

# Module Title: Mental and Emotional Health

## Microlesson Title: Achieving Mental and Emotional Health

*Title: Achieving Mental and Emotional Health Presentation*

### **What is Mental and Emotional Health?**

- Mental and emotional health helps you function effectively each day.
- Mental and Emotional health is the ability to accept yourself and others, express and manage emotions, and deal with the demands and challenges you meet in your life. Having good mental/emotional health is an important part of your total health.
- Mentally healthy people are, in general, happy and enjoy their lives. They feel confident and comfortable spending time with others. Good mental/emotional health influences your physical and social health too.

### **Characteristics of good mental and emotional health**

- Sense of belonging. Feeling close to family members, friends, teachers, and others provides support for you.
- Sense of purpose. Recognizing that you have value and importance as a person lets you set and reach goals.
- Positive Outlook. Seeing the bright side of life reduces stress and increases your chances of success.
- Self-sufficiency. Having the confidence to make responsible decisions promotes your sense of independence and self-assurance.
- Healthy self-esteem. Having healthy self-esteem helps you accept and recover from difficulties and failures.
- Everyone has to manage difficult and stressful situations.
- Mentally and emotionally healthy people handle stresses in positive ways. These people are
- resilient – they have the ability to adapt effectively and recover from disappointment, difficult, or crisis.

### **Self-esteem**

- Developing self-esteem, or how much you value, respect, and feel confident about yourself, influences the other characteristics of good mental health. If you feel valued, loved, and accepted by others, and you value, love, and accept yourself, your overall attitude and outlook is good. Trying new challenges can also raise your sense of competence, or having enough skills to do something.
- Healthy Self-esteem is necessary for good mental and emotional health.

### **How do you develop self-esteem?**

- You probably remember a time when your family praised you for doing something well, or reassured you and gave you advice on tasks you hadn't yet mastered. When you are praised for mastering a task or reassured when you do not, your self-esteem increases.

Your self-esteem also increases when you believe that you can succeed, or when you master new challenges.

- How you react emotionally to situations also affects your self-esteem. Self-talk, the encouragement or criticism that you give yourself, can affect your self-esteem. Using positive self-talk will strengthen your self-esteem. Try to replace negative thoughts by using positive self-talk.

### **Benefits of healthy self-esteem**

- Healthy self-esteem helps you feel proud of yourself and your abilities, skills, and accomplishments. You believe setbacks are temporary. You have the confidence to confront challenges and overcome them.
- Healthy self-esteem also gives you the confidence to try new things.
- You can improve your self-esteem and your overall mental and emotional health.

### **Improving your self-esteem**

- You can control many things that affect your self-esteem. Set realistic expectations, and don't expect everything to be "perfect".
- Here are suggestions that can help you improve your self-esteem:
  1. Choose friends who value and respect you.
  2. Focus on positive aspects about yourself.
  3. Replace negative self-talk with supportive self-talk.
  4. Work toward accomplishments rather than perfection.
  5. Consider your mistakes as learning opportunities.
  6. Try new activities to discover your talents.
  7. Write down your goals and the steps you will take to achieve them.
  8. Exercise regularly to feel more energized.

### **Developing self-awareness**

- Understanding your needs and meeting them in healthy ways will help you reach your highest potential. (Not all people will reach self-actualization)
- The hierarchy of needs is a ranked list of those needs essential to human growth and development, presented in ascending order, starting with basic needs and building toward the need to reach your highest potential.

## **Microlesson Title: Managing Stress and Coping with Loss**

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### **Causes of stress**

- A stressor is anything that causes stress. Stress can be positive (eustress) and negative (distress). Stressors vary among individuals and groups.
- Stressors can be real or imagined, anticipated or unexpected. People, objects, places, events, and situations are all potential stressors.
- Stressors activate the nervous system and specific hormones. There are three stages to a stress response:
  - Alarm – Your mind and body go on high alert.

- Resistance – If exposure to a stressor continues, your body adapts and reacts to the stressor.
- Fatigue – If exposure to stress is prolonged, your body loses its ability to adapt.

### **Stress and your Health**

- The physical changes that take place in your body during the stress response can take a toll on your body. Prolonged stress can be a psychosomatic response, a physical reaction that results from stress rather than from an injury or illness.
- Ongoing stress affects all aspects of your health.
- Some physical effects include:
  - Headache
  - A weakened immune system.
  - High blood pressure.
  - Digestive problems.

