



# LESSON PLANS!

## STAYING BALANCED

BY MAINTAINING  
YOUR INNER BALANCE

### PRIMARY OBJECTIVE

Develop daily habits to maintain your inner balance and care for your mental health.

#### Why should you do this workshop with your students?

To teach them how to adopt good practices that will help them keep their mental balance when going through a difficult time.



**RECOMMENDED  
LEVEL**

All secondary levels



**DURATION**

**40–45 minutes in class**  
(duration of interactions/  
discussions at your discretion)

## BROAD AREAS OF LEARNING

- Health and well-being

## SUBJECT AREAS AND COMPETENCIES

### English, language arts

- Using language/talks to communicate and to learn  
- Writing a variety of texts

### Physical education and health

- Adopting a healthy and active lifestyle

## CROSS-CURRICULAR COMPETENCIES

### Personal and social

- Achieving your full potential

### Communication

- Communicating appropriately

## MATERIALS



- [Printable scale poster](#)
- [Quiz on mental health](#)
- Pencils or markers
- Sticky notes

# CONTENTS

## INFO

03

Theoretical notions about teenagers' mental health

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## ICEBREAKER 10 to 15 minutes

04

Quiz students' understanding of mental health basics

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## PREPARATION PHASE 5 minutes

05

Visualize our inner balance scale

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## IMPLEMENTATION PHASE 15 to 20 minutes

07

- **STEP 1:** Identify events that can make us lose our mental balance
  - **STEP 2:** Identify students' own reflexes to keep their mental balance
- 

## EXIT TICKET TASK 5 minutes

10

A quick reference sheet for students to help them take care of their mental health in a few simple steps

## INFO

Adolescence is a time full of change; a period that can be both **exciting** and **difficult** at times.

Because school is a place where teens learn about all aspects of their lives, you have the opportunity to play a **significant role in the development of their mental health**.

## SO WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH, EXACTLY?



Mental health in young people is a reflection of their well-being, particularly as it relates to:

themselves (self-esteem)

others (friends, family, etc.)

their environment

(school, sports activities, virtual interactions on Messenger, Insta, TikTok, etc.)

Young people can experience **highs and lows**. Think of it like a personalized inner scale that occasionally tips from one side to the other. With the help of **short exercises** (*self-compassion\**, *mentalization\** or *mindfulness\**) and the adoption of **healthy lifestyle habits**, teens can gradually learn to stay **balanced**. **It just takes practice**—much like learning a new sport.

**Mental health** can be summed up in two simple words: **well-being and balance**.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP TEENS TAKE CARE OF THEIR MENTAL HEALTH?

To maintain positive mental health, it's useful to teach young people to take care of themselves daily. Following healthy lifestyle habits, managing their relationship with drugs, resisting academic pressure as much as possible, learning to manage their emotions and stress, and developing a caring inner voice are all ways for teens to maintain positive mental health.

With this educational activity, you'll introduce your students to the concept of taking care of themselves so they can:

- recentre mentally when they get thrown off balance
- identify what has worked in the past



ICEBREAKER  
10-15 minutes

PREPARATION  
5 minutes

IMPLEMENTATION  
15-20 minutes

EXIT  
5 minutes

QUIZ STUDENTS' UNDERSTANDING OF MENTAL HEALTH BASICS



## ICEBREAKER 10 to 15 minutes

### WHAT TO SAY

**"Have you ever heard about mental health?"**  
**"Can you tell me what mental health is?"**

Take a few answers from among raised hands and then round out the discussion using the definition above (see the "Info" section).

Has Fondation Jeunes en Tête already visited your school? If your students have already taken our [Mental Health Basics Workshop](#)\* use this opportunity to go one step further and allow your students to reinvest their knowledge of mental health.



"Let's do a short quiz together to learn more about mental health."

### WHAT TO DO

On the interactive whiteboard (IWB), go to [this page](#)\* on the Fondation Jeunes en Tête website to display the quiz on mental health.

Read each question aloud and ask your students to choose the correct answer. Click on the answer that gets the most votes and read out the answer that appears.



