**Building stress resilience in early adolescents’ lives (BReal)**

**Lesson Plan: Lesson 3 “Changing our stress response”**

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| **Lesson**  3 of 3 | | **Key Terms**  Stress, stress bucket, taps, resilience, social world |
| **Suitable for**  Year 7-9 | |
| **Title:**  Changing our stress response | |
| **Learning objective**  To learn how understanding our brain development can help our own and each other’s mental well-being.  **Learning outcomes**  Students will be able to:   1. Explain why personal and social actions make a big difference to our and other’s stress resilience. 2. Explain how and why social relationships can have a positive and negative impact on stress. 3. Evaluate personal and social strategies people can use to respond resiliently to stress. | | |
| **Resources:**   * Lesson 3 worksheet for each student (includes Baseline and End Point assessments, case studies, and personal reflection activity chart) * Lesson 3 BReal animated video (linked in slide deck – need to be played with sound) * Flipchart paper and pens for groups * SEND alternative glossary * Lesson 3 Quiz * Cumulative Quiz Lessons 1-3 | | |
| **Suggested lesson timings** *(compress, lengthen, or subdivide depending on your school’s standard lesson length and the needs of your students; the discussion and activity sections are particularly adaptable depending on your timing needs)* | | |
| 5 min | **Lesson 3 Baseline: Student Questionnaire (slide 2)** (see Lesson 3 Worksheet)   * As this is a baseline assessment, students should work independently. Do not provide prompts or further explanation at this point. Whilst students complete the task, monitor their responses to establish their current knowledge, ideas and misconceptions and consider how these will be addressed in the lesson, for example by spending additional time on specific activities. Once completed, ask students to add their names and put these to one side, as these will be revisited at the end of the lesson. | |
| 3 min | **Introduce** the lesson objective and lesson outcomes; revisit ground rules (slides 3-4) | |
| 5 min | **Stress buckets** – show PowerPoint slides 5-9 including BReal lesson 3 video (slide 8) | |
| 10 min | **Group work (slide 10)** – 6 groups with flip chart paper – based on the video, complete the stress bucket activity from worksheet 3.  **Feedback** by asking different groups to share their ideas and using PowerPoint slide 9  *In the wider class discussion, we suggest specifically focusing on comparing different kinds of “taps”, how effective or not they are, and whether that varies depending on the situation. e.g. avoidance/running away is effective in the short term for dealing with some stressors, but has a lot of drawbacks. Students never have to use any personal examples in discussions.*  **Challenge activities:**   1. Design a stress-relieving activity that the whole classroom can do together, using any concepts mentioned in the lessons. | |
| 15 min | **Managing stress in social worlds** – show PowerPoint slides 11-16.  When prompted by slide 17, students read the Amber and Kai case studies in Lesson 3 Worksheet, in groups. For each one, students briefly discuss and make notes about:   * what the characters are finding difficult or challenging * what growth mindset strategies they are using to deal with this   *Example questions/answers:*  *(a) Reflecting on Kai/Amber*  *‘What was Kai finding difficult or stressful?*   * *Schoolwork and forgetting things* * *Feeling like a failure and feeling down about himself*   *‘What strategies has Kai used to deal with this?’*   * *Making a plan for dealing with homework* * *Doing homework straightaway and not putting it off* * *Making a list for what he needs each day* * *Getting things ready the evening before* * *Identifying what matters to him and what he enjoys doing* * *Making sure he is doing things he enjoys* * *Doing things that involve connecting with other people*   *‘What was Amber finding difficult or stressful?*   * *Worrying about friendships and what other people think of her* * *That she wanted to be in the school production but felt scared to audition*   *‘What strategies has Amber used to deal with this?’*   * *Facing her fear of auditioning rather than avoiding doing it* * *Finding ways to make it more manageable (e.g., doing it with a friend, checking out the room, practicing the audition)* * *Getting supportive friends on board to booster her confidence* * *At the audition, focusing her attention on the song rather than the negative thoughts of what could go wrong.*   Next, when prompted by slide 18, students re-read Joe and Tia’s case studies from lesson 1 (which have been copied into the Lesson 3 worksheet for easy reference). For each one, students briefly discuss and make notes about:   * The strategies they are currently using and problems with these * Strategies they identify Amber and Kai are using that could be positive for Joe or Tia to try * Challenge activity – are there other growth mindset strategies they can think of that would help Joe or Tia?   **Feedback** students’ ideas by asking different groups to share their thoughts, and using the lesson plan notes to support discussion  *Examples for discussion around Joe/Tia and what they can learn from Kai/Amber:*  *'Joe’s worry is that his friend, Maisie, seems to be spending time with other people and he is worried that she doesn’t want to be his friend anymore. What strategies is he currently using to manage this situation?’*   * *Explaining to Maisie how much this is upsetting him* * *Trying to spend more time with Maisie*   *‘Are there any problems with these strategies?’