a family member that you want to get to know better or a person who you might choose to be a part of your Family Support.” Pause and give the students

a few seconds to think about who this person might be in their life.

“What are some things you could do to connect with these people?” Get a few popcorn answers.

“A few ideas could include giving them a call, writing them a note, or drawing a picture for them. Now turn and pair share with your neighbor a way you can grow your Family Support. Maybe that is doing something to be a support for our family, or maybe it is reaching out to deepen a connection with someone in our Family Support.” Pair share.

“Thanks for sharing. There are so many ways that we can continue to grow our Family Support. Now, we are going to play a game, and do an activity that you can do at home with your family.”

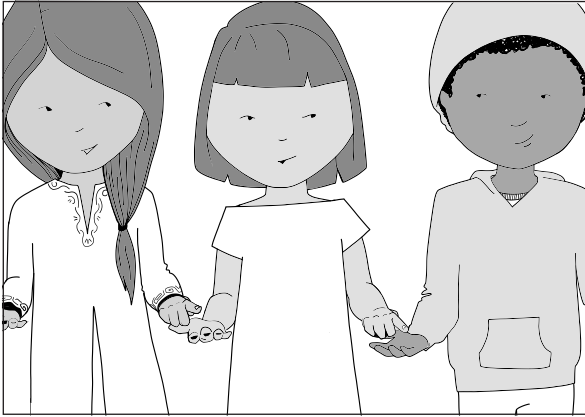
### Gotcha Game (5 min)

“Let's play a game. Everyone stand shoulder to shoulder in a circle without touching. Now take your right hand and put it out flat with your palm up in front of the person to your right.” Be sure all the students have their hands in the right place before moving to the next step.

“Now take your left hand and put your pointer finger in the middle of the palm of the person to your left.” Allow

students time to get set up.

“Now when I say the word ‘GOTCHA,’ try to lift your left finger out of your neighbor’s palm without getting caught, and at the same time, try to catch the finger of the person on your right.”



Play several rounds with this setup and then change direction, so the students are using their other hand. “One really good way to build Family Support is to have fun together and play games. You could even play ‘Gotcha’ with your family.” Have the students get a writing utensil and go to the Talking Circle.

### Family Customs, Routines, and Traditions Paper Chain Activity (12 min)

“At their best, families help us feel valued, cared for, and give us a sense of belonging. We want to do that here in our classroom as well. One way families can do this is through customs, traditions, and routines. In our Sources of Strength lessons, we take time to listen and share in Talking Circles as well as play games together. These become rhythms that help us know what to expect, and they give us time for connection that builds a sense of belonging. When we think about our class, what are some of the customs, routines, and traditions that we have?” Get a few popcorn answers (class greeting, turning in homework, Talking Circle, birthday celebrations, etc.).

“Similarly, one way we can grow Family Support is by creating and taking part in family customs, routines, and traditions. These can happen daily, every year, or even over generations with our immediate family, extended family, or family of choice. They can be connecting and help us feel valued, cared for, and give us a sense of belonging. Some families have cultural customs

they do together, some families have a special meal, some families have holiday traditions, some families listen to music together, and some families have a nighttime routine. You might have a special greeting with a cousin, or your friend’s mom always offers you a snack when you visit. What are some customs, routines, and traditions that you have with your Family Support?” Get a few popcorn answers (birthday celebrations, holiday dinners, breakfast routine, chores, etc.).

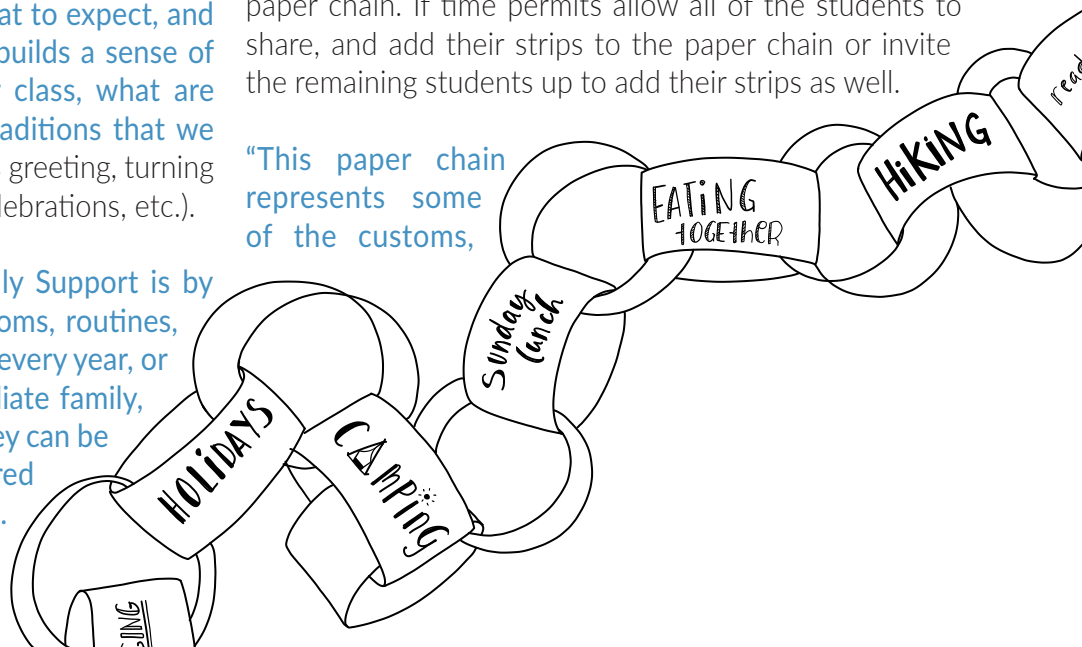
“You are going to get three strips of paper. Write one custom, routine, or tradition from your family or our class on each strip of paper. It could be small things done daily or big things that happen on special occasions.” Pass out three strips of paper to each student. Give them a minute or two to write their answers. Make sure you fill out three strips for yourself too.

“Great! Now, we are going to pair share one or two of the customs, routines, and traditions we’ve written on our strips of paper.” Pair share. Give students two minutes to share.

“So when you think about the customs, routines, and traditions you shared, what is it that makes them meaningful? Is it because it is something predictable that helps you know what to expect, or that it is something to look forward to? Is it an opportunity to connect with people who make you feel valued and cared for in a special way? What makes them meaningful to you?” Get a few popcorn answers.

As students share, take their strips and begin to form a paper chain. If time permits allow all of the students to share, and add their strips to the paper chain or invite the remaining students up to add their strips as well.

“This paper chain represents some of the customs,



# FAMILY SUPPORT - LESSON 5.2

## Growing Our Family Support

routines, and traditions that are meaningful for our class. Some of the links are things we do with our own families, and some are things we do together as a class. As we said before, at their best, families help us feel loved, valued, and cared for, and that is something we want to do for one another. Together, they make a powerful chain reminding us that we are all connected.” Decide with the class where you want to display your class paper chain.

“You will have an opportunity to do some of these activities from our lesson today with the people who are your Family Support. Here is an instruction sheet with the game we played and the customs, routines, and traditions activity to make your own family paper chain. All throughout this curriculum, we have talked about how your voices are powerful, and now you’ll have the opportunity to lead others in identifying the customs, routines, and traditions that link you all together.” Pass out Take Home Family Support activity sheet. Walk through the sheet with the students, highlighting the note for Family Support and giving them a chance to ask any questions.

### Take Home Family Support Activity (3 min)



#### EVERYDAY APPLICATION

Think about ways to establish helpful classroom customs, routines, and traditions. Examples could include practicing regulation strategies every day at certain transition times (see Emotional Regulation Unit or Transitions Unit), instituting a thankfulness practice before tests (see Spirituality Unit), or establishing classroom greetings.



# REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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We would love your feedback on what worked well and what could improve to help Sources of Strength continue to grow.

Scan this QR code or visit [www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback) to give feedback on this lesson!





# UNIT 6

## POSITIVE FRIENDS



*Lesson 6.1: What Makes a Positive Friend?* 87

*Lesson 6.2: What's Your Perspective?* 90

*Lesson 6.3: Belonging and Connection* 94

*Worksheets* 189

# POSITIVE FRIENDS - LESSON 6.2

## What's Your Perspective?

### Lesson Spotlight

Learning that Positive Friends try to step back and understand other people's perspectives, regulate their emotions, and practice healthy communication when conflict arises.

### Materials

- Four large sheets of plain paper
- Pencils
- The four Perspective-Taking pictures, tear out and consider laminating (page 189-195)
- Timer

### Preparation:

- Hang the four pictures in four separate places around the classroom where students from the other groups will not be able to see them. You can cover the picture with a sheet of paper if needed. You may also consider placing the pictures in easily accessible alternative spaces such as the hallway.

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Self-Management, Growth Mindset

### Instructor Overview

This lesson introduces the concept that Positive Friends are able to navigate conflict by understanding the perspectives of other people. This helps students identify ways that conflicts and disagreements are an incredible opportunity to learn new and different perspectives which can lead to creative problem-solving. Students will do a perspective-taking activity to illustrate this concept. They will be divided into four different groups and each will be given a section of a larger picture for their group to draw. The groups will work in relay fashion with one runner looking at their portion of the picture and then relaying it to a team member to draw. Each group member will have the opportunity to be the runner and the drawer.

### Talking Circle (5-8min)

Invite all students to the Talking Circle.

**"In the last lesson, we began talking about Positive Friends, both how we can be Positive Friends for others and how others can be Positive Friends for us. If you remember, at the end, we each named something we could do to become a stronger Positive Friend."** Raise your hand as you ask, **"Who has an example of what they have been doing to become a stronger Positive Friend?"**

Get a few popcorn answers.

**"Positive Friends are friends who work through conflicts, and try to understand how other people might see a problem or conflict. This is called perspective-taking. This week, we are going to talk about how we can navigate challenges, disagreements, and conflict. We will even have an opportunity to practice taking others' perspectives."**

**"How many of you see a rollercoaster and think FUN?"**

Get a show of hands.

**"How many of you see a rollercoaster and think SCARY?"**

Get a show of hands.

**"How many of you see carrots and think YUM?"** Get a

show of hands.

**"Or how many of you see carrots and think YUCK?"** Get a show of hands.

**"These are some simple examples of where we might have different perspectives, but there are other times in relationships where a difference of perspective is something that could create conflict between you and a friend. For example, when you and a friend have a different idea of which game you want to play at recess, or when you each have a different perspective on the best way to complete an assignment for class. When we work through conflict in a healthy way, we are being Positive Friends to people we disagree with. Part of being a Positive Friend in conflict means we accept the idea that other people have different perspectives on problems than us, and that we can work to understand those different perspectives to find a solution together."**

**"If you were to ask the students in the grade below you how or where conflict shows up in their lives, what do you think they would say? We are not asking for specific conflicts, but rather times, places, or topics where conflict comes up."** Take several popcorn answers, keeping the

# POSITIVE FRIENDS - LESSON 6.2

## What's Your Perspective?

tone light and general (games at recess, lining up, sharing with siblings, things other people say about us).

### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

The goal of this question is not to get personal examples of conflict, but rather to gather ideas of places and situations where conflict commonly occurs. If a student shares a personal story, gently redirect them to the question, and find a time to circle back with that student to follow up on their conflict situation.

“Would you all agree that everyone will have disagreements with other people throughout their lives?” Raise your hand or give a thumbs up to encourage the students to non-verbally agree. “Would you also agree that each person has their own point of view when they are in conflict?” Raise your hand or give a thumbs up. “Would you also agree that there is often more than one way to resolve a conflict or disagreement?” Raise hands or give thumbs up.

“Listening to other people’s perspectives can help us understand their point of view and work toward resolving conflict. Do you think that if everyone thought the same thing we would ever come up with cool new ideas? I don’t think so. That’s what having a growth mindset can do. That’s right, we would be pretty boring if we all thought the same way all the time! We need to have differences in order to grow stronger together.”

### Perspective-Taking Activity (12 min)



This image (on four separate pages) can be found from page 189. Tear them out and place each page in a separate location.

“In the next activity, we are going to divide into four teams and work together to draw a copy of four different

pictures I have placed around the room. We are going to play a game of telephone art! Here’s what’s going to happen: your group will get into a straight line. I will be the timer for all of the groups. For the first 30 seconds, you will send the first person in line to look at the picture and then run back to the second person in line, and tell them how to draw as many things from the picture as you can. When I say ‘GO’, the person drawing will now be the one looking at the picture and telling the next person in line what to add to the drawing. You’ll keep going until everyone has seen the picture and had a chance to draw.”

### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

If you are tight on space and that will limit visibility of the different pictures, consider covering them with a piece of butcher paper, and having the runner lift the paper to view the picture, or you can place each picture inside a numbered manilla folder.

Divide the students into four groups, and arrange each group into a line. The first person in each line will be the first runner, and the second person will sit at a desk or table with a sheet of paper and drawing utensils, ready to draw what the runner describes to them. You will be the timekeeper. Make sure students know what the signal is for changing positions. When all groups are ready, start a timer, and say “GO!”

Once every student has had a chance to draw, bring the students back to the large group and have them bring both their drawing and the original picture they were copying. Don’t have the groups reveal their pictures and drawings just yet.

Ask the whole group, “What was that activity like for you?” Take a few popcorn answers from the group (it was fun, challenging, etc.). If students were frustrated with each other, take the opportunity to remind them that people can have different experiences and perspectives from one another even when participating in the same activity.

Raise your hand as you ask, “Who thought it was hard to understand what other people were explaining? Who thought it was hard to explain your own point of view or perspective? It can be tricky to fully understand someone

# POSITIVE FRIENDS - LESSON 6.2

## What's Your Perspective?

else's perspective, and even to explain your own. When you got to be the runner, what are some of the things that worked to help explain your point of view?" Take popcorn answers from the group for these questions.

"When you were the artist, what are some of the things that worked to help understand the runner's point of view when drawing the picture?" If students don't come up with these answers, ask clarifying questions, such as, "Who tried to explain the whole picture? Who just tried to explain smaller details?"



Have the students in group one reveal their original picture with the copy they drew. Place the original on top, and the copy below. Keep it light and remind students that because of our different perspectives and that this activity was designed to be silly and challenging, our pictures might look very different. If

necessary, remind the class that this was a difficult activity, and we need to stay kind and supportive to all but that we can laugh at our pictures together.

Referencing the original picture, ask the whole group, "What do you think is happening in this picture? What emotion do you think this person is feeling?"



Have the students in group two reveal their original picture and the copy they drew below the original. Place the second pictures to the right of the first pictures. This will reveal more elements of the scene.

Get some popcorn answers. "Do your perceptions of these pictures change when we put them together? How did the picture just change for you? What do you think is going on in this new scene? How do you think the people in this picture might be feeling? Does your perspective

change when you see the fuller picture? When you only see a part of something you cannot fully understand what is going on until you see the whole picture. Seeing the whole picture will often change your perspective."



Next, have the students in group three reveal their original picture and the copy they drew below it. Place the third pictures to the right of the second pictures.

Get some popcorn answers. "What do you think is going on in this new picture? How might the moose be feeling? Did anyone's thoughts about the boy in the second picture change when we put them together?" Gather some popcorn answers from the students. "Sometimes we do not have all of the information, and that can make our point of view, or perspective, very different. Now that we have more of the picture, have our thoughts about the first two pictures changed? What might the characters be experiencing?"



Next, have the students in group four reveal their original picture and the copy they drew below it. Place the fourth pictures to the right of the third pictures. This will reveal the complete picture.

"So now that we have the whole picture, we can better understand the perspectives of each of the characters. Before seeing the whole picture, we might have thought the boy on the bike was being rude by splashing the girl with the puddle, but when we see that he is afraid of the moose our perspective changes, and we might think the moose is being mean. When we see that the moose is running away from a dragon, our perspective changes again. It can be like this in life, most of the time, we only see a part of the picture, and we can make judgments or

# POSITIVE FRIENDS - LESSON 6.2

## What's Your Perspective?

assumptions about why someone is acting a certain way. When we can take the time to listen and understand their perspective, it can help us be more understanding, and more able to work through the conflict.”

### Talking Circle (10 min)

Invite students back to the Talking Circle.

“We talked about how some people will explain the picture as a whole, and some will focus on the smaller details. We need both in order to solve problems. We also saw that the more we can see and understand, the better off we are going to be. We know our perspective can change as we see a situation more clearly, just like placing the four pictures together. If you were having a conflict with a friend or peer, what are some things you

might do to get more information to learn and understand someone else's perspective? (Asking questions, good listening, regulating my emotions, asking an adult to help).

“Turn to a shoulder partner, and brainstorm some ideas.”

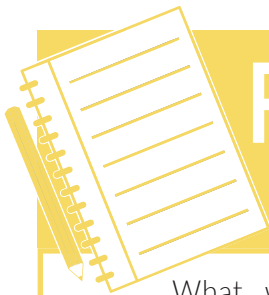
Give the students a minute to discuss. Have students popcorn share the ideas they came up with. As you gather student answers, highlight the answers that mention trying to understand the other person's perspective.

“Thank you all for your participation in this lesson. Can we all commit to working to understand the other person's perspective when we have a conflict? This is a skill we need to learn and practice, so let's keep practicing as a class.”



### EVERYDAY APPLICATION

As conflicts arise in the classroom, facilitate time and space for students to practice perspective-taking, and refer back to the idea list created by the students.



## REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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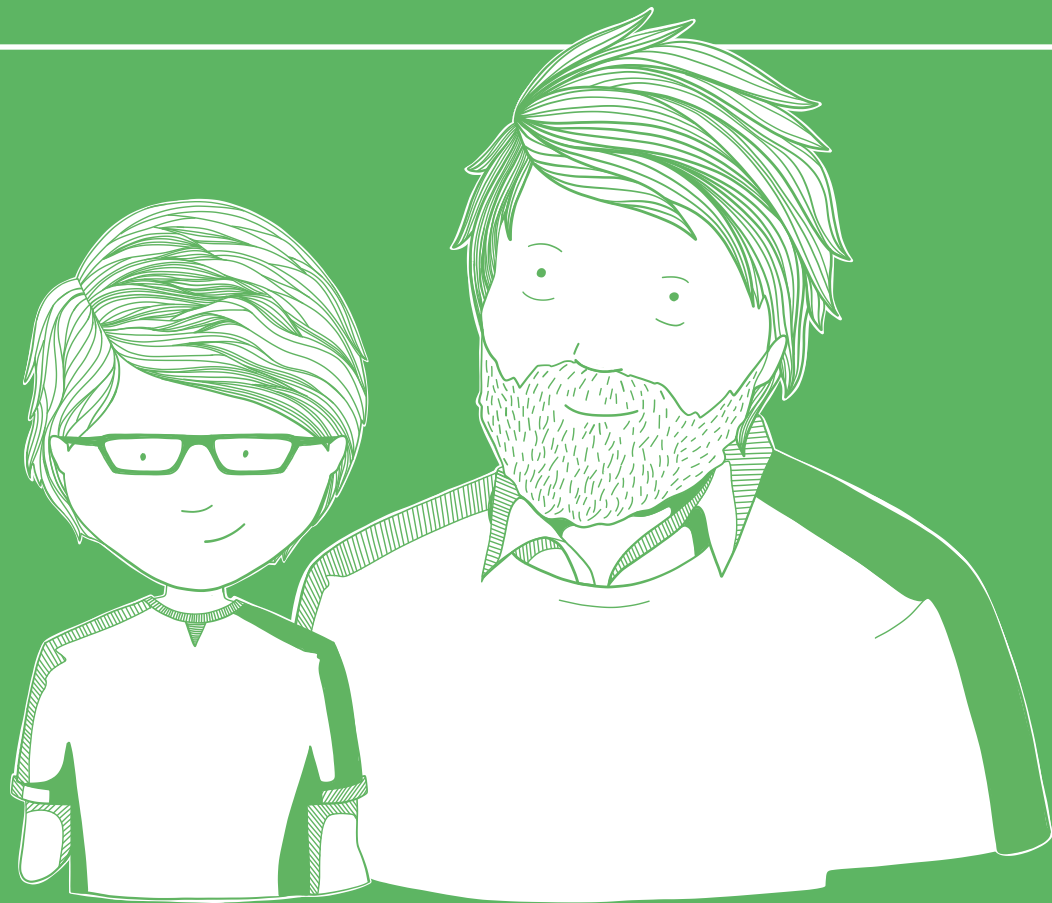
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# UNIT 7

# MENTORS



*Lesson 7.1: What Makes a Mentor?* **99**

*Lesson 7.2: Learning from Mentors* **103**

*Lesson 7.3: The Mentor in Me* **106**

*Worksheets* **197**

### Lesson Spotlight

Learning from the experiences of Mentors helps us grow as we identify the Mentors in our own lives.

### Materials

- Paper or plastic Cups, one per participant
- Name tags (optional)
- Mentor Interview Questions - Option 1, or 2 (page 200-201)

### Preparation

- Reach out to Mentors and invite them to class (Mentors in the building and/or Mentors named from students' home and wider community)
- Make sure you have enough space to accommodate

a bigger group for sharing and games. (Suggestion: Move the desks in a circle around the room, leaving space in the middle for the game).

- Select several students to lead the welcome and introduction (below).
- Take a few minutes before Mentors visit to talk with students about expectations for good interviewing and active listening in their interviews.

### Time

30-45 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Relationship Skills

### Instructor Overview

In this lesson, students have an opportunity to connect with Mentors, and be inspired to develop their own Mentor relationships. Students will hear stories of the power and impact of Mentors in the lives of others they know and trust. As students conduct interviews, they will be able to practice active listening. Before the lesson, it might be beneficial to have a conversation with the students around what active listening should sound and look like with their visitors. There are a variety of formats mentioned in the lesson based on the number of Mentors you have in attendance. Previously, you will have decided whether your Mentors will include parents and community members, or just other adults from the school.

### Welcome and Introductions (2-3 min)

Invite selected students to share what the class been learning about the Sources of Strength wheel, and how Mentors can be helpful and protective in their lives. Have one or two students lead introduction:

"Welcome to \_\_\_\_\_'s \_\_\_\_\_ grade class. Thank you for being here today. We have been learning about the Mentors piece of the Sources of Strength wheel. We know that Mentors can be really helpful and protective in our lives as we grow and learn, and that is why we are excited to have you here with us today. You have been named as a Mentor by someone in our class, or you are adults that we trust in the school, and today, we want to hear about the power and influence of the Mentors who you have had in your lives."

"Thank you for the introduction! Who can name a positive characteristic of a Mentor?" Get a few popcorn answers from students and Mentors.

"I think a lot of our invited guests have many of these characteristics. Why don't we play a game to get to know each other a bit better?"

### Cups and Connections Game (5-6 min)

Have cups, markers, or other objects ready to facilitate the game.

"Let's play a game." Ask for two volunteers one Mentor and one student to help demonstrate the game. Have the volunteers face each other, and put the cup in between them so both can reach it. "The game we are going to play is called Cups and Connections. Each of you will have a chance to face off with others, and answer a question to know them a bit better."

"Once you have your partner, give them a high five or a fist bump, then I will give you a question that you will each answer." Have the volunteers high five each other and ask the question, "What is your favorite food?" For the example, don't have the volunteers answer the question, just move to the next portion of the game.

"After you've answered the question, I am going to shout out different parts of the body, and when I do, you need to use both hands and touch that part of your body. For example, when I say 'KNEES,' you will touch your knees."

# MENTORS - LESSON 7.2

## Learning from Mentors

**When I say 'CUP,' your job is to try to grab the cup before your partner does."**

Model one round with the volunteers:

**"Are you ready? HEAD...KNEES...SHOULDERS...CUP!"**

**"Now, everyone find a partner, and get a cup. Once you have a cup, find an open space in the classroom, and set it on the floor between you. Give your partner a high five or a fist bump, then answer the question, 'What is your favorite food?'"**

Once it appears that the pairs have answered the questions, call out parts of the body for the cups competition.

**"Is everyone ready? HEAD...BIG TOE...LOWER BACK...FOREHEAD...CUP!"**

After there is a winner, thank them for playing and sharing, and direct them to find another group or person to pair up with. Try to have the students pair up with the adult Mentors as much as possible, depending on how many Mentors you have present. Once, everyone has new partners, have them answer the question, and then face off for the cup again.

**"OK, find a new partner, and answer the question."** See list of potential questions below. Play several rounds.

Before facing off each round scan the room for anyone who might not have a partner and help them pair up or join a group. You may need to remind the group to be quiet so they can hear you call out the questions and parts of the body.

### Potential Questions

You may only do a few depending on time. Feel free to come up with your own questions too.

- What is your favorite animal?
- If you could have any superpower, which one would you choose?
- If you could hang out with any famous person in the world, who would it be and why?
- Tell your partner about something that made you laugh this week.

Play the game for a few rounds. If you'd like you can do

a tournament, and have the winners keep facing off until you have one champion.

