



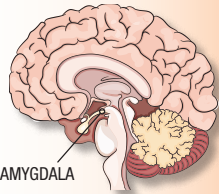
STRENGTHS AND EMOTIONS



FIGHT, FLIGHT OR FREEZE

Wellbeing Bank: to develop my Strengths and Emotions by being aware of my feelings.

When you experience something which may be disturbing, your eyes send a message to your amygdala, which is the part of your brain which naturally creates your feelings and how strong they are. Your brain's response to the message may be either *fight*, *flight* or *freeze*.



Fight is to stand up to a perceived threat.

Flight is to not deal with or ignore it.

Freeze is to be overcome and overwhelmed.

Your amygdala is well developed and is often called the primitive brain. The good decision-making part of your brain, the prefrontal cortex, also receives the message, but doesn't process it as quickly. Which means that your *fight*, *flight* or *freeze* feelings can control your thoughts, words and actions. Your prefrontal cortex is still developing, so give it time to make good choices. When you feel fight, flight or freeze, STOP and breathe deeply for a minute before you speak or act.

Describe how you currently control your feelings.

.....

> Website: Thinking Traps, Wellbeing Builder Reflection.

ACTIONS

What are two things I will start doing to be aware of my feelings and fight, flight or freeze?



1.
2.

MINDFULNESS ACTIVITY

Five Senses – think of two of your greatest achievements and describe what you experienced for each of your five senses.



RESILIENCE BUILDER

Since the beginning of time, when we humans have looked at something, our main focus has been to look for what is wrong with it. From now on, let's start looking for what's right with things. Look around your classroom and come up with ten good things about it.



WHAT WENT WELL THIS WEEK AND WHY?

1.
2.
3.

STRENGTHS' BOOSTER

STRENGTHS SPOTTING (see pages 8-9)

**CHARACTER STRENGTH
 SELF-REGULATION**
www.viacharacter.org

STRENGTHS AND EMOTIONS



FAST AND SLOW TRACK RESPONSES

Wellbeing Bank: to boost my Strengths and Emotions through regulating my emotional responses.

Having the ability to self-regulate the intensity of your emotions and how you respond to situations are gateways to personal and academic growth.

There are essentially two ways you respond, those being fast and slow track. They are also sometimes described as downstairs and upstairs responses.

Fast track responses are when the primitive part of your brain, the amygdala, which strengthens emotions, is in control. Your thinking becomes hijacked by your emotions, resulting in fast unconscious fight, flight or freeze responses and poor decision making.

Others also find it more difficult to understand you. (Google rider and the elephant to learn more.)

Slow track responses are when the good decision making part of your brain, the prefrontal cortex, which regulates your emotions, is in control. Your thinking is more rational and you analyse, problem solve and understand experiences.

Describe how you currently self-regulate your emotions.

.....

Being able to keep your finger on the pulse of your emotions, will assist you to understand the connections between your thoughts, feelings and actions.

Acknowledgement: Daniel Siegel

> Website: Thinking Traps, Wellbeing Builder Reflection.

ACTIONS

What are two things I will start doing to be more aware to self-regulate my emotions by using the slow track?



1.
2.

MINDFULNESS ACTIVITY

Five Senses – think of two of your greatest achievements and describe what you experienced for each of your five senses.



RESILIENCE BUILDER

Throughout Years 9 and 10 you have had to build your skills in preparation for Years 11 and 12. With a friend brainstorm ten challenging situations you will need to overcome to inspire your best possible self to shine in the senior years. Who could you ask to assist you for each of them and what emotions could you feel?



WHAT WENT WELL THIS WEEK AND WHY?

1.
2.
3.

HOW DID YOU FEEL THIS WEEK?





WELLBEING BUILDER: MIDDLE – FIGHT, FLIGHT OR FREEZE SENIOR – FAST AND SLOW TRACK RESPONSES

WELLBEING ELEMENT: STRENGTHS AND EMOTIONS

Students' thinking is influenced by two competing parts of their brains, the amygdala and the prefrontal cortex.

- ✦ The amygdala is the unconscious part which generates emotions. It is well developed in students and causes the fight, flight or freeze reactions, depending on the intensity of the positive or negative emotions produced (also called fast track responses).
- ✦ The prefrontal cortex is the conscious rational part which controls the intensity of their emotions to make better decisions (also called slow track responses). It not fully developed till they reach their early twenties, meaning their responses to what they experience may vary considerably.

When their amygdalas are in charge of their feelings, good decision-making is difficult; often called emotional hijacking. The key is to raise their self-awareness of this, so that they are able to self-regulate their emotions. Cultivate this by:

- ✦ initiating discussions about positive, negative, mixed and hidden emotions and their intensity
- ✦ helping them create their own positive coping and self-calming strategies to reduce emotional intensity
- ✦ exploring common thinking traps each week (see website)
- ✦ learning how to use assertive and positive self-talk to combat hijacking
- ✦ doing Mindfulness Activities each week to distract their amygdala to put their prefrontal cortex back in charge (see website)

Acknowledgement: Canon & Cherry

CONVERSATION STARTERS WITH STUDENTS

Each week choose at least two icebreaker activities (below) to grow resilient wellbeing and respectful relationships.