You can also find all the questions and answers in [this Q&A](#)\*





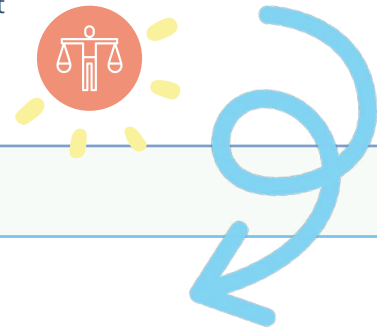
## PREPARATION PHASE

### 5 minutes

#### WHAT TO DO

Choose from the following:

- **Print out the poster on the following page and stick it on the board** (or put it on-screen)
- **Draw a scale on the board** (use the poster below for inspiration)
- **Create a «living scale»** by asking for a volunteer to come to the front of the class and hold a basket or bucket in each hand.



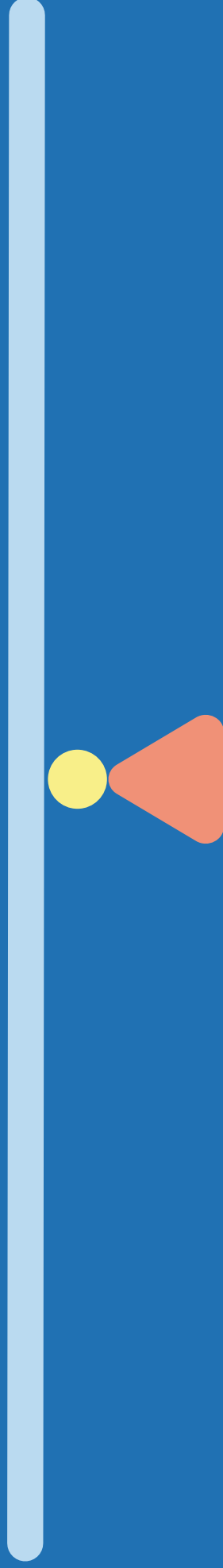
#### WHAT TO SAY

“This scale represents our inner balance. In other words, our mental health.”



## Find your balance

Place the notes on either side of the scale.





## IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

### 15 to 20 minutes

#### STEP 1: Identify events that can make us lose our mental balance

Here's a list of events that can happen in your students' lives and cause them to feel **stress and/or difficult emotions**.



Quarrels with friends	Lost a game of soccer, hockey, etc.
Best friend isn't talking to us	Rejected by someone close to us
A breakup	Parents divorce
Fighting between family members	Death of a family pet
Someone close to us isn't doing well	Dealing with exam-related stress
Getting a lower mark than expected	Feeling sadness or other difficult emotions
Death of a loved one	Feeling alone
Conflicts or a tense environment at work	

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. **Cut out each event** or write them on sticky notes ;
2. **Read them aloud** to the class or invite a student to do so ;
3. **Place each piece of paper on either side** of the scale by dropping it into the basket/bucket or sticking it on the drawing or poster on the board.

**Option:** You can also write each event on the list directly on the board or poster.

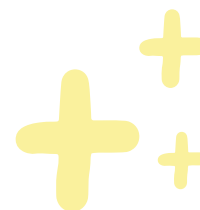
## WHAT TO SAY

“ Some **events** in life can trigger strong emotions that are sometimes hard to manage and cause us to **lose our balance.**”

“Can you relate to any of these examples?”

“Can you think of any other everyday situation that can sometimes throw us off mentally?”

You can use blank paper or sticky notes to add the examples provided by your students.



Some situations may seem trivial or make students laugh. It's important to remind them that it's **normal to experience things differently.**

**For example:** Two people who receive the same mark on a test may have different reactions; one may be delighted with 65% in math while the other may be disappointed. Validate and acknowledge each reaction.

If a student confides in you about an alarming situation, it's important to adopt the **right reflexes** in order to assist them properly and help them find the right resource.