**"Phew, that was fun! We are going to transition into our interview time to hear more from our visitors, and how their own lives have been impacted by Mentors. Let's all take a seat."**

### Interview Q&A (15-20 min)

Here, students will have the opportunity to ask adults some questions regarding Mentors in their life. This could be arranged as a panel discussion with students volunteering to ask questions from the provided worksheet, or could be done in small groups, partners, or one-on-one based on the numbers of students and Mentors. You may also have students talk to a Mentor for a few minutes, and then have them move to hear from another Mentor. Hand out the Mentor Interview Worksheet (optional), this provides examples of interview questions the students may ask during the interview. This may be a good time to give an active listening reminder for the students.

### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

Due to the different ways, this might look in each classroom, we have not scripted this section. Decide how you will run the interview process, and explain it in a way that makes sense to your students and the Mentors, we trust you!

Guide the students through 5-10 minutes of interview questions, facilitating your own follow-up questions as you see fit.

### Questions

- Who is one of the Mentors in your life?
- Tell us a story or a time when your Mentor really helped you or supported you through a challenge or change in your life.
- How did their support make you feel?
- Tell us a story or a time when your Mentor helped you through a time of transition in your life?
- Tell us how that Mentor has influenced who you are today?
- What would you say to your Mentor if they were in the room today?



### Closing (1 min)

End the discussion with a thank you to the Mentors who took the time to visit and share today:

“We want to thank you all for coming to our class today, and for the opportunity to hear about your Mentors. Join me in a standing round of applause for all of our Mentors and guests. In the next lesson, we'll finish up our unit on Mentors, and talk about how we can be Mentors for others. Thank you all once again for coming and sharing your stories with us today!”

**MENTOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: OPTION 1**  
Pairs or Individual

INTERVIEW 1	INTERVIEW 2
Who is one of the Mentors in your life? _____	Who is one of the Mentors in your life? _____
Tell us a story or a time when your Mentor really helped you or supported you through a challenge or change in your life. _____ _____	Tell us a story or a time when your Mentor really helped you or supported you through a challenge or change in your life. _____ _____
How did their support make you feel? _____ _____	How did their support make you feel? _____ _____
Tell us how that Mentor has influenced who you are today? _____ _____	Tell us how that Mentor has influenced who you are today? _____ _____
What would you say to your Mentor if they were in the room today? _____ _____	What would you say to your Mentor if they were in the room today? _____ _____

**MENTOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS: OPTION 2**  
Print and cut along dashed line. Give one to each group.

1. Who is one of the Mentors in your life?  
2. Tell us a story or a time when your Mentor really helped you or supported you through a challenge or change in your life.  
3. How did their support make you feel?  
4. Tell us a story or a time when your Mentor helped you through a time of transition in your life?  
5. Tell us how that Mentor has influenced who you are today?  
6. What would you say to your Mentor if they were in the room today?

1. Who is one of the Mentors in your life?  
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6. What would you say to your Mentor if they were in the room today?

**SOURCES OF STRENGTH**



# REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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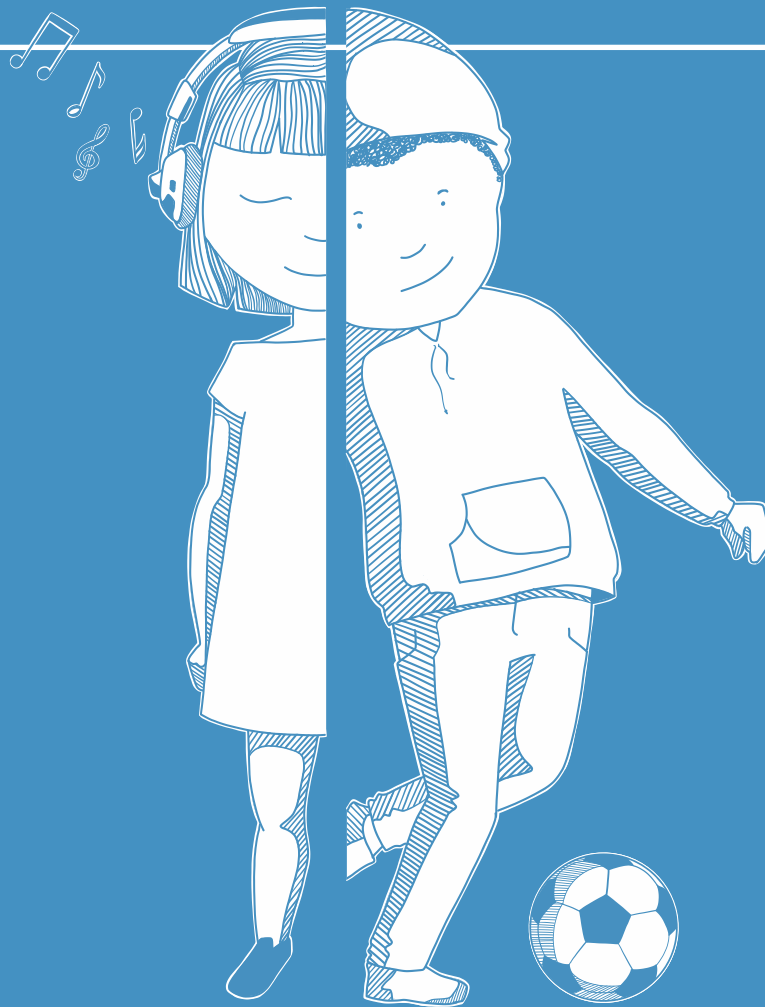
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# UNIT 8

## HEALTHY ACTIVITIES



*Lesson 8.1: What Helps Me* **111**

*Lesson 8.2: Learning Through Failure* **115**

*Worksheets* **203**

**Lesson Spotlight**

Identifying and practicing many different Healthy Activities helps us live healthy lives and regulate big emotions.

**Materials**

- Calming and Energizing Activities Worksheet, one per student (page 203)
- Corner labels

**Preparation**

- Familiarize yourself with What Helps Me Activity
- Make and hang labels in the corners of the room for What Helps Me Activity (hang **Angry, Anxious, Sad,** and **Not Sure** in two corners, and place **Energizing** and **Calming** in opposite corners)
- Copy Healthy Activities Worksheet, one per student

**Time**

30 minutes

**SEL Focus**

Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Growth Mindset

**Instructor Overview**

In this lesson, we will explore a variety of different Healthy Activities that we engage in regularly and explore the benefits they can provide. It is important to recognize Healthy Activities help each of us in different ways. Two people can engage in the same activity, and feel very different responses. It might calm down one person's brain and body, but energize another. We will explore three common emotions: anger, anxiety, and sadness, and what to do when they get really big. We will consider how different Healthy Activities can help us bring those big emotions back down to size. There are no right or wrong types of Healthy Activities in this lesson, as we all have different needs and experience enjoyment, connection, and help in different ways. It is important to remember that all of the Strengths on the Wheel can help us navigate big emotions.

**Talking Circle (10 min)**

Invite students to the Talking Circle.

**“We are starting a new unit in our Sources of Strength curriculum. Today we are going to talk about Healthy Activities. There are many different activities that help us. Sometimes we use physical activities like playing soccer or jumping on the trampoline, and sometimes we use creative activities like music, art, writing, or even building something with Lego's. Healthy Activities can be divided into activities that calm us and activities that energize us, and we need both at different times. Turn to your neighbor and share your go-to or favorite Healthy Activities.”** Pair share. This gives everyone a chance to share a Healthy Activity. Then get several popcorn answers from students with diverse interests (riding my bike, playing video games, playing with my baby brother, etc.).

**“These activities we do everyday can be the exact same things that help us when we really need to calm or energize our bodies when we feel a big emotion like anger, anxiety, or sadness.”**


**Naming our Healthy Activities Worksheet**

(7-8 min)

Pass out the Calming and Energizing Worksheet.

**“Lets take a few minutes to fill this sheet with all the Healthy Activities we currently use and enjoy. Categorize your Healthy Activities based on which ones are calming and which ones are energizing.”** It's OK if some students have an activity that fits into calming and energizing at different times, depending on the circumstances.

Fill out the worksheet with your own list of calming and energizing activities too.

CALMING AND ENERGIZING ACTIVITIES WORKSHEET	
Write down all the activities that you currently enjoy in the sheet.	
CALMING ACTIVITIES	ENERGIZING ACTIVITIES
Name: _____	Date: _____
	

# HEALTHY ACTIVITIES - LESSON 8.1

## What Helps Me

“Let’s create a collective list of our Healthy Activities up here on the whiteboard.” Ask a student to help capture a list of Healthy Activities on the board, or if there is time, have the groups share their lists in small groups of four instead of the larger group.

“What do all of these activities do for us?” Get a few popcorn answers (help us feel like a part of something, help us use our energy, learn new things, help me feel better, etc.).

“We talked about the different emotions when we learned about the Regulation Railroad (Lesson 3.2). Let’s talk about three emotions that can show up when we are going through life’s ups and downs: anger, anxiety, and sadness. All of us will experience these emotions in big ways at some point in time, and it is important to think about how our Healthy Activities can help us regulate these emotions.”

Raise your hand as you ask each question to invite students to participate by a show of hands. “How many of you feel anger when you are stressed or have a lot going on? You get really short with your friends or your parents and find yourself frustrated, or maybe your muscles get tense, or your face gets hot?” Get a show of hands.

Raise your hand as you ask to invite students to participate. “How many of you feel anxiety or worry when you are stressed or have a lot going on? Perhaps you have something that you can’t stop thinking about, feel uneasy about, or can’t focus well on?” Get a show of hands.

“How many of you feel sadness when you are stressed or have a lot going on? You just feel down or perhaps a little blue. Maybe you feel like you have low energy, want to be alone, or don’t want to do the activities you normally enjoy.

“All of these emotions are normal; our brains and bodies communicate with us through these emotions. When these emotions get too big we can walk through the stops on the Regulation Railroad to bring them back down to size.” Refer to the Regulation Railroad Poster as a reminder if it has been a while since you’ve engaged the Stops.

### Regulation Railroad Stops

1. *What do I notice in my body?*
2. *What emotion do I feel?*
3. *How big is the emotion?*
4. *What will I do to regulate myself?*

“When we think about regulating big emotions, our Healthy Activities can be great tools to help us feel better. Some of the ways we do this are by having fun, connecting with others, and focusing on something else for a little while. We’ve learned through science that Healthy Activities help our bodies and brains become resilient and strong.”

### What Helps Me Activity (8 min)

This activity is intended to get students up and moving. We also want to normalize the idea that we all experience things in life from different perspectives and navigate the ups and downs of life in different ways. There are no wrong or right answers to these questions.

Students will move around the room and categorize themselves based on what is true for them. Each scenario will have two steps. Read the scenario and point to the different labels in the corners of the room, and then read each step and allow students to move around the room based on what they think, feel, or experience.

“In a minute, I am going to read a couple of different scenarios. When you hear each scenario, walk to the emotion written on the wall that you think you might feel in that situation. No emotion is right or wrong in this activity, just walk to the first thing that comes to mind. If you think you would feel two emotions at once, you can stand between the two corners where they are hanging.” It is important for adults to model how they experience and navigate emotions in healthy ways, so please participate in this activity as well.

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

Take note of student responses to these scenarios, as they can be helpful in individual conversations around healthy coping and regulation.

**Scenario 1:** “You studied hard for a test and when you got it back, your grade was lower than you expected.”

**Step 1:** “Which big emotion (anger, anxiety, sadness, or not sure) would come up for you in this situation? Based on what you think, feel, or experience, move to the corresponding emotion.”

**Step 2:** Point out the Calming and Energizing labels. “What kind of activity would you need in this scenario: energizing or calming?” Remind everyone that there is no right or wrong answer. Once students move to the corresponding corner, get a few popcorn explanations.

“What is the Healthy Activity that works for you in this scenario? What makes it a Healthy Activity for you?” If they respond with “energizing” or “calming”, add a follow-up question to clarify what that activity might be.

**Scenario 2:** “My good friend can’t make it to my birthday party.”

**Step 1:** “Which big emotion (anger, anxiety, sadness, or not sure) would come up for you in this scenario? Based on what you think, feel, or experience, move to the corresponding emotion.”

**Step 2:** “Now what kind of activity do you need in this scenario, energizing or calming?” Once students move to the corresponding corner, get a few popcorn answers.

“What is the Healthy Activity that works for you in this scenario? What makes it a Healthy Activity for you?” If they respond with “energizing” or “calming”, add a follow up question to clarify what that activity might be.

