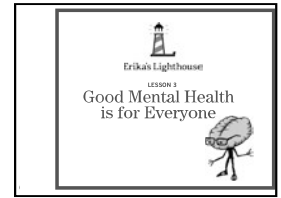


# Lecture | AUDIO/SLIDESHOW SCRIPT

The Audio Lecture and Slideshow can be found on the Program CD  
or at [www.erikaslighthouse.org](http://www.erikaslighthouse.org).

## LESSON 3: Good Mental Health is for Everyone

SLIDE 1  
INTRO



START AUDIO AND ADVANCE SLIDE

We all know mental health is important and everyday we are faced with decisions that can help lead us to a more balanced mind.

SLIDE 2

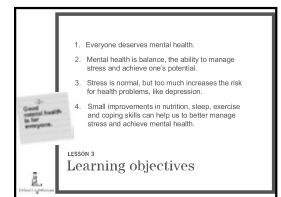


CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE

Today's lesson is all about mental health and we will learn:

1. Everyone deserves mental health.
2. Mental health is balance, the ability to manage stress and achieve one's potential.
3. Stress is normal, but too much increases the risk for health problems, like depression.
4. Small improvements in nutrition, sleep, exercise and coping skills can help us to better manage stress and achieve mental health.

SLIDE 3



CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE

Mental health is something everyone deserves and it is much more than just the absence of mental illness. Mental health means feeling emotionally in balance. It means having the ability to manage the stresses of everyday life. And, it means achieving our potential.

SLIDE 4



CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE

So, what gets in the way of mental health? The largest factor for most people is stress.

SLIDE 5



There are many life circumstances that can cause stress such as being bullied, experiencing trauma, family problems, moving away, a break up, an argument with a loved one and even things like school and sports.

CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE

Stress is normal and the body's response to it is actually helpful in preparing us to face life's challenges. However, health problems can arise when people experience too much stress, including developing depression. With that being said, it is important to understand that what is considered "too much" stress can vary greatly from person to person.

SLIDE 6



CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE

The good news is that you can learn to better manage stress. So, what factors contribute to someone’s ability to bounce back from challenges? Not surprisingly, the same things that contribute to health: nutrition, sleep, exercise and coping skills.

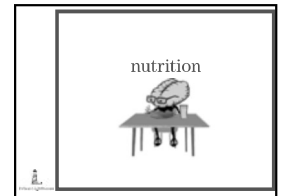
SLIDE 7



**CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE**

First, let’s talk about the importance of nutrition. Food is fuel for the mind and body.

SLIDE 8



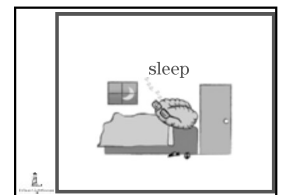
It is ideal to strive for three balanced meals per day with light snacks in between. Balanced meals include fresh fruits and vegetables; low fat dairy like milk and yogurt; lean proteins such as chicken, fish and beans; whole grains like brown rice or wheat bread and healthy fats such as avocados and nuts. Choosing fresh options versus food packaged in a box or a bag is an easy way to start making healthy food choices.

In addition, making sure to drink plenty of water is important to keep your body hydrated. To calculate exactly how much you need, take your weight and divide it by two. That number is how many ounces of water you should consume daily.

**CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE**

Now, let’s discuss why good sleep matters. Think of yourself as a phone and sleep as its charger – without sleep the brain and body will eventually shut down. Just as Mason from the video talks about, teens should strive for 8-10 hours of sleep per night, that is more than adults because teens are still growing. We know it can be hard to find the time, yet there is still a lot we can do to improve our sleep.

SLIDE 9



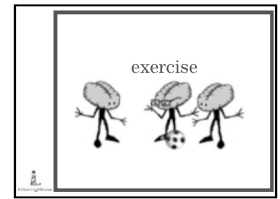
Start with creating a sleep environment that is cool, dark, quiet and relaxing – think about using window shades, ear plugs, comfortable bedding or a fan. In addition, it is important to avoid activities that can excite the brain before bed. In the hours before bed, pass on doing homework, talking to friends, checking social media or consuming foods that are heavy or spicy or drinks that contain caffeine or sugar. In addition, staying off of electronic devices like cell phones, TV, tablets and computers an hour before sleep is a good idea.

So, how can someone unwind before bed? Things like taking a hot shower, reading a book or drinking a cup of caffeine free herbal tea are easy ways to get relaxed and prepare for sleep.

**CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE**

Next, let's explore exercise. Exercise strengthens our body to manage the physical challenges of living. Research proves that exercise even generates feel good chemicals that can improve our mood.

