

# PERSONAL POWER

## LESSON 1: WHAT IS HEALTH?



### GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 1 USING THINK, FEEL, ACT

**Directions:** Read both situations in each scenario. Use Think, Feel, Act (TFA) to determine how to respond to each situation.

**Scenario 1:** Maggie is your close friend. She has been out of school for a few days. When she returns, her right leg is in cast and she is using crutches. Her backpack keeps falling off her shoulder and it looks like she is about to fall.

**What do you THINK?**

**How do you FEEL?**

**How do you ACT?**

Maggie is your close friend. She has been out of school for a few days. When she returns to school, she is quiet and avoids being around you and her other friends. You notice that she has been crying.

**What do you THINK?**

**How do you FEEL?**

**How do you ACT?**

**Scenario 2:** Jorge is a new student who sits next to you in math. After lunch he puts his head down on his desk. When you ask Jorge if he is okay, he tells you his stomach really hurts and he feels sick.

**What do you THINK?**

**How do you FEEL?**

**How do you ACT?**

Jorge is a new student who sits next to you in math. After lunch he puts his head down on his desk. When you ask Jorge if he is okay, he tells you that he is feeling really anxious. His hands are shaking and he is starting to sweat.

**What do you THINK?**

**How do you FEEL?**

**How do you ACT?**



**Scenario 3:** Kayla rides her bike to school. One day, she has an accident on her way. When she arrives at school, her knees are bleeding and her hands are scraped.

**What do you THINK?**

**How do you FEEL?**

**How do you ACT?**

Kayla comes to school and you notice cuts on her arm. When you ask her about them, she puts on her hoodie and pulls down the sleeves.

**What do you THINK?**

**How do you FEEL?**

**How do you ACT?**

**Scenario 4:** You eat lunch with Jayden every day. One day, you offer to share some of your lunch. Jayden tells you that she was just diagnosed with diabetes so she has to watch what she eats.

**What do you THINK?**

**How do you FEEL?**

**How do you ACT?**

You eat lunch with Jayden every day and notice that she has stopped eating lunch. She was always thin and recently she has lost a lot of weight. One day, you offer to share some of your lunch. Jayden tells you that she's watching what she eats and isn't hungry right now.

**What do you THINK?**

**How do you FEEL?**

**How do you ACT?**



GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 2  
HELPING HANDS

**Directions:** We all have the ability to help others. Read each statement below. Determine what you can do to help, what you will say, and what you won't do or say.

*You notice that a friend has stopped sitting with you at lunch. She looks really sad. When you ask what's wrong, she says she's feeling totally overwhelmed.*

*A new student in school looks upset in the hall before school starts. He tells you he is feeling really anxious and can't face going into class.*

I can

I will

I won't

I can

I will

I won't

GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 3  
MENTAL ILLNESS DEFINITIONS

**Anxiety Disorder:** Feeling extremely afraid, worried, or uneasy about a situation or thing. The feelings are so intense that it interferes with daily activities.

**Bipolar Disorder:** A mood or emotional disorder that causes extreme mood swings from an extremely happy or good mood (mania) to extremely sad, overwhelmed, or low mood (depression). This is far more extreme than the usual ups and downs of teenage life.

**Conduct Disorder:** Behaviors that are extremely destructive toward other people, animals, and property, including failure to follow basic rules and comply with requests of others. Running away or skipping school may be the result of a conduct disorder.

**Depression:** Overwhelming feelings and emotions that include sadness and irritability for an extended period (usually 2 weeks or longer). Daily activities such as eating, sleeping, and going to school can be impacted by depression.

**Eating Disorder:** Distorted body image that results in dangerous, abnormal or extreme eating behaviors, including insufficient intake of food (anorexia nervosa), excessive eating (binge eating disorder), or purging after eating (bulimia) that results in improper nutrition.

**Schizophrenia:** A serious mental illness resulting from a disconnection between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that causes withdrawal from reality and relationships. Losing touch with reality resulting in delusions and living in a fantasy world. Difficulty thinking, speaking, or interacting with others in an organized way.

**Suicide:** Suicide is not a mental illness, however, it may result from mental illness. According to the National Institute of Mental Health, suicide is the second leading cause of death in youth age 10 – 24. Suicide is defined as self-inflicted behavior with the intent to die. Suicidal ideation or ideology is thinking about, planning for, or considering suicide.