**Scenario 3:** “I didn’t get picked to be on a team that I wanted to be on.”

**Step 1:** “Which big emotion (anger, anxiety, sadness, or not sure) would come up for you in this scenario? Based on what you think, feel, or experience, move to the corresponding emotion.”

**Step 2:** “What kind of activity do you need in this scenario, energizing or calming?” Once students move to the corresponding corner, get a few popcorn answers.

“What is the Healthy Activity that works for you in this scenario? What makes it a Healthy Activity for you?” If they respond with “energizing” or “calming”, add a follow up question to clarify what that activity might be.

**Scenario 4:** “You stayed up late at a friend’s house this weekend. Now, it’s Monday morning, and you are feeling very tired and it’s time to go to school.”

**Step 1:** “Which big emotion (anger, anxiety, sadness, or not sure) would come up for you in this scenario? Based on what you think, feel, or experience move to the corresponding emotion.”

**Step 2:** “Now what kind of activity do you need in this scenario, energizing or calming?” Once students move to the corresponding corner, get a few popcorn answers.

“What is the Healthy Activity that works for you in this scenario? What makes it a Healthy Activity for you?” If they respond with “energizing” or “calming”, add a follow up question to clarify what that activity might be.

As students respond, be explicit in naming and making connections to other Strengths in the Sources of Strength wheel.

### Talking Circle (4 min)

Invite students back to the Talking Circle.

“As we just saw in that activity we all experience life and emotions differently.

It is important for us to know what helps us, and it can be helpful to know what helps our friends so that when they are having a hard day, we can encourage them to do things that help them use their Strengths too.”

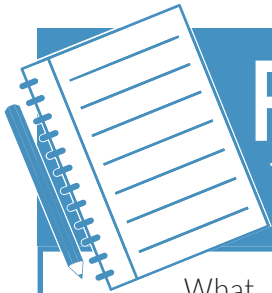
“Turn to a partner and share two Healthy Activities you want to use the next time you experience a big emotion.” Pair share.



# HEALTHY ACTIVITIES - LESSON 8.1

## What Helps Me

“There are so many different types of Healthy Activities that we engage in on a daily basis. Sometimes we need other people and Healthy Activities to help us bring our big emotions back down to size, and sometimes we just need a quiet creative space. Using all of our Strengths from the Wheel, including Healthy Activities, helps us become stronger and more resilient.”



## REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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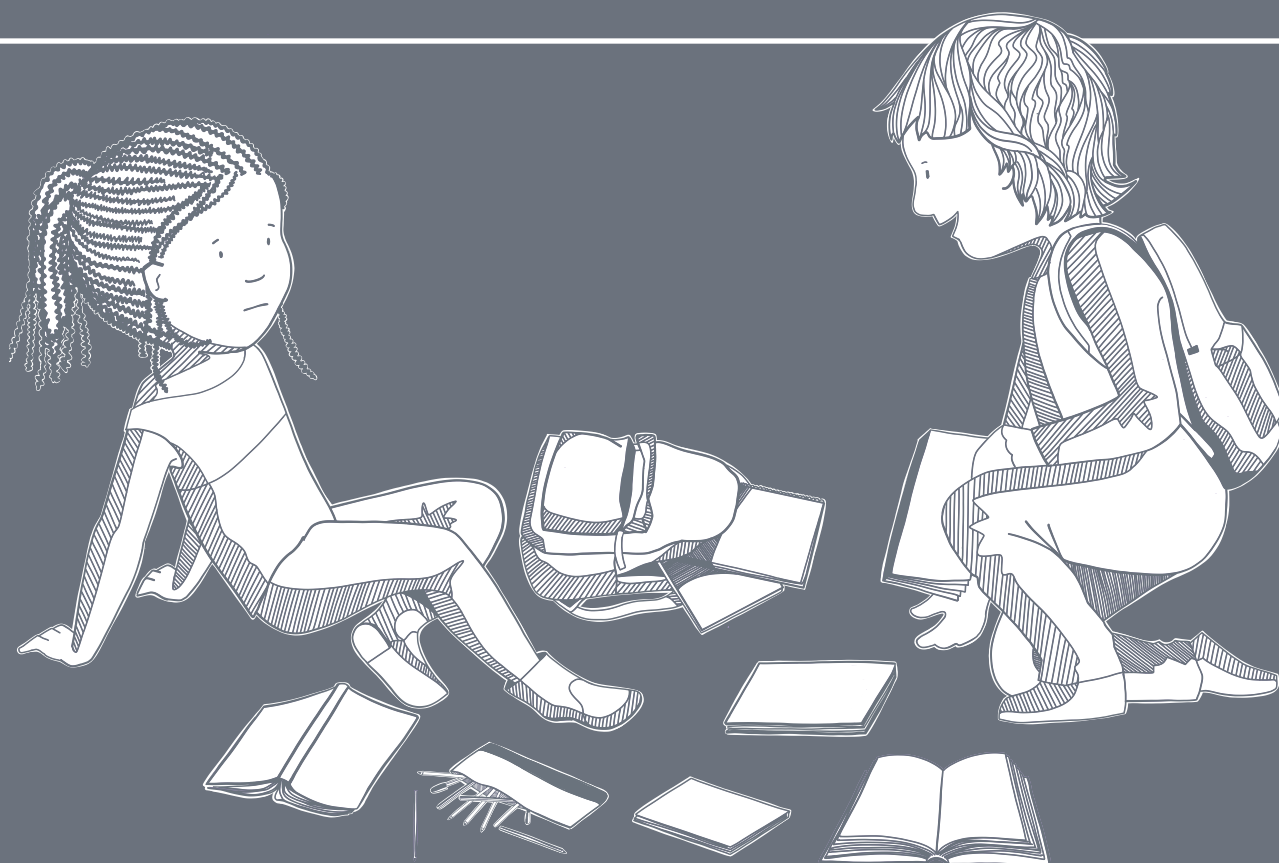
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# UNIT 9

# GENEROSITY



*Lesson 9.1: The Power of Generosity* **119**

*Lesson 9.2: Practicing Generosity* **123**

*Lesson 9.3: Celebrate and Spread Generosity* **126**

*Worksheets* **204**

# GENEROSITY - LESSON 9.1

## The Power of Generosity

### Lesson Spotlight

Practicing Generosity in big and small ways can help us build healthy connections as well as lift our spirits.

### Materials

- 5-8 large (9x12) sheets of paper with the word 'Generosity' written in the middle
- Markers for each poster group
- What's Generosity Like? Prompts, cut apart (page 204)

### Preparation

- Write 'Generosity' in the middle of the large sheets of paper and set them around the room for different work groups

- Type out poster prompts or write one on each poster for the What's Generosity Like? activity
- Designate a more permanent space in the classroom for the Generosity posters to be kept after the lesson for the rest of this unit. Future lessons will refer back to these posters

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Relationship Skills, Social Awareness, Growth Mindset

### Instructor Overview

In this lesson, we will take a deeper look at the impact of Generosity in our lives; how it makes us feel and different ways we can accept Generosity from others. Throughout the lesson, we will be developing a definition and common understanding of Generosity, and discuss what being generous to others looks like. We'll explore the impact of Generosity in our own lives and the lives of others through a group writing activity. We'll do a little experiment to demonstrate how Generosity can be contagious and how it can lift the spirit of those around us. Practicing Generosity allows us to increase connections to those around us. Generosity impacts the amygdala, connected to both the Brainstem and Limbic System of the brain (the Trunk and Roots of the BrainTree), and decrease the reaction of Fight-Flight-Freeze under stress.

### Talking Circle (5 min)

Invite all students to the Talking Circle.

**"Today we are going to talk about Generosity. We can be generous with our money, actions, time, and attention. We can be generous towards others like friends, family, animals, and the environment. Science shows Generosity has a positive impact on our brains and bodies when we are stressed. But it doesn't stop there, it can also help us build strong and healthy community connections."**

Give students a moment to pause and reflect on their answers to the following questions.

**"Try to think of a time when you were generous to someone. What did you do? Were you generous to a friend, family member, animal or the environment? How did you feel after? Proud? Grateful? Excited?"**

Get popcorn answers to the following questions and capture the students thoughts on the whiteboard.

- What does the word Generosity mean?
- What are some examples of Generosity you've seen or experienced?

- What kind of impact can Generosity have in a community? (Classroom, school, family).

### GENEROSITY

Generosity is a willingness to give more help or support than is usual or expected. Generosity happens both ways; often, when we give of ourselves we get back in ways we don't expect. Practicing Generosity is part of what makes our communities strong and safe.

Don't limit this conversation to only people, it could include an impact on the environment, animals, and even our attitudes, perspectives, and the appearance of public spaces. **"Practicing Generosity helps us build community and releases dopamine in our brains that helps us feel happier."**



# GENEROSITY - LESSON 9.1

## The Power of Generosity

### Pair Share (8 min)

“Who is one person in your life who is generous? What makes them generous?” Give students a minute or so to share. “OK let’s do a quick poll. As I ask the following questions, raise your hand if your answer is yes.

- Have you experienced someone being generous to you in the last week?
- Have you practiced Generosity this week with a friend, family member, an animal or the environment?
- Have you been generous towards yourself this week?

Be sure to pause after each question to compliment the group for their Generosity.

Invite a few of the students who raised their hands to share how they have practiced Generosity towards themselves. If no one raised their hand share a few examples:

- Take a long, slow, deep breath to help yourself calm down.
- Sit quietly on the couch for a few minutes after a long day.
- Smile at yourself in the mirror to boost your mood.

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

You can also create an opportunity for students to practice Generosity towards themselves during this lesson:

- "Get up and get a drink of water."
- "Give yourself a high five, fist-bump, or hug."
- "Think of something you're proud of."
- "Give yourself a compliment."

### What's Generosity Like? Activity (15 min)

Cut along the dotted lines, and give one slip to each group.

**WHAT'S GENEROSITY LIKE? PROMPTS**  
Print and cut along dashed line. Give one prompt to each group.

Use the markers to draw lines from the word Generosity and make a web of words, phrases, or ideas that come to mind based on the following prompt.

**WRITE DOWN WORDS DESCRIBING GENEROSITY**

Use the markers to draw lines from the word Generosity and make a web of words, phrases, or ideas that come to mind based on the following prompt.

**WRITE DOWN FEELINGS YOU EXPERIENCE WHEN PRACTICING OR RECEIVING GENEROSITY**

Use the markers to draw lines from the word Generosity and make a web of words, phrases, or ideas that come to mind based on the following prompt.

**WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU CAN SAY OR DO WHEN SOMEONE IS GENEROUS TO YOU**

Use the markers to draw lines from the word Generosity and make a web of words, phrases, or ideas that come to mind based on the following prompt.

**WRITE DOWN HOW YOU CAN PRACTICE GENEROSITY (THINK BIG AND SMALL)**

**SOURCES OF IDEAS**

Number the students off into small groups with no more than five students per group. You may have multiple groups responding to the same prompt. Give each group their prompt and the large paper with Generosity written in the middle.

“Each group will have a large piece of paper with the word Generosity on it. Use the markers to draw lines from the word Generosity, and make a web of words, phrases, or ideas that come to mind based on your prompt. You will have four minutes to add as many words to your web as possible.” Give them a one minute warning, and ask them to choose one to two people from their group to share their prompt and three to five things from their poster.

#### The prompts are:

- Write down words describing Generosity.
- Write down feelings you experience when practicing or receiving Generosity.
- Write down what you can say or do when someone is generous to you.
- Write down how you can practice Generosity (think big and small).

Feel free to add an additional prompt if you'd like.

If students need a jump-start, you may ask the group for one example from each prompt while the class is all together and then divide them up into small groups.

# GENEROSITY - LESSON 9.1

## The Power of Generosity

Bring students back together and have each group share their prompt and three to five of the things they wrote on their posters. Collect posters and display them for reference in future lessons.

**"Remember we can practice Generosity with ourselves and others. What is something you can do to be generous to yourself? What can you practice in class, at home, or in a stressful moment?"** Get a few popcorn answers.

**"Practicing Generosity with others can be as simple as a smile or sharing a snack, or as big as running a race for cancer research, or writing a card to someone who needs it."** Incorporate the student answers from the discussion and posters into your examples.

### Contagion Activity (2 min)

**"Generosity helps us feel better and is contagious so it can help others feel better too. Lets do a simple and fun experiment with Generosity. OK, everyone put on their biggest cheesiest smile, and look around at your fellow classmates."**

You can also do this activity with laughter instead of a smile. What tends to happen is that even though our initial smile or laughter feels fake, it becomes real when we see other people smiling and laughing as well. Model this for the class.

