

## INTRODUCTION: Getting Started with EmpowerU

*This lesson is where all students start in the course. It introduces EmpowerU’s mission and outlines the requirements of the program. The lesson also asks students to identify and reflect on their teams, support systems, and relationships. Students briefly reflect on and identify any areas of change they want to make in their life.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Students will understand the requirements of the course and the concept of investing time in themselves daily to build resilience.	<b>Self-Awareness Responsible Decision-Making</b>	1.12.1 Predict how healthy behaviors can affect health status.
Students will identify their team (their community of friends and supports that they can lean on).		6.12.1 Assess personal health practices and overall health status.
Students will identify any changes they want to make in their life and/or any changes that people on their “team” want them to make.		

## LESSON 1: My Values

*In Lesson 1, students are asked to demonstrate understanding of a core value and be able to articulate their personal core values. Then, they work to develop strategies to live more in alignment with these values in different areas of their life.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Standards
Identify core values and be able to articulate their personal core values. They will develop strategies to live more in alignment with these values in different areas of their life.	<b>Self-Awareness Responsible Decision-Making</b>	2.12.8 Analyze the influence of personal values and beliefs on individual health practices and behaviors.
Analyze how aligned they are to their values in day-to-day life.		1.12.3 Analyze how environment and personal health are interrelated.
Reflect on how to live more aligned with their values.		

## LESSON 2: Using My Strengths

*This lesson is about personal strengths. Students are asked to identify their personal strengths and reflect on how they can use those strengths to meet their goals. There is also a strengths assessment to help students identify personal core strengths.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Analyze past experiences and the strengths used to get through struggles.	<b>Self-Awareness Responsible Decision-Making</b>	2.12.8 Analyze the influence of personal values and beliefs on individual health practices and behaviors.
Complete a strengths assessment to identify personal core strengths.		
Reflect on how their strengths help them meet goals.		

### LESSON 3: Taking Charge of My Goals

*In this lesson, students learn the difference between an internal versus external locus of control and how that affects our ability to cope. They will identify and reflect on the type/degree of locus of control they have and evaluate how that helps or prevents them from achieving their goals. Then, students apply all that they've learned in the first three lessons to their personal lives and goals in a Starting Point Assessment. They then set goals in each of the four domains to work toward throughout the EmpowerU course.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Students will understand the concept of internal versus external locus of control and increase an awareness to what type/degree of locus of control they have in different wellness domains in order to build resilience.	<b>Self-Awareness Responsible Decision-Making</b>	1.12.2 Describe the interrelationships of emotional, intellectual, physical, and social health.
Complete a comprehensive review within different wellness domains based upon the ASCA (academic/career, personal wellness, social/belonging, emotional/mental health) based upon Stages of Change (Prochaska & Diclemente, 1983) and gain insight into the areas that would be most helpful for them to begin personal change.		6.12.1 Assess personal health practices and overall health status.
Assimilate their reflections in each domain and based upon their review, set “smart” goals in four domains - personal wellness, emotional/mental health wellness, social wellness, and academic/career wellness to work toward throughout the EmpowerU lessons.		6.12.2 Develop a plan to attain a personal health goal that addresses strengths, needs, and risks.

### LESSON 4: Small Steps to Making Change

*Lesson 4 builds upon the goal setting in Lesson 3 by introducing the concept of “small steps” as a way to make lasting, realistic change. In this lesson, students learn five specific habit change strategies and apply one of them to a habit they want to increase or decrease. Throughout the lesson, students apply that knowledge to their goal(s) from Lesson 3.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Explain why making small changes is sustainable.	<b>Self-Awareness Self-Management Social Awareness Responsible Decision-Making</b>	7.12.1 Analyze the role of individual responsibility for enhancing health.
Identify different habit change strategies and develop an understanding of the unique habit change strategies that work best for them to eliminate or reduce unwanted behaviors.		7.12.2 Demonstrate a variety of healthy practices and behaviors that will maintain or improve the health of self and others.
Apply a habit change strategy to the habit they either want to increase or decrease.		7.12.3 Demonstrate a variety of behaviors to avoid or reduce health risks to self and others.
Analyze how all strategies can help them better meet their goals.		