WEEKLY CHECK IN

Journal – What am I looking forward to most this week?



MIND AND HEART CALMER

Journal – What kind things have I done for other people this week or they have done for me?



ASSERTIVE CHOICE

Journal – What do I choose to do this week?



SELF KIND AFFIRMATION

Do – I will believe in myself as a person who matters.



SAYING

Discuss – “By constant self-discipline and self-control you can develop greatness of character.”
Grenville Kleiser



THREE FOR ME

Journal – What are three good things I've achieved in my life?



FEELINGS AND EMOTIONS

Journal – What emotions did I feel this week and why did I feel them?



RESILIENT MINDSET

Reflect – Do good to feel good and feel good doing good.



WEEKLY CHECK OUT

Journal – What went well that I am grateful for, why did they happen and how can I make them happen again?



“By constant self-discipline and self-control you can develop greatness of character.” Grenville Kleiser



RESOURCES AND INTERACTIVE PDF ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD TO YOUR SCHOOL HUB FROM www.learningcurve.com.au

To develop the elements of wellbeing, nurture resilient mindsets, and cultivate social-emotional skills which enable students to create and maintain respectful relationships, below are the choices you have from the website to achieve these outcomes. On page 5 of this manual, there are detailed suggestions of what you could do with your classes for each of these resources. To maintain student engagement, choose different activities to explore each week.

Character Strength - SELF-REGULATION

In your own words, how would you describe **self-regulation**?

How does the dictionary describe **self-regulation**?

Describe a time or times in your life that you believe you have shown this **Character Strength**.

In the boxes below describe a time you have shown this **Character Strength** and think of two things you will start doing in your role as a student, family and community member. Also, which of your signature strengths will assist you in this **Character Strength**?

As a student at school	Describe a time I used this Character Strength well	What are two things I will start doing to build this Character Strength
As a family member at home		
As a member of the Community		

Acknowledgements: V&A Institute, www.vic.gov.au

CHARACTER STRENGTH - SELF-REGULATION

Habit of Mind - THINKING FLEXIBLY

THINKING FLEXIBLY
Being able to change your mind when you receive new information. Sometimes the information may cause you to contradict your opinions and consider other options.
Being able to shift in your thinking from "your way is the only way" to "perhaps another way is better".
Ask yourself the following questions:
• when have I been flexible in my thinking and why?
• in what different ways did I think?
• who has impressed me with his/her flexible thinking and why?

HABIT OF MIND - THINKING FLEXIBLY

MINDFULNESS ACTIVITY - FIVE SENSES

Think of two of your greatest achievements and describe what you experienced for each of your five senses.

GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT 1 | **GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT 2**

See | Hear | Smell | Touch | Taste

MINDFULNESS ACTIVITY - FIVE SENSES

SECONDARY

Parent Newsletter

Wellbeing Builder: Middle - FIGHT, FLIGHT OR FREEZE
Senior - FAST AND SLOW TRACK RESPONSES

Wellbeing Element: SELF-REGULATION
Character Strength: SELF-REGULATION
Strengths Booster: STRENGTHS AND EMOTIONS
Wellbeing Reflection Activities: Middle - FIGHT, FLIGHT OR FREEZE
Senior - FAST AND SLOW TRACK RESPONSES (see website)

Parent Wellbeing: The best way to build your wellbeing and personal growth is through contributing to make a positive difference to others. Being good to feel good and feeling good to do good. Describe three times you have done this and the emotions you list.

Students' thinking is influenced by two competing parts of the brain, the amygdala and the prefrontal cortex.
• The amygdala is the unconscious part which generates emotions. It is well developed in students and causes the fight, flight or freeze reactions, depending on the intensity of the positive or negative emotions produced and called 'fast track responses'.
• The prefrontal cortex is the conscious rational part which controls the intensity of these emotions to make better decisions (also called 'slow track responses'). It is not fully developed till they reach their early twenties, meaning their responses to what they experience may vary considerably.

When their amygdala is in charge of their feelings, good decision-making is difficult, often called emotional hijacking. The key is to raise their self-awareness of this, so that they are able to self-regulate their emotions. Cultivate this by:
• making decisions about positive, negative, mixed and neutral emotions and their intensity
• helping them create their own positive coping and self-calming strategies to reduce emotional intensity
• exploring common thinking traps each week with wellbeing
• learning how to use resources and positive self-talk to combat hijacking
• using Wellbeing Activities each week to distract their amygdala & put their prefrontal cortex back in charge (see website)

"We cannot self-develop and self-control you can develop greatness of character." - Gandhi (quote)

PARENT NEWSLETTER

RESILIENCE BUILDER

Since the beginning of time, when we humans have looked at something, our main focus has been to look for what is wrong with it. From now on, let's start looking for what's right with things. Look around your classroom and come up with ten good things about it.