*This is not a comprehensive list. This list includes mental illnesses most common with students in middle and high school. This information is to provide background information, not to determine a diagnosis of a mental illness.*



**GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 3**  
**SUICIDE AWARENESS & PREVENTION STATISTICS****Group 1 - Suicide Awareness and Prevention Statistics**

- Suicide is the tenth leading cause of death overall in the United States. More than 47,000 die from suicide each year.
- Females attempt suicide more frequently than males (3:1); however, males complete suicide more frequently than females (4:1).
- LGBTQ+ youth are almost five times as likely to have attempted suicide compared to heterosexual youth.

**Group 2 - Suicide Awareness and Prevention Statistics**

- 1 in 62 people has lost someone in their life to suicide.
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death among individuals between the ages of 10 and 34.
- Adolescent suicide is a growing problem in the United States.

**Group 3 - Suicide Awareness and Prevention Statistics**

- 1 in 5 adults and youth live with a mental health condition
- Adolescent suicide is a threat to youth of every race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.
- Over 90% of suicidal adolescents give clues to others prior to their attempt.

**Group 4 - Suicide Awareness and Prevention Statistics**

- A person under the age of 25 dies by suicide every 2 hours and 11 minutes.
- Socially isolated youth are generally found to be at greater risk of suicide.
- Suicidal threats or thoughts of self-harm must always be taken seriously.












**Group 5 - Suicide Awareness and Prevention Statistics**

- Suicide is preventable. Most suicidal individuals really want to live, but they are unable to realize alternatives to their situation.
- Each day there are approximately 12 youth suicides.
- Many people may think about suicide at one time in their lives. However, they never attempt suicide because they realize that the current problems are temporary and death is permanent.



**GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 4**  
**WARNING – TIME TO GET HELP**

**Directions:** Read each statement. If any of these statements describe something you or someone you know is experiencing, it is a red flag that you need to seek help from a trusted adult.

-  1. Feeling very sad or down for more than 2 weeks (crying frequently, feeling tired, not wanting to do anything).
-  2. Suddenly feeling very scared or afraid for no reason, sometimes with a racing heart or fast breathing.
-  3. Not eating, throwing up, losing a lot of weight.
-  4. Extreme mood swings that cause problems in relationships with friends and family.
-  5. Drastic changes in behavior, personality or sleeping habits (difficulty falling or staying asleep, sleeping too much or too little, acting differently, not feeling like yourself).
-  6. Extreme difficulty paying attention, sitting still, and finishing schoolwork, resulting in low grades.
-  7. Feeling extremely worried and fearful, causing inability to complete daily activities like hanging out with friends or going to school.
-  8. No longer being interested in the activities and things someone used to like.
-  9. Trying to harm or kill oneself or making plans to do so.
-  10. Behavior that is out-of-control or dangerous that can cause harm to self or others.
-  11. Using and abusing drugs or alcohol.



**GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 4  
RESOURCES FOR TEENS****National Suicide Hotline:****1-800-SUICIDE (784-2433)**

Toll-free, 24-hour, confidential hotlines that connect you to a trained counselor at the nearest suicide crisis center.

**National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI):****800-950-6264 or text NAMI to 741741**

Toll-free, confidential hotline operating Monday – Friday, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm (EST). Trained volunteers provide information, referrals, and support to anyone with questions about mental illness.

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:****1-800-273-TALK (8255)**

Toll-free, 24-hour, confidential hotlines that connect you to a trained counselor at the nearest suicide crisis center.

**Project Safe Place: 1-888-290-7233**

Project Safe Place provides access to immediate help and supportive resources for young people in crisis through a network of qualified agencies, businesses, and trained volunteers.

**SAMHSA - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:****1-300-622-HELP (4357)**

SAMHSA's National Helpline is a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service in English and Spanish for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

**The Jason Foundation: 1-800-274-TALK (8255) or text JASON to 741741**

The Jason Foundation provides information, educational programs, and resources to help in the fight against the “silent epidemic” of youth suicide. The Jason Foundation directs those in crisis to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline phone numbers. Learn more at <http://jasonfoundation.com/>

**The Trevor Project: 866-4-U-TREVOR**

The Trevor Project operates the only nationwide, around-the-clock crisis and suicide prevention helpline for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth. The Trevor Helpline is available as a resource to parents, family members and friends of young people as well. Visit [www.TheTrevorProject.org](http://www.TheTrevorProject.org) for more information and resources for young people, including “Dear Trevor,” an online Q&A forum for non-time sensitive questions.