## LESSON 5: The Power of My Thoughts

The next few lessons are focused on thoughts, specifically negative or ruminating worried thoughts and anxiety. Lesson 5 kickstarts that learning by focusing on the brain, specifically the power of thoughts and how they build. Students learn how thoughts can create emotions and chemical and physical change in their brains in both helpful and hurtful ways. They also learn about subconscious thoughts and how they build over time. More importantly, they learn that they can talk back to their hurtful subconscious thoughts using their Inner Coach. The reflection for this lesson asks students to identify their own helpful and hurtful subconscious thought patterns.

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Explain the pathway of a thought.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	5.12.1 Examine barriers that can hinder healthy decision making.
Demonstrate understanding of the power of a thought and how it builds in the brain. They will understand how thoughts can create emotions and chemical and physical change in their brains in both helpful and hurtful ways.		5.12.2 Determine the value of applying a thoughtful decision-making process in health-related situations.
Identify personal thought patterns and demonstrate understanding of how they can control their thoughts and emotions and identify practical strategies to create real, positive change within their brain structure.		6.12.3 Implement strategies and monitor progress in achieving a personal health goal.

## LESSON 6: Thinking Traps

This lesson is about Thinking Traps (persistent negative thoughts). Students continue to learn about negative subconscious thoughts and how they can distort thoughts and beliefs over time. They then examine a specific area of worry or anxiety that gets in their way of meeting goals and identify Thinking Traps that promote this worry. Finally, they practice using their Inner Coach to challenge their Thinking Trap(s).

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Understand how a negative subconscious distorts thoughts and beliefs over time.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	5.12.1 Examine barriers that can hinder healthy decision making.
Identify a specific area of worry or anxiety that gets in their way of meeting goals and identify Thinking Traps that promote this worry.		5.12.2 Determine the value of applying a thoughtful decision-making process in health-related situations.
Examine personal Thinking Traps as a way to start increasing their Inner Coach to combat hurtful or worried thinking.		6.12.3 Implement strategies and monitor progress in achieving a personal health goal.

## LESSON 7: Thoughts and Emotions

*This lesson builds upon the learning from Lessons 5 and 6, specifically focusing on the relationship between thoughts and emotions. In this lesson, students learn about the experience -> thought -> emotion -> action cycle. More importantly, students learn that they can control their thoughts and emotions using their Inner Coach.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Identify how emotions/fear response can take over the brain and cut off access to the prefrontal cortex (PFC) or logical thinking.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	5.12.1 Examine barriers that can hinder healthy decision making.
Demonstrate understanding of the difference between a thought, a feeling, and a fact. They will demonstrate understanding of the different ways that feelings develop from thoughts and how they can process them effectively.		5.12.2 Determine the value of applying a thoughtful decision-making process in health-related situations.
Examine how using the Inner Coach to identify the emotion and talk back to it can keep personal control.		5.12.2 Determine the value of applying a thoughtful decision-making process in health-related situations.
		6.12.3 Implement strategies and monitor progress in achieving a personal health goal.

## LESSON 8: Disrupting a Negative Cycle

*In this lesson, students learn how to stop a hurtful thought in low and high stress situations, recruiting different strategies for each situation. They will demonstrate mastery of a comprehensive CBT approach to change ingrained distorted thoughts into more realistic and encouraging thoughts through intentional personal practice.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Demonstrate the hand model and “Flip Your Lid.”	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	5.12.1 Examine barriers that can hinder healthy decision making.
Examine how to disrupt a negative cycle when emotions are big.		5.12.2 Determine the value of applying a thoughtful decision-making process in health-related situations.
Identify strategies to disrupt negative cycles by demonstrating knowledge on how to stop a hurtful thought in low and high stress situations, recruiting different strategies for each situation.		6.12.3 Implement strategies and monitor progress in achieving a personal health goal.