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 10

Resilience Builder - Middle Secondary

RESILIENCE BUILDER - MIDDLE SECONDARY

RESILIENCE BUILDER

Throughout Years 9 and 10 you have had to build your skills in preparation for Years 11 and 12. With a friend brainstorm ten challenging situations you will need to overcome to inspire your best possible self to shine in the senior years. Who could you ask to assist you for each of them and what emotions could you feel?

1 2 3 4 5
6 7 8 9 10

Resilience Builder - Senior Secondary

RESILIENCE BUILDER - SENIOR SECONDARY

Strengths Booster

STUDENT

Just knowing what your top strengths are makes no difference to your wellbeing unless you use them. Becoming your best possible self comes from doing more difficult things which challenge your current way best. The Strengths Boosters give you opportunities to use your strengths in different ways to build your wellbeing.

STRENGTHS SPOTTING

Journal any times I use myself or others using this week's strength and the actions I or they take.

STRENGTHS BOOSTER - STRENGTHS SPOTTING

WEEK 1

MIDDLE PLANNER | **PAGE 22** | **SENIOR PLANNER** | **PAGE 22**

STRENGTHS AND EMOTIONS FIGHT, FLIGHT OR FREEZE

STRENGTHS AND EMOTIONS FAST AND SLOW TRACK RESPONSES

ACTIONS: ...

AMPLIFIED ACTIVITY: ...

RESILIENCE BUILDER: ...

WHAT WENT WELL THIS WEEK AND WHY?

HOW DO YOU FEEL THIS WEEK?

STRENGTHS BOOSTER: ...

2019 TEACHER USER MANUAL

TEACHER USER MANUAL

Thinking Tool

ANSWER, REFLECT, SHARE

Answer: ...

Reflect: ...

Share: ...

THINKING TOOL - ANSWER, REFLECT, SHARE

THINKING TRAP

No evidence, then true?
Because there is no evidence or points against something, then it must be true.
E.g. I'll eat more ice cream because no-one has proved it's not good for me.

Describe a time when you have thought this way.

Why do you believe that thinking this way may have caused you to arrive at decisions that really were not logical?

What is one thing you could start doing to avoid thinking this way?

THINKING TRAP - NO EVIDENCE, THEN TRUE?

Wellbeing Builder Reflection - MIDDLE

WELLBEING BUILDER - IN CHARGE OF YOUR FEELINGS

Character Strength: ...

Mind and Heart Calmer: ...

Abilities Calming: ...

Strengths Spotting: ...

Resilience Builder: ...

Wise Words: ...

What Went Well This Week? ...

WELLBEING BUILDER REFLECTION MIDDLE

Wellbeing Builder Reflection - SENIOR

WELLBEING BUILDER - FAST AND SLOW TRACK RESPONSES

Character Strength: ...

Three for Me: ...

Abilities Calming: ...

Resilience Builder: ...

Learning to Flourish: ...

Strengths in Action - SELF-REGULATION

What Went Well This Week? ...

WELLBEING BUILDER REFLECTION SENIOR

Choose a job you love and you will never have to work a day in your life." Saying



RESPECTFUL AND RESILIENT RELATIONSHIPS ACTIVITIES



When you have a healthy state of wellbeing you enjoy thriving and respectful relationships. This means you understand your emotions, use your character strengths, have positive coping strategies, are able to solve problems, show empathy, manage stress and seek help. Normally most of your relationships will be respectful.

The three factors which underpin respectful and resilient relationships are:

Connected – sharing and communicating equally and openly with others.

Protected – feeling emotionally and physically safe.

Respected – feeling others value all of you.

Respectful relationships can be threatened by risk taking, not prepared to seek help, body image, anxiety, eating disorders and not accepting people with individual differences.

QUESTIONS TO REFLECT ON	YOUR THOUGHTS
What are your responsibilities in having a respectful relationship?	
How can you recognise when others' expectations of what a respectful relationship differs to yours?	
How do you show empathy and understanding for others with individual differences?	
How are respectful relationships affected when empathy is not felt or shown?	

Acknowledgement: Janice Atkins, Melbourne Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne

STAFF WELLBEING ACTIVITIES

Please share these weekly wellbeing building activities with all of your staff.

Knowing and talking about what are the right things to do to build your wellbeing, is not doing them. To inspire your best possible self to shine through, make a deliberate choice to do what follows and devote the time to purposefully journal your thoughts. Then focus on making your thoughts become your actions and your actions become your habits. Give yourself permission to be human.

Reflection: Breathing deeply and purposefully while focusing on something, is a powerful way to change the way we feel. I will make a list of five achievements I am proud of in my life. Every morning concentrating on each of them in turn, I will breathe deeply for 30 seconds. How did I feel?

.....
.....

Three Joys: What are the three things I am looking forward to most this week?

.....

Valued Strengths: I will journal what strengths I value in others as friends or colleagues. Are they similar to my own strengths?

.....

Acts of Kindness: What did I do this week which made a positive difference to others' lives?

.....

Gratitudes: What are good things that happened this week and how can I make them happen again?

.....

“The highest reward for man’s work is not what he gets for it but what he becomes of it.” John Ruskin