**TeenScreen.org: 866-833-6727**

The TeenScreen National Center for Mental Health Checkups at Columbia University is a non-profit privately funded public health initiative working to increase youth access to regular mental health checkups and the early identification of mental illness. TeenScreen Schools and Communities is the National Center's flagship program, offering mental health checkups to youth through more than 500 local sites in 43 U.S. states. Visit [TeenScreen.org](http://TeenScreen.org) to read facts/figures about teenage mental health, and to learn more about the National Center's programs and initiatives.

# PERSONAL POWER

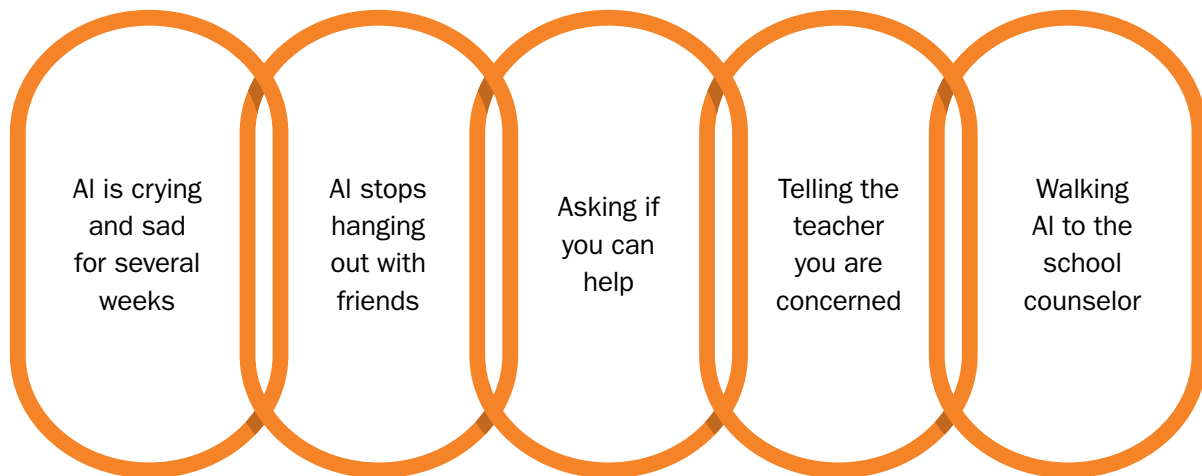
## LESSON 4: SEEKING HELP



### GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 4 LINKS TO HELP

**Directions:** Working with a partner, sort the statements from each chain. Start with identifying the Red Flags, then showing concern, and moving to getting help. Write one statement inside each link.

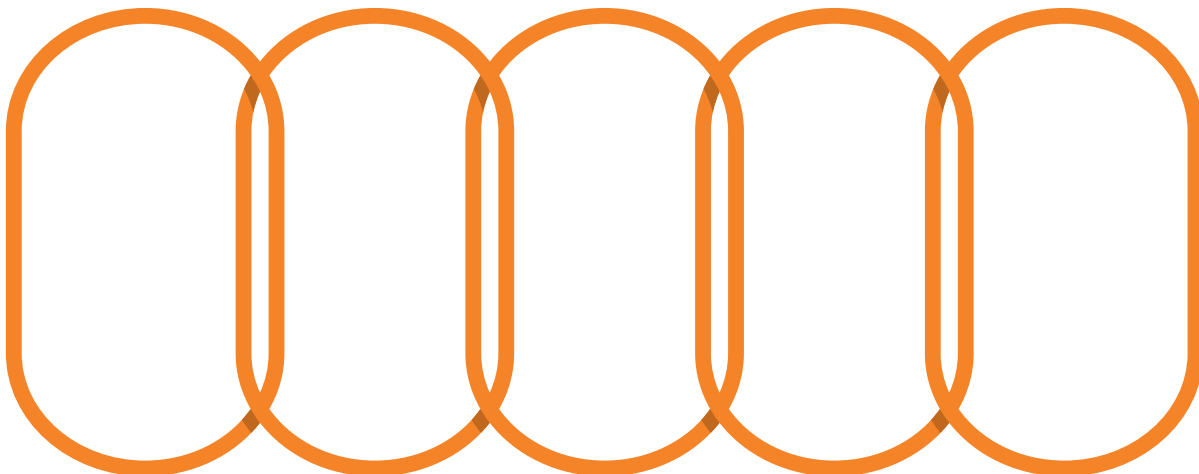
**EXAMPLE:**



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**Chain 1:**

Asking your older sister what you should do  
Noticing Chris stopped playing his favorite video games  
Asking your teacher for help  
Telling Chris that it seems like something is wrong and asking if he is ok  
Hearing Chris say he wants to sleep all of the time