**Discover our practical advice on how to react to a young person's distress in our mini-guide\*.**





## STEP 2 : Identify students' own reflexes to recentre their mental balance

### WHAT TO SAY

“ So it's totally normal to feel off-balance at times and experience all the emotions that get triggered. What you need to know is that each one of us is capable of regaining our mental balance when we lose it! **We all have reflexes and tricks that help us feel better when we go through rough patches.**

**Can you share some examples in your own life with us so we can learn how to rebalance together?”**

### WHAT TO DO

Hand out **sticky notes** for students to write down examples of **simple everyday actions** they do that help them **feel better** and then place them in the basket/bucket or stick them on the drawing or poster. Alternatively, have a volunteer write the answers directly on the drawing or poster.

To guide your students, you can ask them about their **hobbies, favourite activities, extracurricular activities, tips for relaxing, etc.** You can also give them examples of things you do to take care of yourself (listening to music, reading, playing sports, doing nothing, cooking, going for a walk, colouring, playing a board game, etc.).

### WHAT TO SAY

“ These are all great examples, and they show us that we already have many ways **to take care of our mental health** and keep our balance!

If you feel the situation isn't changing, however, and are finding it harder to find your balance, then it's important to talk about it with people and adults you trust.\* Whether it's friends, family, teachers, coaches or someone at school.”

**\*Don't hesitate to list the school resources available to your students.**

## HAVE STUDENTS REINVEST THEIR KNOWLEDGE



## EXIT TICKET TASK

### 5 minutes

#### WHAT TO DO

Distribute the following student handout to each student.

It's a quick reference sheet for **good life habits** that everyone can practise on a daily basis to **improve their mental health**.

Invite your students to complete it by **listing the self-care activities they enjoy doing**. They can then carry it with them in their agenda or put it up in their bedroom for easy reference.

You can also encourage your students to check out our teen toolkit for more tips on taking care of their mental health.



#### FILTER BY THEME

- Body Image
- Get Help
- In my Head
- Love and Sexuality
- Psychological Distress
- Social Life and Relationships
- Stress and Anxiety

#### FORMAT TYPES

- Articles
- Info sheets
- Podcasts
- Videos



#### LOVE AND FRIENDSHIP 4/5: TOXIC FRIENDSHIP - FRESHTA'S TESTIMONY

Listen to 16-year-old Freshta Ismaili share her story of breaking up with a friend. In partnership with Aidersonenfant.com.

[LISTEN ON SPOTIFY >](#)



#### TWO CULTURES: HOW DO I FIND WHERE I BELONG?

Here is some advice to help you better understand what you're going through and find a place you belong between your family's culture and your host country's culture.

[READ ARTICLE](#)



#### GETTING OVER YOUR FEAR OF GRADES

Here are the keys to put grades into perspective and keep calm.

[READ ARTICLE](#)

# TAKE CARE OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

In a few simple steps

## ADOPT GOOD LIFESTYLE HABITS



Eat healthy foods



Try to get adequate sleep  
(8 to 10 hours a night)



Take a break  
from screens



Take a step back from your  
emotions with mindfulness



Confide in an adult  
you trust



Adopt positive self-talk  
when in a stressful situation



Move your body by doing  
a physical activity you enjoy

## TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Listen to music, read, do a sport, play a board game, relax doing nothing, cook, go for a walk, talk to a friend, do something creative, etc.

List a few things you would like to do every day to take care of yourself:

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DISCOVER ALL  
OUR TOOLS!



[fondationjeunesentete.org/en](https://fondationjeunesentete.org/en)



# DISCOVER OUR TOOLS

## • SCHOOL TOOLKIT

packed with simple, handy tools you can use with your students to help them take care of themselves on a daily basis.



## • WORKSHEET

to help your students get to know themselves better, improve their self-esteem and develop self-compassion.



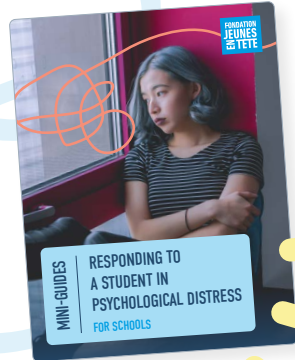
## • TESTIMONIALS

from two teachers on their experience with using mindfulness meditation in the classroom, along with a 5-step tutorial for leading your first meditation with your students.



## • MINI-GUIDE

to psychological distress in teens, with key tools to help you respond effectively to your students and provide them with support.



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