## LESSON 9: Thinking Realistically

*Lesson 9 focuses on using realistic thinking as a tool to disrupt negative, hurtful subconscious thought patterns. Students learn how to eliminate or reduce persistent negative thoughts by replacing them with positive, realistic thoughts.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Examine ways to change hurtful subconscious thought patterns.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible</b> <b>Decision-Making</b>	5.12.1 Examine barriers that can hinder healthy decision making.
		5.12.2 Determine the value of applying a thoughtful decision-making process in health-related situations.
Demonstrate the ability to utilize realistic thinking (Three Cs) as a strategy to change hurtful thoughts into realistic thoughts that can help.		6.12.3 Implement strategies and monitor progress in achieving a personal health goal.

## LESSON 10: Noticing and Managing Stress

*This lesson is all about stress, specifically its physiological and psychological effects. Students will learn what causes stress and what can happen if we let it build up over time (leave it unattended). They will also learn how to use emotions as signals to help them pause and check in on their own stress levels.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Demonstrate understanding about what causes stress and the physiological and psychological effects of stress.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Social Awareness</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible</b> <b>Decision-Making</b>	1.22. The student will analyze the impact of personal health behaviors on the functioning of body systems
Analyze how stress triggers a range of emotions.		4.1. The student will evaluate different strategies to use when making decisions related to the health needs and risks of young adult.
Describe the unhealthy effects of unattended stress.		

## LESSON 11: Processing Difficult Emotions

*In this lesson, students learn to identify and process difficult emotions and uncontrollable stressors (things that causes the most stress but cannot be changed) using a four-step model. They then identify their biggest uncontrollable stressor and practice processing it using the four steps.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Identify personal triggers for stress/anxiety in their own life and categorize them into controllable stressors and importance of outcome.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Social Awareness</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible</b> <b>Decision-Making</b>	1.22. The student will analyze the impact of personal health behaviors on the functioning of body systems
Learn to process your emotions in a healthy way.		4.1. The student will evaluate different strategies to use when making decisions related to the health needs and risks of young adult.

## LESSON 12: Befriend Myself First

*The last few lessons are focused on social connection and friendship. Lesson 12 kickstarts that learning by having students practice using their Inner Coach to increase their confidence in who they are.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Students will understand how confidence in who they are as a person and a friend is the first step in building relationships and analyze their current level of confidence.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Social Awareness</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible</b> <b>Decision-Making</b>	4.12.1 Use skills for communicating effectively with family, peers, and others to enhance health
Students will learn how to ward off distorted negative thinking, especially about others' thoughts, through a deeper sense of self.		4.12.2 Demonstrate refusal, negotiation, and collaboration skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
		4.12.3 Demonstrate strategies to prevent, manage, or resolve interpersonal conflicts without harming self or others.

## LESSON 13: Belonging vs. Fitting In

*In this lesson, students learn about the difference between belonging and fitting in. Students are asked to discern between relationships with true belonging versus relationships where they are just fitting in. They learn about the difference between changing their values to fit in and changing small behaviors to connect with people at all levels, especially at the beginning of relationships. Finally, students reflect on where they feel personal belonging in their relationships and friendships.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Assess where they feel valued and included for who they are.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Social Awareness</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible</b> <b>Decision-Making</b>	4.12.1 Use skills for communicating effectively with family, peers, and others to enhance health
Develop the ability to discern between relationships with true belonging versus relationships where they are just fitting in and will demonstrate understanding of areas of their life where they want to foster more belonging.		4.12.2 Demonstrate refusal, negotiation, and collaboration skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
Examine how feeling a sense of belonging is an important piece of community.		4.12.3 Demonstrate strategies to prevent, manage, or resolve interpersonal conflicts without harming self or others.

## LESSON 14: Levels of Friendship

*This lesson introduces the levels of friendship, emphasizing the importance of creating connections with people at all levels (Acquaintances, Circumstantial Friends, Close Friends, Best Friends). Students will use this framework to examine their own personal friendships and supports, helping to guide steps forward in their relationships.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Understand the levels of friendship and how friendships are created over time.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Social Awareness</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible</b> <b>Decision-Making</b>	4.12.4 Demonstrate how to ask for and offer assistance to enhance the health of self and others.
Examine their own friendships and supports.		8.12.1 Utilize accurate peer and societal norms to formulate a health-enhancing message.