**Chain 2:**

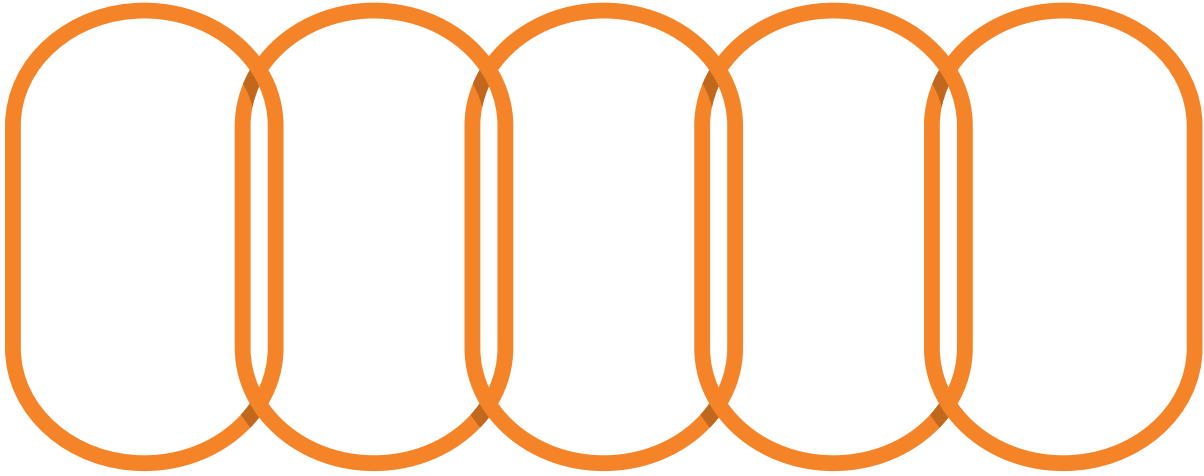
Going to the doctor

Feeling nervous to leave the house

Telling your father that you don't feel well and want to stay home

Feeling worried all of the time

Explaining to your father that you need help

**Chain 3:**

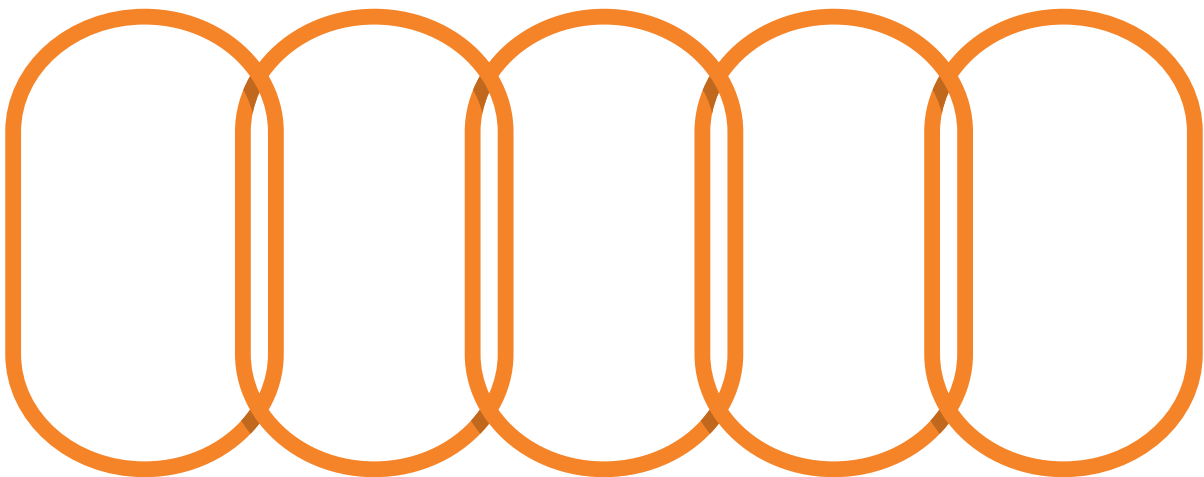
Asking Kaya how you can help

Going with Kaya to talk to the school counselor

Noticing Kaya has been missing basketball practice

Getting a text from Kaya that says, "I am so upset, I just can't take this anymore."