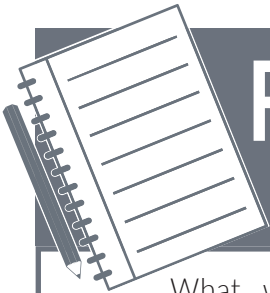
**"Who's feeling even just a bit better?"** Raise your hand to model participation.

**"In the same way that our smiles got bigger as we looked around the room Generosity can be just as simple and contagious as our smiles."**



### EVERYDAY APPLICATION

Add the ideas that were shared around self-Generosity into the Regulation Station.



# REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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We would love your feedback on what worked well and what could improve to help Sources of Strength continue to grow.

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# UNIT 10

# SPIRITUALITY



*Rationale* **131**

*Lesson 10.1: What Lifts Our Spirit* **132**

*Lesson 10.2: The Mosaic of Spirituality* **135**

*Worksheets* **206**

Spirituality can feel like a big word, one that can carry many different meanings to a lot of different people. It might feel awkward to talk about Spirituality in a school context. Given this, you might ask why Spirituality is one of the eight Sources of Strength. The answer is quite simple: research has shown that Spirituality can be incredibly protective. As with all of the Strengths, we approach this protective factor by casting a wide net. There are millions of people, places, practices, traditions, cultures, and expressions of Spirituality throughout the world. Our purpose here is not to promote any one practice or expression over another, but rather to allow students the opportunity to explore what this powerful Strength looks like in their lives.

For some, Spirituality is protective because it builds community and connection. For others, it offers a sense of peace or meaning. Others might find a sense of connection to something larger than themselves. Even the simple act of noticing and naming something we are thankful for can be a grounding and spiritual experience. Ultimately, the root of the word Spirituality is spirit. Whatever the expression, anything that lifts our spirits and brings us hope and healing during hard times can be a form of Spirituality.

This unit consists of two lessons. The first explores how people, places, and practices can all serve to lift our spirits. The lesson then explores the practice of thankfulness in more detail. There is an abundant amount of emerging research about the power of thankfulness in our lives. Practicing thankfulness can Strengthen our mental, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing. Thankfulness is an accessible practice that is used in cultures and traditions across the world. It is important to note that practicing thankfulness does not mean that hard things do not happen or that they are magically made better by being thankful. Rather, it offers a powerful reframe that helps us to see hope and turn to our Strengths even in the midst of hard times.

The second lesson in this unit provides students with an opportunity to identify what people, places, and practices lift their spirits. The lesson also celebrates the diversity of how the Strength of Spirituality shows up in people's lives around our world. When we can appreciate the Strengths in others, it leads to greater connection and belonging.

Sources of Strength does not attempt to prescribe any one expression of Strength. Rather, we intend for the Sources of Strength wheel to be a mirror that an individual can see themselves and their Strength reflected within. Our hope is that the Spirituality Unit will serve as a nuanced, accessible, and helpful resource for you and your students to continue to build protective Strengths in your lives.

### Lesson Spotlight

Practicing and experiencing Spirituality can happen in many diverse ways. When we identify what lifts our own spirits, we are building Strength in our lives. When we learn about and appreciate what lifts other people's spirits, we create safety, connection, and belonging.

### Materials

- Mosaic Activity sheet, one per student (page 207)
- Colored pencils
- Paper for Art Activity, lined, blank

### Preparation

- Print Mosaic Activity Sheets
- Have art supplies ready for the Art Activity, including paper and coloring utensils (if you would like to add additional supplies for creativity, you could also provide paint, musical instruments, costumes, etc. as it fits your class)

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills

### Instructor Overview

In this lesson, we will explore the diverse ways people experience and practice the protective Strength of Spirituality. The lesson begins with a Talking Circle inviting students to share what lifts their spirit. Next, the students will complete a mosaic coloring activity designed to help them identify concrete expressions of Spirituality that resonate with them, as well as to see the diversity of spiritual practice for others. Last, the students will create and share an artistic expression of a way that they experience Spirituality in their own lives.

### Talking Circle (7 min)

Invite students to the Talking Circle.

**“Last time we talked about how thankfulness is a part of the Spirituality Strength on the Sources of Strength wheel. Today, we’re going to look at some of the diverse ways we experience Strength from Spirituality in our communities, with our families, and on our own.”**

Raise your hand after each of the following questions to invite participation, but do not take responses from students. **“Let’s talk about some of the things that can lift our spirit.”**

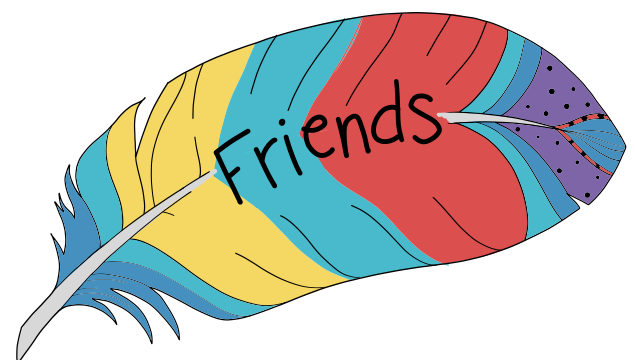
- **“Who feels like their spirit is lifted by people that love and value you?”**
- **“Who feels like their spirit is lifted by belonging to a group or community of people that make them feel connected?”**
- **“Who feels like their spirit is lifted in a place that feels meaningful or peaceful?”**
- **“Who feels like their spirit is lifted by a special object or a memory?”** (gift from a special person, a family picture, a keepsake, or a significant memory)

**“These are just a few of the ways each of us might experience Spirituality in our lives. Turn to a neighbor and share a specific way you experience Spirituality**

**through people, places, or practices and how it lifts your spirit.”** After a few minutes of sharing, bring the students' attention back to the full group.

**“Would anyone like to share how you experience Spirituality with the class?”** Get a few popcorn answers from students with diverse backgrounds, getting a variety of answers (watching the sunset makes me feel peaceful, holding my baby brother makes me feel connected, going to a temple makes me feel like I’m not alone, mindfulness helps me notice how I feel, prayer makes me feel connected to something larger than myself, etc.). **“Thanks for sharing.”**

### Mosaic Activity



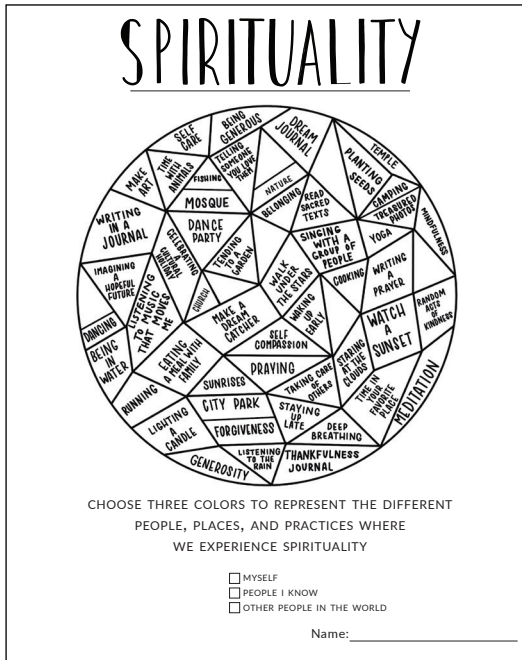
# SPIRITUALITY - LESSON 10.2

## The Mosaic of Spirituality

(7 min)

“Let’s do an activity that explores more of what Spirituality can look like for ourselves and for others.”

Pass out the Mosaic Worksheet, and have the students go back to their desks and get out their coloring utensils.



“As you look at this mosaic, remember that there are all kinds of people, places, and practices that could represent Spirituality. Choose one color to represent ways you experience Spirituality for yourself. Choose another color for ways people you know experience Spirituality. Then, choose a third color for ways other people in our world can experience Spirituality. Be sure to fill in the key at the bottom with the colors you choose. Some of the spaces will be the same for both you and people you know, you can be creative in how you fill the space with the three colors. There are some blank spaces too, so if there is something that you do that is not on the worksheet, go ahead and write it in.

“Now take the next 5 minutes and color in as many spaces as you can. Don’t worry if you don’t get to them all.” Give students a one-minute warning as they wrap up coloring.

“OK, everybody hold up your mosaics. Notice how they are all different. The ways we experience and practice Spirituality are diverse. Imagine if the mosaic was all one color, it wouldn’t be as intriguing or beautiful, would it? Similarly, the ways we are different make the world more

intriguing and beautiful. It’s amazing how many diverse people, places, and practices exist within the Strength of Spirituality. These can be powerful Strengths and supports for getting through life’s ups and downs, and they remind us that we are connected to something bigger than ourselves.

### Art Activity (12 min)

**INSTRUCTOR NOTE**

Think about the individual Strengths of your class, and offer different creative avenues such as drama, poetry, dance, music, painting a picture etc. Highlight the use of your student's creative expression.

“We just saw the many different ways Spirituality can look for ourselves and others. Now that we have an idea of what lifts our spirit, we’ll take the next few minutes to create something to express how you experience Spirituality.

“Look at your mosaic. Is there one piece that stands out to you? Using that one piece, or a combination of a couple, draw a picture, write a poem, or create a song that represents what lifts your spirit. You can also choose another creative way to express your Spirituality.

“Feel free to express how or where you feel loved and valued. Maybe it is the way you feel connected to other people, places, or practices. Think of what makes you feel like you belong or have a sense of peace. It could be something that represents a special memory that lifts your spirit. Go find a comfortable spot in the classroom and get started.”

Provide art supplies and encourage students to use their imagination and creativity to represent what lifts their spirit. If students are struggling to get started, encourage them to look back at their mosaic sheet and choose one thing to represent what lifts their spirit. They could draw something they are thankful for, or write a note to a person they are thankful for. Give ample warning for students to finish up their expressions and clean up.

### Closing Activity (4 min)

Number the students off into groups of four to share diverse expressions of Spirituality within each group. **“In your group, take 30 seconds each and share what you created. You can share why you chose those particular things to express Spirituality and how they lift your spirit. Share as much or as little as you would like.”** Consider keeping time and announcing when 30 seconds is up so that everyone has an equal opportunity to share. As the small groups are sharing, circulate throughout the classroom to monitor for respectful listening and sharing from students.

### Supplemental Activity

Feel free to do this supplemental activity at the end of the lesson or for a transition sometime during the next week.

### Rainstorm Movement

**“We are going to do an activity called the Rainstorm. I want you to follow my instructions as we go along.”** Have the class do each action for 10-20 seconds before moving on to the next.

**“To begin, everyone rub your hands together.**

**“Now, switch to lightly snapping your fingers.**

**“Now, start to slap your thighs lightly.**

**“Now, slap your thighs and stomp your feet.**

**“Now, only slap you thighs lightly.**

**“Now, snap your fingers.**

**“Finally, rub your hands together.**

**“This is an example that allows us to be a part of something bigger than ourselves.**

**“We can also do this activity as a class if we are feeling like we need a break to wake up and refocus. It's a whole class Regulation Station idea.”**



## REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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# UNIT 11

## PHYSICAL HEALTH



*Lesson 11.1: Health and Hydration* **139**

*Lesson 11.2: Practicing Physical Health Everyday* **143**

*Worksheets* **208**

### Lesson Spotlight

Improving our Physical Health through healthy habits, like hydration, can positively impact our emotional and Mental Health.

### Materials

- Hydration Brain Meld Recording Worksheet one per group of 4-5 students (page 208)
- Containers for water demonstration
- Sticky notes, one per student
- Talking Piece (optional)
- Weekly Water Intake Tracker Worksheet (optional), one per student (page 209)

### Preparation

- Prepare containers for water demonstration: 7 (8oz) glasses, 56oz, or 1.5L of water - Choose one method to demonstrate this volume of water to the class
- Ensure there is enough space for input/output activity

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills, Responsible Decision-Making

### Instructor Overview

This lesson begins with a brief overview of how Physical Health is connected to our overall health and wellbeing. We will explore one way of caring for our Physical Health through hydration. The scientific facts here are meant to help students understand how they can be empowered to care for and grow their own Physical Health and that of their friends and classmates.

Developmentally, upper elementary school students are transitioning into a stage where they have more agency and responsibility for the ways they care for their bodies through personal hygiene, hydration, nutrition, and healthy activities. As students grow in their awareness and agency, we want to guide them in a direction that leads to healthy lifelong practices of proactively caring for their physical and emotional wellbeing.