*   * *It seems to be leading to arguments and making the relationship with Maisie worse* * *Maisie might feel a bit suffocated and overly responsible for Joe* * *Joe is putting everything into one friendship*   *‘What strategies might work better that might involve some of the things we’ve talked about, like a growth mindset or facing fears and taking risks?’*   * *Joe could try to develop new friendships – identify people who seem kind, have similar interests, join clubs (in or outside school)* * *Could start by chatting to new people* * *Could swap phone numbers with people to build connections outside school* * *Could talk to Maisie about developing new friendships – could she help him to meet more people and could they expand their group?* * *Growth mindset – if people don’t seem to be interested, don’t see this as meaning he is unlikable and instead try chatting to other people*   *‘Are there any strategies from Kai or Amber that Joe could use?’*   * *Identifying what he enjoys and doing activities that would enable him to meet people* * *Using friends to help build connections/be brave*   *'Tia is feeling frustrating about not getting picked for football and struggling to keep up with other girls who are now taller and stronger than her. What strategies is she currently using to manage this situation?’*   * *Avoiding going to football and considering giving up*   *‘Are there any problems with these strategies?’*   * *She’ll lose her fitness and be less able to keep up* * *She might feel sad* * *She will miss out on the other aspects of sport – being part of a team, seeing friends*   *‘What strategies might work better that might involve some of the things we’ve talked about, like a growth mindset or facing fears and taking risks?’*   * *Growth mindset – this doesn’t mean anything bad about her, she might grow and get stronger than the other girls, keeping playing will help her build up her strength, she could do other exercises to get stronger (e.g., weights)* * *Challenge her negative thinking and remember that it’s not all about being picked - there are lots of other things she gets from doing sport* * *Could she give other sports a try where being smaller and lighter might be an advantage?*   *‘Are there any strategies from Kai or Amber that Tia could use?’*   * *Maybe not make everything about sport – Identify other activities she enjoys (especially those that involve connecting with other people)* * *Chat to friends about how she feels – maybe other people have had similar experiences?* | |
| 15 min | **Personal and social resilience (slides 19-21):**  (Slide 19) Students read the new scenario with Joe (personal resilience) and discuss in their groups:   * How did Joe feel before he started? * How did he feel afterwards? * Did anything he was worried about actually happen? * Could this activity be a good stress bucket tap for Joe in the future and why?   Feedback students’ ideas using notes below to support this.   * *Before he started he felt scared and worried that someone would think it was a stupid idea* * *Afterwards he felt brilliant and loved it, except for when he fell on his bum* * *Nothing he was worried about beforehand happened, he saw someone from school but they seemed to be having fun and waved at him. It didn’t look like they thought it was a stupid thing to do.* * *Yes it could be a good new stress bucket tap in future, and if he invites a few new friends along, it would be a good way to get to know them better.*   (Slide 20) Read the scenario with Tasha and Amber (social resilience) and discuss in their groups:   * What was Tasha’s friend Amber stressed about? * What did Tasha do to help? * How did Amber feel afterwards? * How did Tasha feel afterwards?   Feedback students’ ideas using notes below to support this.   * *Tasha’s friend Amber really wants to audition for the school production but is worried about messing up and being judged.* * *To help, Tasha went with her to the music rooms at school, and she practiced her audition in front of her.* * *Amber felt pleased she did it and more confident for the actual audition.* * *Tasha felt good that she had supported her and helped her feel more confident.*   **SEND alternative for case study discussion:**  For SEND students you may prefer to use fill-in-the-blank answers rather than free-flowing responses. We have provided some suggested fill-in-the-blank responses for you to use or adapt at your discretion:   1. *What is Kai worried about?* Kai is worried about how he \_\_\_\_\_ things, like school work and PE kit (enjoys/forgets/fails) 2. *How is he managing his stress?* Kai dealt with this by making a \_\_\_\_\_ (plan/game/story) 3. *What could you apply from Kai or Amber’s situations to Joe and Tia’s?* Like Kai, Tia could make sure she is involved with \_\_\_\_\_\_ activities she enjoys (funny/boring/multiple) | |
| 7 min | **Personal reflection (slide 21):** Guide students through both chart tasks (individual and social) in the Lesson 3 worksheet. Come up with one hypothetical example for each chart together as a class, then encourage the students to complete the remainder of each chart within the next week or so. Be clear with students that this exercise is just for their reflection, they will not need to share their responses.  **End point assessment (slide 23):** ask students to complete the “student questionnaire” at the end of their worksheet.  Optional extension activities: Lesson 3 Quiz and Cumulative Quiz Lessons 1-3.  Signpost further support and answer students’ questions (slides 24-25) | |