SLIDE 10



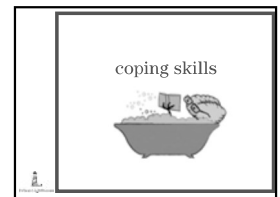
There are numerous ways to get active, so no matter your physical condition or interest, it is easy to find an activity that is enjoyable and practical to incorporate into your daily routine. Think of activities like jogging, yoga, playing a sport or paddle boarding. Even simpler ways to get moving can make a big difference. Things like taking the stairs, riding your bike to school or even taking your dog for a walk.

As a general rule, everyone should try to get at least 2.5 hours of moderate intensity exercise a week and engage in activities that both raise the heart rate and work all the muscle groups.

**CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE**

And finally, let's address coping skills. Coping skills are the activities that reduce stress by helping people to feel balanced, relaxed or find purpose in the things that might be difficult. Pretty much anything that is both safe and helps you to feel good can be considered a "coping skill".

SLIDE 11



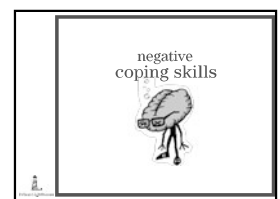
There are countless coping skills. Some common ones include staying organized, volunteering, hanging out with positive people, going for a walk in nature, listening to music, practicing gratitude, journaling, taking a bubble bath, deep breathing, problem solving or reading a book. In the video, Mac talks about creating art and goal setting.

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**CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE**

However, it is important to realize that there are both healthy and unhealthy ways to cope with stress. Negative coping skills include activities that can feel good in the moment, but leave people feeling worse later on and potentially be dangerous. Negative coping include things like taking drugs, drinking alcohol or engaging in high risk behavior like reckless driving or cutting.

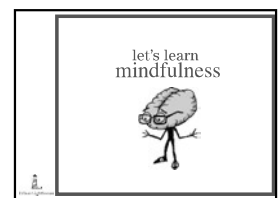
SLIDE 12



**CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE**

In today's lesson, we want to teach you a helpful new coping skill called mindfulness. Mindfulness is the practice of being present in the moment. When we get overwhelmed it is usually because our minds start to think about past setbacks or worry about future challenges – this kind of thinking can lead to feelings of stress and even depression. If we live in the present moment we can begin to free ourselves of those negative thoughts and feelings and be more effective in what we are trying to do at any given moment – whether it is being more present with our friends or family, school work or hobbies.

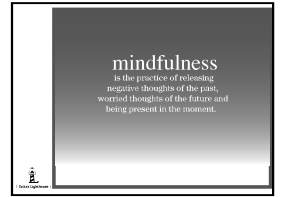
SLIDE 13



**CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE**

So, let's try mindfulness for a moment. This particular mindfulness exercise is about being present and aware of our bodies.

SLIDE 14



First, I want you to close your eyes. If you prefer, you can also keep your eyes partially open and turned towards the ground.

Now, get comfortable in your seat and allow your body to be still with your feet planted on the ground and your arms resting on your desk or in your lap. I'm going to give you some instructions to follow. During this time your mind will probably start to wander. It's normal for this to happen because our brains are think machines. When this happens, try not to get frustrated. Simply just bring your attention back to my voice.

First, I want you to observe your breathing. If you want, place your hand on your belly. Notice the rise and fall as you inhale and exhale. Inhale 1, exhale 2 – keep counting your breath until you get to 10. **[PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS]**

Now, bring your awareness to your neck and shoulders. Are they holding any tension? If so, take a deep breath in and slowly let go of any tension as you release your breath out. **[PAUSE FOR 5 SECONDS]**

Turn your attention to your arms. Notice the contact between your arms and their resting place. **[PAUSE FOR 5 SECONDS]**

Notice your hands. Observe the warmth they feel from your body or the coolness from the desk. **[PAUSE FOR 5 SECONDS]**

Remember, if your mind starts to wander, just gently bring it back to my voice.

Now, bring your awareness to your legs. Pay attention to the feeling of the backs of your thighs making contact with the chair. **[PAUSE FOR 5 SECONDS]**

Finally, notice the pressure beneath your feet making contact with the floor. **[PAUSE FOR 3 SECONDS]**

Gently bring your mind back to your breathing. With your hand on your belly, observe the rise and fall as you inhale and exhale. Inhale 1, exhale 2 – keep counting your breath until you get to 10. **[PAUSE FOR 10 SECONDS]**

Slowly, open your eyes. I hope you feel present and relaxed.

Mindfulness is something you can do for just a few minutes when you need it, but it is best to practice a few minutes each day to begin to train the brain to become more present and aware.

**CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE**

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Thank you for listening. Remember, even the smallest improvements we make in nutrition, sleep, exercise and coping skills can make a big impact in our ability to manage stress and achieve mental health.

For more information on coping go to [www.erikaslighthouse.org](http://www.erikaslighthouse.org)

**CLICK TO ADVANCE SLIDE**

SLIDE 15



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**OPEN YOUR STUDENT WORKBOOKS  
TO THE LESSON 3 DISCUSSION GUIDE.**

SLIDE 16