### Talking Circle (8 min)

Invite the students to the Talking Circle.

**“Today we are starting the Physical Health unit in our Sources of Strength curriculum. The health of our body impacts the health of our life in many ways. In previous lessons, we have talked about how our brains and bodies are connected and communicate with us.**

**When we don’t get enough sleep and we’re tired, it is hard to learn. If we eat lunch later than usual and we are super hungry we could get upset, angry, or frustrated more easily. If we haven’t had enough water to drink we can get dehydrated which makes it harder for us to remember what we have learned. If we only eat unhealthy food, our bodies won’t get all of the nutrients needed to give us the energy we need. When we get the exercise we need, it helps our hearts, lungs, and minds be healthier. Sometimes we can get hurt or sick and having access to medical help can be really important for us to get better. Caring for our Physical Health is important.**

**Turn to a partner and share, what are some of the ways you care for your own Physical Health?”** Pair share.

**“Can a few people share how they care for their Physical Health with the class?”** Get a few popcorn answers (brush my teeth, eat my vegetables, play soccer at recess, etc.).

**“Why do you think our Physical Health is important?”** Get a few popcorn answers (it keeps us from having to go to the hospital, helps us live long lives, we feel better when we take care of our bodies, we only get one body, it’s easier to help others when we are healthy, we will get fewer cavities, it keeps the rest of our families healthy, etc.).

**“We are going to continue our exploration of Physical Health by looking at one way we can practice being healthy. Who knows what the word dehydrated means?”** Get a few popcorn answers.

**“Being dehydrated means not having enough water in our bodies. When we are hydrated we have enough water for our bodies to function properly.**

**How does someone become dehydrated?”** Get a few popcorn answers (physical activity, sickness, spent the

# PHYSICAL HEALTH - LESSON 11.1

## Health and Hydration

day in the sun, not drinking enough liquids, etc.).

“What are some things we might experience if we are dehydrated?” Get a few popcorn answers. Mention whichever symptoms the students don’t name.

- Lightheadedness/headache
- Muscle cramps/spasms
- Constipation
- Headache
- Dry lips
- Dry mouth/throat
- Increased heart rate
- Dark-colored urine
- Feel overheated
- Feel tired
- Hard time remembering things

“These are all examples of how the Roots of our BrainTree communicate with us when our body needs more water.

“Our body is made up of 50–70% water! Drinking enough water keeps our bodies hydrated and healthy. Water helps keep our body in top condition by supplying nutrients to our cells, muscles, joints, and organs. Water also regulates our body temperature and helps our hearts function correctly. When our body is properly hydrated, it keeps our joints moving smoothly, helps protect our spine, and keeps our skin looking good.

“Our brain is over three-quarters water. So, when we are dehydrated our brain literally shrinks. You may feel cranky, anxious, tired, dizzy, confused, or have difficulty remembering things when you are dehydrated.

“Let’s do a little activity to experience how our bodies stay hydrated.”

### Input/Output Activity (5-6 min)

Invite students to stand shoulder-to-shoulder in a large circle, facing outside the circle.

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

This activity will require a lot of space. If possible, move to a gym or outdoor space.

“The circle we have created represents the body. As I read each scenario, take one step away from the circle for each activity that involves water leaving the body and take one step toward the inside of the circle when water is entering the body. You will continue to take steps away from the circle each time water leaves the body and only take a step towards the circle when water is entering the body.”

Read these scenarios and feel free to add others that fit the season, your school, or your students’ activities. Choose a ratio of 3:1 dehydrating (D) to hydrating (H).

- Walk to school (D)
- Eat a morning snack (H/D)
- Read a book with your sibling (D)
- Go to the bathroom (D)
- Drink from the water fountain (H)
- Eat an apple (H)
- Play outside with Positive Friends (D)
- Go to basketball practice (D)
- Eat dinner with your family (H/D)
- Sleep (D)
- Drink Soda/Pop (D)
- Go for a hike with friends (D)
- Skateboard (D)
- Meet with your mentor (D)
- Do homework (D)
- Play video games with your Dad (D)
- Drink a sports drink (H)
- Write a poem (D)
- Blink (D)
- Name one thing we’re thankful for (D)
- Go to the dentist (D/H)

“Was there anything that surprised you about hydration during this activity? Why?” Get a few popcorn answers.

#### ADAPTATION

You could also do this activity with a line representing the body instead of a circle.

# PHYSICAL HEALTH - LESSON 11.1

## Health and Hydration

### Brain Meld Activity (8 min)

HYDRATION BRAIN MELD RECORDING WORKSHEET	
GROUP MEMBERS: _____	DATE: _____
With your group discuss the following questions and list your answers in the spaces below. Once you are finished put a ★ by your top three ideas and designate a spokesperson to share them with the rest of the class.	
1. What are the things that keep kids our age from being hydrated?	2. What things can we do to help our class drink more water?
3. How can we keep track of our water intake? Individually and as a class?	4. What more do we need to learn or try in order to help grow our Physical Health strength on the wheel?

Divide students into groups of four to five and pass out one Hydration Brain Meld Sheet to each group. "In your groups, you are going to discuss the questions listed in each box on the worksheet and record your answers."

Give the students five to seven minutes to fill out their worksheets. Circulate through the groups engaging them in playful and upbeat conversation asking clarifying questions about their ideas.

"We have about one minute left, discuss with your group and put a star next to your top three ideas. Then designate a spokesperson for your group." Give students time to finish and identify their spokesperson.

"Now that you have melded brains with your group and have come up with some great ideas, your group will have one minute to share your top ideas with another group. Each group will have the opportunity to listen and share with one other group."

If there is enough time, you can ask the group to share out a few popcorn answers of their top ideas.

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

Take this activity to the next level and make time for the students to put their ideas into action in the classroom. Nothing says student empowerment like asking for their ideas and then letting them carry out a few of them for a real audience.

### Recommended Daily Water Intake (2-3 min)

Invite students back to the Talking Circle.

"Now that we had a chance to generate some ideas, let's see what we can do today to care for our Physical Health through hydration. How much water does someone your age need to drink in a day?" Get a few popcorn responses.

"The recommended daily water intake for someone your age is 7 (8oz) glasses, 56 oz, or 1.5 liters of water. It can be hard to know exactly how much water that really is, so why don't I show you?" Demonstrate with whatever measurement you chose to show this volume of water.

"Who thinks they are getting enough water every day?" Get a show of hands.

"Who thinks their body could probably use more water?" Get a show of hands.

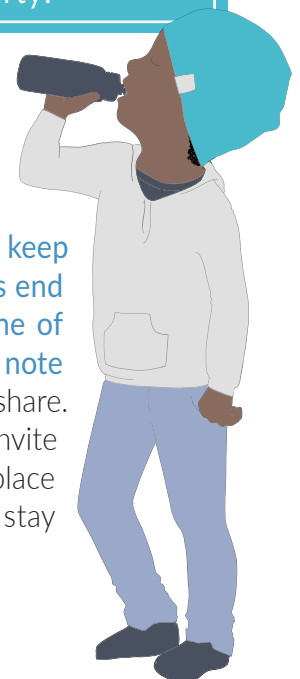
Pass out one sticky note per student. "We've learned how important water is for our bodies and our brains. Now take a few moments and write down on your sticky notes two specific ways you are going to try and stay more hydrated." You can remind students of the different ideas they came up with during the brain meld.

#### LESSON EXTENSION

You can contact local agencies and get donated water bottles to use throughout the year in order to encourage greater hydration. Have a water bottle decorating party!

### Talking Circle (5 min)

"We've spent some time today talking about how staying hydrated can help our Physical Health. We can see how our brains and bodies keep us strong by working together. Let's end today by sharing with a partner one of the ways you wrote on your sticky note to try to stay more hydrated." Pair share. As students return to their desks, invite them to put their sticky note in a place that will serve as a reminder to stay hydrated.





### EVERYDAY APPLICATION

Find ways you can incorporate hydration breaks in the classroom. If students are dehydrated, they are less able to learn and more likely to experience dysregulation throughout the school day. Support the use of water bottles and water breaks. Incorporate hydration in lesson transitions, for example: **"We are going to transition to math class; everybody take a moment to drink some water."** Included in this curriculum on page 209 is a Water Tracking Worksheet your students can use to help monitor their hydration on a daily and weekly basis. The goal is to have the class practicing healthy hydration throughout the whole year.



## REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Is there a story or experience from this lesson that you'd like to capture or remember?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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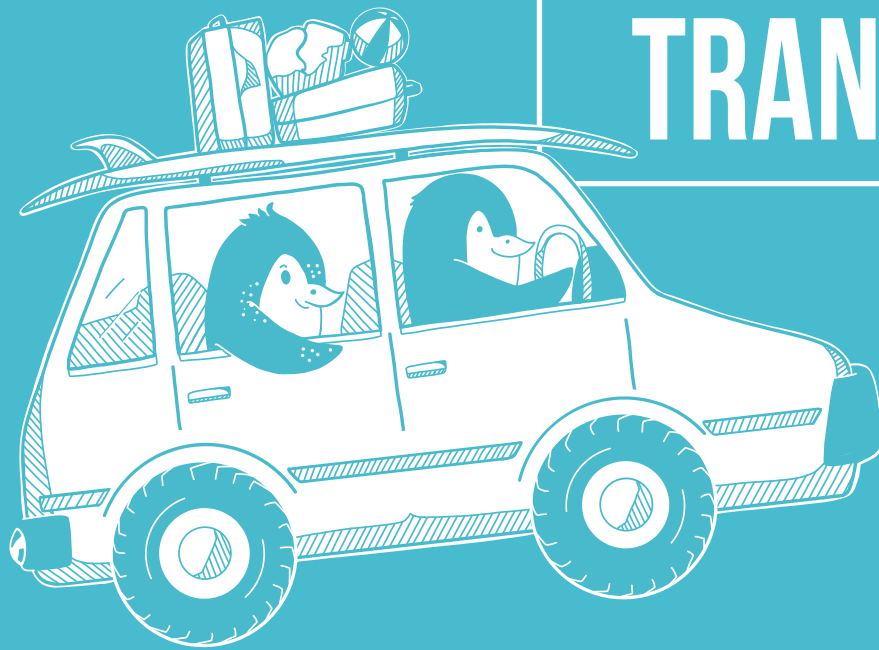
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# TRANSITIONS



## LESSON 2

### Navigating Transitions

#### Lesson Spotlight

Navigating transitions smoothly includes identifying and adapting our Strengths and Strategies.

#### Materials

- Poster paper for T-chart
- Dance music playlist
- Speaker
- Transition Plan Worksheet (**Choose Your Own Transitions Activity: Option 1**) (page 210)
- Letter Template (**Choose Your Own Transitions Activity: Option 2**) (page 211)
- Video camera or phone, poster paper, and markers (**Choose Your Own Transitions Activity: Option 3**)

#### Preparation

- Review the Choose Your Own Transitions Activity options and select one.
- **Option 2:** If other classes are doing the same activity, coordinate with instructors to assure that letters are sent to different classes.
- **Option 3:** If you need help capturing and editing video, ask for support from colleagues, students, or parents prior to this lesson.
- Label T-chart

#### Time

30 minutes

*\*If option 3 is selected additional time will be required*

#### SEL Focus

Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Responsible Decision-Making, Growth Mindset, Social Awareness

#### Instructor Overview

In this lesson, students will reflect on the ways they have utilized their own Strengths and strategies to navigate transitions throughout the year. Transitioning from the end of a school year through summer break to the beginning of a new school year can be dysregulating for students and staff. Practicing and identifying the Strengths and activities that help through transitions can empower students and build resilience.

The **Choose Your Own Transitions Activity**, provides three different options:

- Writing a Personal Transition Plan
- Writing a letter to a rising grade level for the upcoming school year
- Creating a What Helps Us video for transition into next school year *\*This option is highly recommended for students moving into middle school and will require additional time.*

### Talking Circle (5 min)

Invite the students to the Talking Circle.

“Today we are going to revisit our discussion about using our Strengths and strategies to navigate transitions. Remember the comic strips in our first lesson on transitions? You all drew the Strengths that could be used in transitions. What are some of the Strengths and strategies we can use to navigate transitions in a healthy way?” Get a few popcorn answers (support from a Positive Friend, taking deep breaths, asking a Mentor for help, etc.).

“That is a great list. As we learned, no matter how frequently transitions happen, we can use the Regulation Railroad strategies and our Strengths to support us through transitions in healthy ways.

We are getting close to the end of the school year, which is a significant transition for many of us.”