### **Managing Stress**

- Identifying what is stressful is the first step in learning how to manage stress.
- The effects of stress are additive, meaning they build up over time. Unless you find ways of managing stress, it will take a physical and mental toll on you. An increasing number of teens are experiencing chronic stress, stress associated with long-term problems that are beyond a person's control.

### **Stress management Techniques**

- You can develop strategies to both avoid and reduce stress.
- If you are unable to avoid a stressor, you can use these strategies:
  - Use refusal skills – Determine whether you have time for a new activity before taking it on. If the new activity will add to your stress, use refusal skills to say no.
  - Plan ahead – Manage your time wisely by planning ahead. Think about how stressed you get before a test.
  - Think positively – We can't control everything in our lives, but we can control how we respond to events. A positive outlook limits stress by shifting your perception and the way you react to a stressor.

### **Coping with loss and grief**

- Acknowledging a loss is one way to help begin the healing process.
- You have probably experienced a loss in one way or another that left you feeling sad. Everyone experiences loss during their lives and the grief that it brings. Grieving is a common and natural reaction to any that brings on strong emotion. Acknowledging and understanding your grief will help you begin the healing process. This in turn will help you cope with the loss and manage your feelings.

### **The grieving process**

- While everyone grieves in their own way, the grieving process includes stages of grief, a variety of reactions that may surface as an individual makes sense of how a loss affects him or her. Here are the stages:
  - Denial or numbness – It may be difficult to believe the loss has occurred.
  - Emotional Release – The loss is recognized. This stage often involves periods of crying.

- Anger – The person uses anger because he or she feels powerless and unfairly deprived.
- Bargaining – As the reality of the loss sets in, the person may promise to change if what was lost was returned.
- Depression – Beyond the feelings of sadness, feelings of alienation, and hopelessness may occur.
- Remorse – The person may become preoccupied with thoughts about how the loss could have been prevented.
- Acceptance – The person faces the reality of the loss, and experiences closure, or the acceptance of loss.
- Hope. Remembering becomes less painful, and the person begins to look to the future.
- Experiencing and accepting your feelings during grieving is necessary for healing. These feelings are part of coping, or dealing successfully with difficult changes in your life.

## Microlesson Title: Mental and Emotional Problems

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### **Dealing with anxiety and depression**

- Anxiety and depression are treatable mental health problems.
- Occasional anxiety is a normal, manageable reaction to many short-term, stressful situations. Experiencing difficult emotions is a normal part of life. They occur for a variety of reasons, including hormonal changes, relationship issues, grief, and stress. A common feeling of anxiety, the condition of feeling uneasy and worried about what may happen.
- Occasional anxiety is a natural response to life events. Brief feelings of worry, insecurity, fear, self-consciousness, or even panic are common responses. Usually, once the stressful situation is over, so is the anxiety it created.

### **Causes and effects of depression**

- Depression can be caused by physical, psychological, or social reasons.
- Other symptoms include:
  - Changes in thinking - People who are depressed may have trouble concentrating and making decisions.
  - Change in feelings – People who are depressed may experience apathy, or lack of strong feeling, interest, or concern.
  - Changes in behavior – People with depression may become emotional, and they may begin eating too little or too much.

### **Getting help for depression**

- If you recognize signs of depression in yourself or a friend, discuss your concerns with someone you trust. Depression is serious, but it is treatable. If a friend asks you not to

tell anyone that he or she is depressed, it's okay to break that promise. Health professionals can develop a plan to treat depression that may include taking medication, making changes in the home or school environment, or counseling. Treating depression takes time, persistence, and patience.

## Microlesson Title: Getting Help

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### **Overcoming the stumbling blocks**

- The benefits of treatment encourage people to overcome a reluctance to get help.
- When asking for help, remember these facts:
- Asking for help is a sign of inner strength. It shows responsibility for one's own wellness.
- Serious disorders, compulsions, and addictions are complex and require professional intervention.
- Sharing your thoughts with an objective, helpful individual can be a great relief.
- Financial help to help apply for care may be available.

### **Where to go**

- People in your community are available to help.
- It takes courage to confront a problem and try to solve it. Talking with a trusted adult, such as a parent, guardian, teacher, or school nurse can help you get started.
- Mental health professionals include:
  1. Counselor
  2. School Psychologists
  3. Psychiatrists
  4. Neurologists
  5. Clinical psychologists
  6. Psychiatric social worker