## LESSON 15: Creating Community

*This lesson focuses on the first two levels of friendship – Acquaintances and Circumstantial friendships – and the value of those connections. Students examine their own friendships and reflect on which ones they want to move to the next friendship level.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Understand the importance of creating community wherever they go.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Social Awareness</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	4.12.4 Demonstrate how to ask for and offer assistance to enhance the health of self and others.
Determine the value of acquaintances and circumstantial friends and supports.		8.12.1 Utilize accurate peer and societal norms to formulate a health-enhancing message.
Apply understanding of personal criteria to increase intentional reflections for what they value in a relationship as people move through the levels, again using this to increase their Inner Coach to accept people at different levels.		

## LESSON 16: Meaningful Connections

*Lesson 16 centers on the last two levels of friendship: Close and Best Friends. In this lesson, students reflect on the qualities that they value in a close or best friend and identify appropriate behaviors to build connection in friendships, including having their walls up or down, safe disclosure and reasonable expectations of self and others. They then apply this knowledge to their own social circle, identifying relationships and supports that are at this closest level of friendship.*

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Assess the attributes that are important to them in a close or best friend.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Social Awareness</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	4.12.4 Demonstrate how to ask for and offer assistance to enhance the health of self and others.
Understand the difference between having their walls up versus down.		8.12.1 Utilize accurate peer and societal norms to formulate a health-enhancing message.
Analyze the changes they can make to move to the next level of friendship, including safe disclosure and reasonable expectations of self and others.		8.12.2 Demonstrate how to influence and support others to make positive health choices.
		4.12.1 Use skills for communicating effectively with family, peers, and others to enhance health



## LESSON 17: Friendship Changes

The lessons on friendship conclude with Lesson 17, which is about friendship change and transition. In this lesson, students learn more about friendship changes and strategies to deal with friendship changes throughout their lives.

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Reflect on the various ways in which friendships change and why.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Social Awareness</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	4.12.2 Demonstrate refusal, negotiation, and collaboration skills to enhance health and avoid or reduce health risks.
Learn strategies to help cope with friendship changes.		4.12.3 Demonstrate strategies to prevent, manage, or resolve interpersonal conflicts without harming self or others.
		4.12.4 Demonstrate how to ask for and offer assistance to enhance the health of self and others.

## LESSON 18: Final Wrap-Up

This course concludes with a final wrap-up lesson. Students complete a Next Point Assessment (similar to the Starting Point Assessment from Lesson 3), a comprehensive review of different wellness domains based upon the ASCA (academic/career, personal wellness, social/belonging, emotional/mental health). After completing the Next Point Assessment, they reflect on their growth throughout the course, gaining insight into their improvements based on the Stages of Change model (Prochaska & DiClemente, 1983). Then, they identify strategies to use after the course is complete.

Essential Learnings	CASEL Competencies	National Health Education Standards
Take a Next Point Assessment similar to the Starting Point Assessment taken at the beginning of the course.	<b>Self-Awareness</b> <b>Self-Management</b> <b>Social Awareness</b> <b>Relationship Skills</b> <b>Responsible Decision-Making</b>	1.12.2 The student will analyze the interrelationships of mental, emotional, social, and physical health throughout life.
Compare the Next Point Assessment to the Starting Point Assessment to determine what they want to work on after this course is complete.		7.12.1 Analyze the role of individual responsibility for enhancing health.

<p>Identify strategies based on learning from this course to help be successful in meeting a goal(s) after the course is complete. This will be shared with the student's school counselor and family member to help hold the student accountable going forward.</p>		<p>7.12.2 Demonstrate a variety of healthy practices and behaviors that will maintain or improve the health of self and others</p>
<p>Finish by completing a course survey.</p>		<p>7.12.3 Demonstrate a variety of behaviors to avoid or reduce health risks to self and others.</p>