If your students are moving to a new school, acknowledge how that can be a significant transition. For example: “I know when I switched from one grade/school to the next I felt \_\_\_\_\_. What helped me was \_\_\_\_\_. Even now I can feel \_\_\_\_\_ every time we get to the end of the school year, and what helps me is \_\_\_\_\_.”

“Turn and pair share with a neighbor how you are feeling about the end of the school year and one Strength or strategy that is helping, or might help you.” Pair share.

### Transition Strategies (5 min)

With the students still in the Talking Circle, shift into popcorn discussion. The class will fill in a T-chart on the white board or anchor chart using the answers from the following questions. Label the left side of the T-chart “Transitions” and the right side “Strengths and Strategies.” Feel free to ask a student to capture the class’ answers.

Example of T-Chart:

TRANSITIONS	STRENGTHS AND STRATEGIES

“Now we are going to transition into another activity.

Let’s fill one side of this T-chart with different transitions and the other side with Strengths and strategies that help in transition. What are some different kinds of transitions we’ve experienced this year?” Get some popcorn answers and fill in the chart. Be sure to get examples of everyday transitions, weekly or monthly transitions, and less frequent transitions (school week to weekend, changing classes, spring break, starting a new school year, etc.).

“Now let’s fill in the other side of the chart with Strengths and strategies that have helped us move through those transitions in healthy ways.” Get popcorn answers and fill in the chart (talking to a Mentor, taking a deep breath, asking my Positive Friends for help, checking in to see how big my emotions are, using Regulation Station strategies, etc.).

“Wow, look at all of these great examples of how we can navigate transitions in healthy ways. We’re almost finished with the school year. We might experience some big emotions as the year comes to a close and we transition into summer break. We can use these ideas to navigate transitions for ourselves and support others when we notice emotions getting big.”

### Dance Master Game (8 min)

**ACCOMMODATION**

This game can be played from a seated position in order to accommodate different student abilities. Chairs will need to be in a circle for this game accommodation.

“We have been sitting for a while. Let’s play a game called Dance Master. In a moment we will send someone out into the hallway. While they are outside we will choose a Dance Master. The Dance Master will begin a dance move that the rest of us will copy. The Dance Master will change the dance moves several times, and each time everyone else will imitate the new dance move right away.” Try it out with all the students still present (it might be good to have the Instructor be the first Dance Master).

“I will turn on a song and everyone will try your best to follow what I am doing. Don’t worry if you don’t have it right, just do your best to follow the Dance Master.”

# TRANSITIONS - LESSON 2

## Navigating Transitions

Turn on the music and begin with your first dance move. Continue the same move for about 10-15 seconds until most of the students have it down. After 10-15 seconds change to a new dance move. Feel free to be goofy so that students don't feel they need to be perfect.

**“Now we are going to choose one student to go in the hallway. Once they are in the hallway we will choose a Dance Master. The job of the person in the hallway is to come in and guess who the Dance Master is. They have one minute or three guesses to identify the Dance Master. If you are the Dance Master you will want to wait until the guesser is facing away from you to change your dance move making it trickier to guess. Dance moves should change every 10 or 15 seconds. Everyone else should try not to look directly at the Dance Master all the time as someone might give them away.”**

Choose a volunteer student to be the first guesser and send them to the hallway. While they are out, choose a Dance Master. Once the Dance Master is chosen, start the music and dance. Once the whole class is dancing, bring the guesser back in. You may need to remind the guesser to make quick guesses. You also might need to remind the Dance Master to change their move if they get stuck. If the Dance Master is guessed correctly, then send them out to be the guesser while you choose a new Dance Master. If the Dance Master was not guessed correctly, have the Dance Master reveal themselves and then send them to the hallway as the new guesser. Play a few rounds.

**“Well done! That's a fun game that can get us all energized. Now let's all do a calming activity to help us transition into our next activity.”** You may ask for calming activity suggestions or just use one from the Regulation Station (eg. Square Breathing from Lesson 3.4).

### Choose Your Own Transitions Activity

(Time: variable)

This final activity includes three options for you and your class to choose from. You may decide to do one or all three of these activities as you have time.

- Writing a personal transition plan
- Writing a letter to a rising grade level for the upcoming school year
- Creating a What Helps Us video for transition into the next school year

### Option 1: Personal Transition Plan

**“We are going to write our own personal transition plan. Think for a moment about a transition that you know is particularly hard for you. Maybe it is ending the school year and going into summer, or coming back to school after the summer break. Maybe it is going from a structured school schedule to summer camps, activities, or clubs.”**

Pass out Personal Transition Plan Worksheets (pg.-) to the students. **“Once you have decided which transition you want to write your plan for, write it as the title at the top of your paper.”** Have the students fill in the sections with their responses to the following prompts:

**Section 1: “What emotions might come up when you experience your transition?”** (nervous, angry, sad, etc.) **“Draw a face that represents the emotions you might feel.”**

**Section 2: “Thinking about all that you have learned through Sources of Strength and the Regulation Railroad, write down all the things that help with the emotion you named in Section 1?** (Calming or energizing activities, asking for help, taking a deep breath, running in place, going to soccer practice, making art, reading a book, etc.) **“Think about how your Wheel of Strengths might be changing as a result of the transition.”** (Family Support changes while at summer camp, but more time for Healthy Activities etc.)

**Section 3: “Now, think about who the people are that could help in your transition and write their name or role in the space.”** (Parent, teacher, counselor, friend, playground monitor, school social worker, etc - Reference the T-chart you just made.) **“Write down how they can help you.”** (Give me advice, help me calm down, connect me to someone who can help, etc.) **“Write out a sentence of how you would ask that person for help.”** (“I'm feeling really \_\_\_\_\_, could you help me find a quiet place for a few minutes?”)

**Section 4: “Look at your list in Sections two and three. Which of these activities will be the most helpful in this transition? Make a list of three strategies that you will use the next time you experience this transition.”**



### Option 2: Letters to Rising Grade for the Upcoming School Year Transition

“Now we are going to incorporate the ideas we listed in our T-chart in an act of generosity to other students in the school. You all have potential to be Mentors and have powerful ideas to share with others. We are going to write letters to another class of students and share with them what helps us through school year transitions. The letters can highlight some of the Strengths and strategies they can use as they transition from one school year to the next.”

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

Invite students to share a note of hope for the rising grade level reminding them that we all have ups and downs but we can lean into our Strengths in many different ways. Example: Math starts out hard, but ask for help when you need it and you'll make it through.

Pass out the letter writing template to the students. “Here is a letter template for you all. Take a look at the T-chart that we created before the game and think about the people, places, and activities that were helpful for you when you started \_\_\_\_grade. Include two or three Strengths from the Sources of Strength Wheel and how they might be helpful. Share at least one or two things that you found especially helpful. You may also include something you are thankful for this year.”

### Option 3: What Helps Us Video

\*This activity can be done by any grade level but is recommended for students moving from elementary to middle school.

“As we have already discussed, the end of the school year is coming and all of you will be going to a new school next year. There are a lot of emotions and feelings that can come up when we are transitioning into a new school. We are going to make a video that includes all of us sharing the Strengths that we can use to begin the school year in a healthy way. We will share how those Strengths might help us and how we can grow them in a new school.”

Divide the students into 6 groups and give each group a piece of butcher paper to collect their brainstorm ideas. Have each group write their assigned Strength(s) on the top of their paper:

1. Family Support
2. Positive Friends
3. Mentors
4. Healthy Activities
5. Generosity and Spirituality
6. Physical Health and Mental Health

Put the following prompts on the whiteboard:

During the first week of school:

1. How can we use this Strength to start the school year strong?
2. How can we use this Strength when our emotions get big?
3. What are some ways that we can grow this Strength in a new school?

“Once your group has answered these three questions for your assigned Strength(s) we will all work together to create a class video that we can use to remind us of our Strengths, what they do for us, and how to grow them in a new school.”

Circulate around the room while the groups are brainstorming. Ask questions like:

- “What are the qualities of a new Positive Friend that you might be looking for?”
- What are some new activities that you might be able to do?

# TRANSITIONS - LESSON 2

## Navigating Transitions

- How might you get to know the counselor?
- How might you start to identify new Trusted Adults in the new school year?"

Give all those who want to appear in the video the opportunity to decide which pieces they will share. For those who are more camera shy, find ways for them to still be a part of the filming process (running the camera, holding cue cards, film editing, etc.). Students may just read the answers to the questions or have the class think of a creative presentation format such as acting it out, turning it into a game show, or news cast.

Here are some sample prompts to get you started, however, feel free to write your own for the video:

- "We can use (insert Strength) to start the year strong by (student generated idea)."

**Example:** We can use our *Healthy Activities* to start the year strong by *joining a group that enjoys our Healthy Activity together* (i.e. choir, video game club, etc.)

- "We can use (insert Strength) when we feel (emotion by action)."

**Example:** We can use our *Strength of Family Support* when we feel *anxious by talking to a family member about how we're feeling*.

- "We can use (activity, idea, strategy) to grow our (Strength) at a new school."

**Example:** We can use *square breathing* to grow our *Mental Health* at a new school.

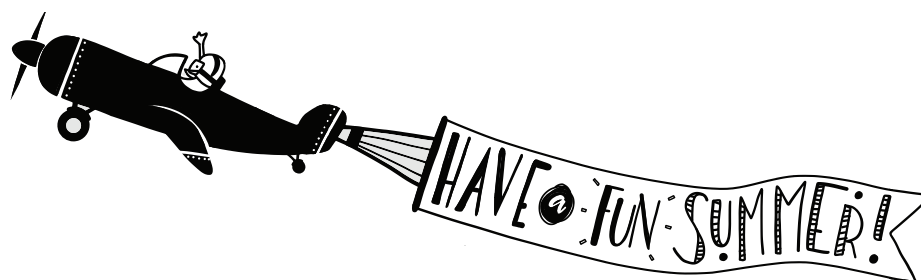
- "Some of the qualities of a (Mentor/Positive Friend/Trusted Adult) are \_\_\_\_\_."

**Example:** "Some of the qualities of a *Positive Friend* are that they are *encouraging, kind, and good listeners*."

### Tips for Making a Video

- Record in a quiet space.
- Make sure the space is well lit.
- Decide on vertical or horizontal camera orientation (YouTube vs. Instagram style)
- Practice your lines.
- Set up the camera close enough to the students so you can see and hear them well.
- SMILE and let your personalities shine!
- Outtakes can add a lot of fun and personality to your video.

This video serves as an opportunity for students to reflect on and incorporate all that they have learned throughout the Sources of Strength Curriculum during the school year.





# REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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What is a Strength you noticed in a student or in your class during this lesson?

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What is something you noticed or learned about yourself during the lesson?

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Other thoughts or reflections?

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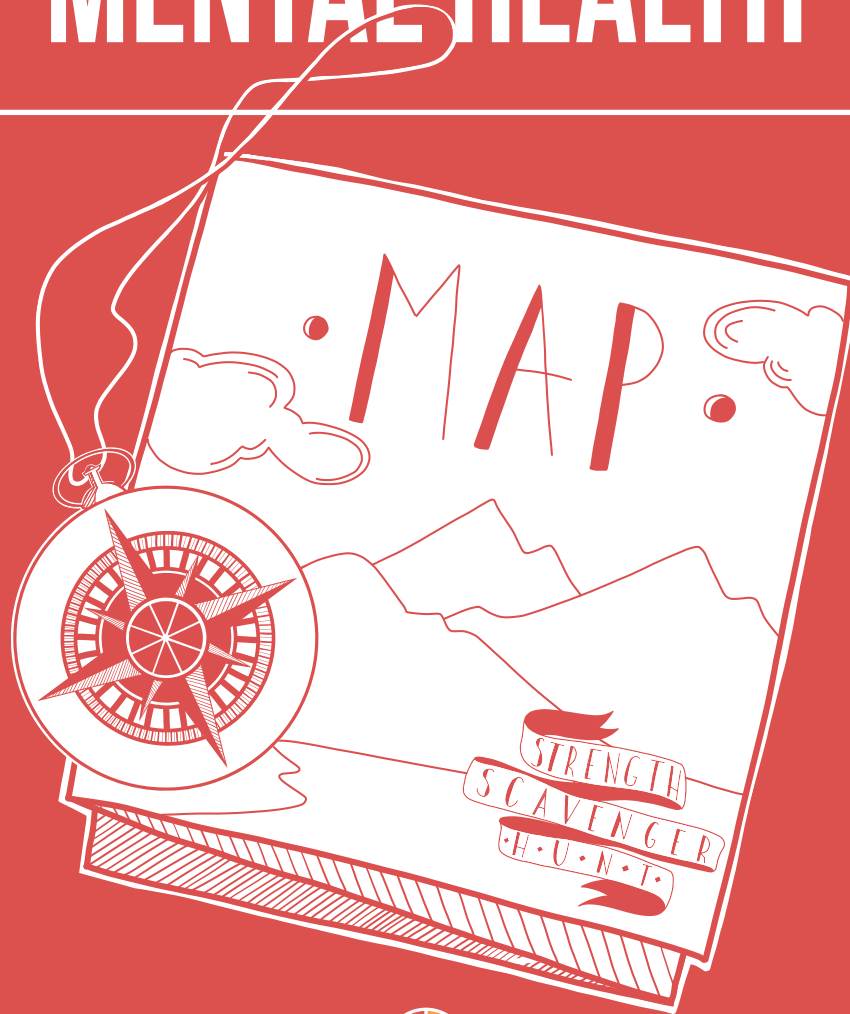
We would love your feedback on what worked well and what could improve to help Sources of Strength continue to grow.