Listening to Kaya



# PERSONAL POWER

## LESSON 4: SEEKING HELP



### GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 4 JOURNAL

*"I think it is really important to take the stigma away from mental health. My brain and my heart are really important to me. I don't know why I wouldn't seek help to have those things be as healthy as my teeth. Don't I go to the dentist? So why wouldn't I go to a mental health specialist?"*

—Kerry Washington, actress

Seeking help for any physical or mental health concern is important. Consider the people in your life that you can "link with" for help. If someone you know is struggling with a mental health concern, how can you help them understand that seeking help for mental health is just as important as seeking help for physical health?



# PERSONAL POWER



GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 5  
**REDUCE THE STRESS**

**R**

**Relax** – Take a deep breath and relax

**E**

**Enjoy** – Do things you enjoy doing

**D**

**Determine** – What is causing you stress

**U**

**Understand** – If there are productive steps you can take to eliminate the stressor

**C**

**Connect** – With the people and things that you like

**E**

**Explain** – Let the people in your life know how you feel

# PERSONAL POWER

## LESSON 5: WELLBEING



### GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 5 REDUCING THE STRESS

**Part 1 Directions:** Read each scenario. Determine the stressors. Look for the clues of what the student enjoys or finds fulfilling, then use REDUCE for ideas of strategies and activities that could be used to REDUCE the stress.

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**Relax** – Take a deep breath and relax

**Enjoy** – Do things you enjoy doing

**Determine** – What is causing you stress

**Understand** – If there are productive steps you can take to eliminate the stressor

**Connect** – With the people and things that you like

**Explain** – Let the people in your life know how you feel

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#### DEVON

I am so stressed. I feel like I don't have enough time to get everything done. I used to like to play video games and basketball with my friends. Now I don't even have time to listen to my favorite music. I really miss sitting on the front porch and watching silly videos on my phone. Now, I have swim practice before school. After school I have so much homework. Then my mom is telling me I have to practice the trumpet for the band concert next week. Every Saturday I have to watch my little sister. She wants my attention all the time. We have to watch the little kid shows she wants to watch. If we don't, she cries and has a temper tantrum. When my mom gets back, she gets angry if my sister's toys are on the floor. I just wish I had a minute to myself.

**What is causing the stress?**

**What did Devon enjoy doing?**

**How could Devon REDUCE the Stress?**

R  
E  
D  
U  
C  
E



**JAYLEN**

Last summer I started drawing the flowers in my garden. I carried a sketch book with me and when I saw something I liked; I would try to draw it. I shared my drawings with my friends and family, they were impressed. I started teaching my friends how to draw. I like the art class I'm taking in school, but I'm really struggling in English class. We have so many books to read and so many essays to write. I have never been very good at writing, but this year I just feel like a failure. I can't sleep at night because I am so worried about finding time to read the book before class. Then I am so sleepy in class, it's hard to keep my eyes from closing.

**What is causing the stress?**

**What did Jaylen enjoy doing?**

**How could Jaylen REDUCE the Stress?**

R  
E  
D  
U  
C  
E

**DIEGO**

I used to have a routine. I went to school, walked home with my friends, played some video games, helped cook dinner, finished my homework, watched a TV show, and went to bed. Life seemed pretty simple. But then everything changed. I just moved and had to start a new school. My old school was very different. My new classes are so much harder and there is so much homework. Everyone in the class knows the procedures and what to do. But I am confused all the time. I am too embarrassed to ask what is going on in class, so I just sit there feeling anxious and upset. I haven't made any friends, so I just sit alone at lunch and walk home by myself. I didn't think things could get worse, but they did. Today my social studies teacher told me about a big project that is due next week. How am I supposed to read the book, write a report, and make a poster board all by next week? This is just too much!

**What is causing the stress?**

**What did Diego enjoy doing?**

**How could Diego REDUCE the Stress?**

R  
E  
D  
U  
C  
E

**Part 2 Directions:** Using the acronym REDUCE, list the strategies you could use to reduce stress.

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**Relax**

**Enjoy**

**Determine**

**Understand**

**Connect**

**Explain**



# PERSONAL POWER

## LESSON 5: WELLBEING



### GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 5 JOURNAL

*"Mental health is so important. People don't pay enough mind to it because we have things to do. We have schedules, we have pressure to fit in, places to be, Instagram Stories, trying to keep up. People don't pay attention to what's happening inside."*

– Ariana Grande, singer

Consider the quote by Ariana Grande. She points out that everyone faces challenges, pressures, and stressors. Write a story about how you can REDUCE the stress in your life. Review your answers to the REDUCE the Stress activity for ideas.

**GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 6**  
**THE STAGES OF DEVELOPING AN ADDICTION**

**1. TRYING** – When a person tries or experiments with a drug for the first time. This experimentation may be due to pressure from friends and/or trying to fit in. It may be due to curiosity about what it is like to use the drug or to be rebellious. Most people can stop using the drug on their own at this stage. However, if the drug is being used in response to a problem or to “feel better,” help is needed to resolve the underlying reason for using the drug.



**2. USING** – When a person continues to regularly use the drug because of how it makes them feel. The use of the drug is part of daily life. The use of the drug is predictable (every weekend or when hanging out with friends) or under specific circumstances (when feeling sad, stressed, worried, or lonely). The drug interacts with the brain. The changes in the brain can last hours, days, weeks, or even months before returning to normal.



**3. MISUSING** – When a person continues to use the drug, despite harm it is causing. Tolerance can develop with misuse, requiring more and more of the drug to get the same effect. The person may begin to show changes in behavior and engage in risky behaviors or activities. A person may begin using the drug at times that are inappropriate - such as before or at school. The drug misuse can lead to failure to take responsibility for obligations with family, friends, school, or work. Tolerance is a sign of misuse and a red flag of addiction.



**4. ABUSING** – When the person must continue using the drug because they have a mental and/or physical dependence on that drug. Without the drug, withdrawal causes the person to feel anxious, sick, or to have a physical reaction. The person believes that the drug is needed to feel normal, and they use the drug at times that are not appropriate. At this stage, a substance abuse treatment program may be needed to stop using the drug.



**5. ADDICTION** – When the person is unable to stop using the drug. The need for the drug is so overwhelming it can cause serious problems, including health problems, money problems, and relationship problems. The person often denies that they have a problem with drugs. The need for the drug may motivate the person to do whatever is needed to get more of the drug, putting them at risk for dangerous behavior. Addiction requires the help of a professional addiction treatment program.



GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 6  
WHAT'S THE STAGE?

**Directions:** Read each statement. Determine what stage of addiction it represents: trying, using, misusing, abusing, or addiction. Write the stage of addiction next to each statement.

- I wonder what beer tastes like? \_\_\_\_\_
- I will spend every penny I have to get more drugs. \_\_\_\_\_
- I was too high to babysit my little sister. It wasn't my fault that I forgot. \_\_\_\_\_
- All my friends are vaping, I don't know how to say no. \_\_\_\_\_
- I have to get more weed. I feel terrible when I stop smoking. \_\_\_\_\_
- I drink beer on the weekend when we are watching football. \_\_\_\_\_
- I don't have a drug problem. I *wanted* to fail school, fight with my dad all the time, and steal money to buy drugs. \_\_\_\_\_
- I need to drink, it makes me feel normal. \_\_\_\_\_
- I vape every morning before school. \_\_\_\_\_
- I keep using drugs and I keep needing more. \_\_\_\_\_
- I might feel better if I smoke weed. \_\_\_\_\_
- I was up late drinking, how am I supposed to get up so early for school. It doesn't matter, that teacher is failing me anyway. \_\_\_\_\_
- I have to find someone to buy me another vaping pen, I need it today! \_\_\_\_\_
- I always smoke with my older brother at the park on Saturday. \_\_\_\_\_
- Who needs friends? I can be happy all alone. All I need are these drugs. \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Create a statement that summarizes each stage of addiction.

Trying:

Using:

Misusing:

Abusing:

Addiction:



**GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 6**  
**ADDICTION FREE ME**

**Directions:** Complete each sentence starter with a healthy choice or affirmation to help yourself stay drug and addiction free.

**Healthy Choices**

I will spend time

I will learn to

I will take time to

I will  
with my friends.

**Positive Affirmations**

I am too good to

I am strong enough to

I can



# PERSONAL POWER

## LESSON 6: HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES



### GRADE 7 • MENTAL HEALTH • LESSON 6 JOURNAL

Consider the statement – *I can't get addicted to something I haven't tried.* What does that statement mean to you? How can you use your personal power to say no to peer pressure to try drugs, alcohol, or nicotine (smoking or vaping)?