Scan this QR code or visit [www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback](http://www.sourcesofstrength.org/elementaryfeedback) to give feedback on this lesson!



# UNIT 12

## MENTAL HEALTH



*Rationale* **153**

*Lesson 12.1: Strengths Scavenger Hunt* **154**

*Lesson 12.2: Celebration of Strength and Growth!* **158**

*Worksheets* **212**

The Mental Health Unit serves as the culmination of the Sources of Strength Elementary Curriculum. The truth is that every aspect of this curriculum has been a part of Mental Health. All that we have covered this year: understanding our brains, regulating our emotions, navigating transitions, identifying and cultivating our Strengths, is a part of Mental Health.

This unit serves as a celebration and reflection of all the ways we have grown in our Mental Health throughout the year. In the first lesson, we revisit our learnings from the previous units and highlight their connections to our Mental Health. In the second lesson, we reflect on and celebrate the growth we have experienced both individually and as a class throughout the year.

Remember the story about the Brooklyn Bridge in Building Below the Waterline at the beginning of the curriculum. We often get to the end of the school year and look around to see what type of bridge we've built. It is important to remember that we have spent this year building below the waterline. This work is foundational, and it is as a result of this work that the bridge will stand the test of time. These seemingly small daily interactions can build into changing the course of a child's life. When we work together with students to ask for help, learn to navigate conflict, move through transitions, regulate emotions, and cultivate Strengths, we are building Anchor Points in their lives. These Anchor Points translate into reduced risk of violence, suicide, addiction, harassment, truancy, homelessness, and more. Your work in building below the waterline creates a foundation for health, connection, community, resilience, hope, Strength, and belonging. In short, it empowers a well world. Your work with students this year has an impact far beyond what you can see right now.

Thank you for the investment of your time, energy, and passion. Thank you for practicing Strength in your own life and creating a space of connection and safety for your students to do the same. You and your students are powerful agents of change bringing more Hope, Help, and Strength to our world!

# MENTAL HEALTH - LESSON 12.2

## Celebration of Strength and Growth!

### Lesson Spotlight

Celebrating Mental Health and the growth of Strengths in ourselves and others, builds stronger and safer communities of belonging

### Materials

- Personal Strengths Posters, one per student (page 171)
- Copies of each Student's Personal Strengths Posters from Lesson 1.3
- Certificate of Growth, one per student (page 215)
- Markers/writing utensils

### Preparation

- Fill in your own Personal Strengths Wheel as a model for students
- Print student names on each certificate
- Decide whether this lesson will be split into two lessons with more games and a party

### Time

30 minutes

### SEL Focus

Growth Mindset, Self-Awareness, Social Awareness, Relationship Skills

### Instructor Overview

This is the final Mental Health lesson and serves as the culmination of the Sources of Strength Curriculum. We will have an opportunity to compare Personal Strengths Wheel from the beginning of the year to posters created today. This highlights that our Strengths are always growing and changing. The lesson ends with an opportunity for students to notice and name the growth they have seen in themselves, in their classmates, and in the class. The certificate is not just from you, or the program, but is designed to be collaborative, allowing students to celebrate each other's Strengths and growth.

### Talking Circle (5 min)

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

This lesson can be divided into two lessons if you would like to take more time to celebrate. Consider splitting it up with games and a party.

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

Students may share that the games were their favorite part. While this might feel like they missed the point, this is not the case. During the games, students are practicing social-emotional skills, building connections, and having fun together, which are powerful ways to build and support a healthy and positive classroom community. If a student shares that the games were their favorite part, follow up by asking them what they liked about the games.

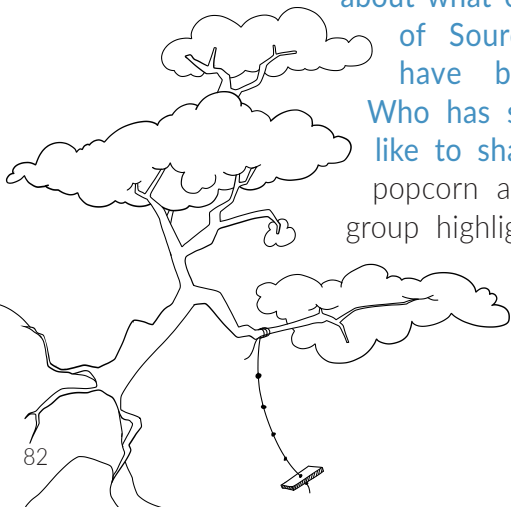
Invite students to the Talking Circle.

**“Well done everyone! This is our last Sources of Strength lesson for the year. That means it's time to celebrate all the different ways we have grown. As we talked about in the previous lesson, we can grow our Mental Health when we grow all of our Strengths. To start, let's share about what our favorite parts of Sources of Strength have been this year. Who has something they'd like to share?”** Get lots of popcorn answers from the group highlighting aspects of the curriculum throughout the year.

### Strengths Growth Posters (10 min)

“Everyone is going to get their own Strengths poster and some markers, then we are going to break into small groups of four or five. We will fill in our own poster with the pictures and examples of what each Strength on the Wheel looks like in our lives now. Once we are done drawing and filling in our poster, we'll have an opportunity to share in small groups.” Pass out Personal Strengths Wheels and break into groups.

**“Before you start, take a look at my Personal Wheel and what these Strengths look like in my life.”** Hold up your Strengths Wheel for the class. Make sure it has a lot of



pictures and names of people who are your Sources of Strength.

Give students three to five minutes to fill in their Strengths Wheel. While students are working on their Wheels, walk around the room commenting, helping students, and playfully engaging with everyone. If it's helpful, stop and hold up someone's Wheel and highlight their illustrations. Consider highlighting the Strengths Wheel of students that might be overlooked.

Give a one-minute warning when it is time to finish their posters. **"Now that you have finished, in your small groups please go around and share one or two things you drew on your Strengths poster."** Give the groups two minutes to share in their small group.

Have the students take out their personal Strengths posters from lesson 1.3 or provide them with the copies you have collected. **"Now let's compare the two posters. What do you notice? Share with your small group some of the things you notice between the two posters. What is the same? What has changed?"** Give the groups two minutes to share.

### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

If you do not have the Strengths posters from lesson 1.3 an option would be to have the students share about how their Strengths have changed throughout the year. They could share new or different ways they are tapping into Strength now versus the beginning of the school year.

**"It's really powerful that we all have so many Strengths in our lives. Comparing the two posters is a reminder that our Strengths are always changing and growing in different ways. We all have the power to grow our Strengths, in the same way we've seen our Class BrainTree grow throughout the year."**

### Hog Call Game (3 min)

Ask students to find a partner and come up with an animal and its corresponding noise (Duck - quack, Cow - moo, Turtle - "turtle, turtle" - accuracy is not the key here). Make sure no groups have the same noise. Have each partner go on opposite sides of the room, and then put their "bumpers out," meaning they will hold their

arms crossed in front of them, a few inches away from their chests. Ask them to close their eyes, if they feel comfortable, and if they don't, they can look down at the ground. They are not supposed to look up and around them. When you say "GO," they must find their partner using only the animal sound they chose. This creates a cacophony of noise through which they must pick out the sound of their partner and navigate to them through the mass of people.

Feel free to substitute this game out with any others the students really enjoy.

**"As we saw in this game, your voices are powerful. All we have learned this year in Sources of Strength has helped us use our voices in new ways to help ourselves and to help others. In a moment, we are going to have an opportunity to use our voices for our classmates. Please bring a writing utensil to the Talking Circle."**

### Certificates of Celebration (10-12 min)

#### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

The BrainTree can be a powerful visual reminder of all we have covered this year. Consider taking some time to admire and take down your BrainTree together as a class. As you do so, you can remember and reflect with students on activities and lessons done in the Sources of Strength curriculum. You can have students take their Leaves home with them as a memento of all they have learned and how they have grown throughout the year.

Students may need a notebook, clipboard, or some type of hard surface to write on. **"As we finish up with Sources of Strength, it is great for us to remember the different parts of the BrainTree."**

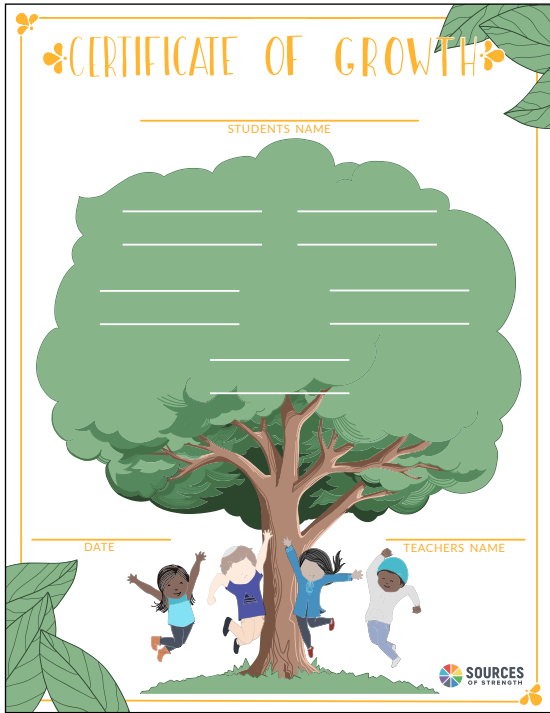
**"Remember the Roots or the Brain Stem help keep us safe and secure, making sure we breathe and telling us when we are thirsty. The Trunk, which is our Limbic System, is where we hold our memories and it is where our emotions live. The Branches and Leaves represent the Frontal Lobe, the part of the brain that uses the information from the Roots and Trunk to make decisions. We have spent the year building healthy, balanced brains. It is impressive to think about all of the growth we've**

# MENTAL HEALTH - LESSON 12.2

## Celebration of Strength and Growth!

witnessed in each other and ourselves. Now it's time to celebrate!"

Pass out the Certificates.



"Now we'll have a chance to use our powerful voices like we were talking about in the Hog Call game to recognize the Strengths in others. We're going to pass around these certificates and fill in a pair of lines on several classmates' certificates. Pass your certificate three people to the right. Choose a pair of lines on the certificate and write a specific way you have seen that person grow or name a Strength from the Wheel that they are really strong in." Prompt students to write specific examples of Strength (Ernesto was a great Mentor to me in math class teaching me concepts I was struggling with. Mariah has really grown as a Positive Friend this year and now has lots of different types of friends.).

"Now pass the certificate three more people to the right and fill in a pair of lines on that classmate's certificate."

You can do a few more passes around the circle as you have time. "Now, go find the person whose certificate you ended with and share what you wrote on their certificate. Then go find the person who has your certificate and they will share how they have seen you grow." Once it appears that pairs have finished sharing, have them come back to the Talking Circle.

"Let's close with one last full Circle Share. As we go around the circle, everyone share a specific way you feel like you have grown, or you have seen our class grow this year." Allow everyone to share. Don't forget to share how you've grown too.

"Wow, it is so powerful to hear all the ways we have grown over this school year. Thank you for sharing and for all you have done to make our world a stronger and healthier place this year. Remember to keep practicing what we have learned this year and to spread Hope, Help, and Strength to our world!"

### INSTRUCTOR NOTE

Intentionally end this sharing time centering on the students' voices rather than closing with a final teaching point. The curriculum is designed to move students toward their own recognition and celebration of their growth, their voices, and their Strengths.





# REFLECTION

Take a moment to reflect on this lesson. We encourage you to capture your reflections in a notebook or a journal.

What was a highlight from this lesson?

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What would you do differently the next time you teach this lesson?

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