

ADVENTIST  
HEALTH WEEK  
2024  
11-18 MAY

*Mentally Thriving*



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# INTRODUCTION

It has been a real blessing to put together this 2024 Health Week resource for the children across our South Pacific Division. Several people have played a vital role in contributing to this resource, in particular those who wrote specific days, composed the theme song, and those who helped edit and format these pages. We thank them all for their valuable contributions and the time given to the creation of this resource.

We chose to focus on the topic of **Mental Health** for this year's resource, as it is an area of wellbeing that has gained greater attention within the wider sector of the health community, and we felt it was important enough for our children to focus on as well.

Each daily devotion has been carefully planned to give a healthier understanding of a particular mental health topic, while providing a sample of suggested tools on how to improve outcomes or address the challenges associated with each topic. We have chosen to focus on the mental health challenges that are the most commonly experienced within the general population i.e. depression, addiction, and stress. As well as two areas commonly associated with mental health challenges, i.e. anger and coping with disappointments. Please contextualize the content to your setting or needs. Use what works and amend the resource as necessary.

It is imperative to note that each daily devotion contains mental health advice and information that must never replace advice or treatment given by a trained Mental Health professional. Added to this if a child should need further mental health support, they must be referred to their nominated safe person, and encouraged to seek professional assessment as needed.

We pray that this resource will assist our young ones to value Jesus as the one who loves them unconditionally. We also hope they will gain a positive understanding of themselves and how they think and feel, as well as comprehend the importance they hold to their family, friends, community, and God.



Adrielle Carrasco & Team  
Director of Adventist Health Ministries NZPUC



*New Zealand Pacific*

# DAY 1

Sing the Health Week song:  
"Let the Sun Shine In"  
(Sheet music & Audio  
Track on page 38)  
Start or finish with  
this song, or do both



## BIBLE VERSE

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature  
and in favour with God and man. Luke 2:52

# Building a STRONG house!

## - How to be mentally healthy

BY ADRIELLE CARRASCO



How many of you have been to the beach and tried to build a castle on the sand? Were you successful? What was it that made it a good strong castle and what was it that made it weaken?

Building a strong house of any sort can be challenging. For some the challenge is building on different types of ground or locations, for others it's the size of the land or the number of rooms, and for some others it's finding the money to build a house that will suit their lifestyle, values, and budget.

While these things can make building a house challenging, the one thing that all houses must do is stand strong, and keep the family safe, warm or cool, dry, and protected. A house that has well built walls will be able to withstand all sorts of weather, family drama, community problems, and renovations. However, if one of the walls become greatly damaged it will put a strain on the rest of the house. The other walls may be weakened, and the overall strength of the house will grow weaker over time. If this were to happen we would need to repair the damaged wall, then make sure the other walls are still strong or are strengthened also. We would need to do this to ensure the house continued standing for a long time, looking after all those who lived inside it.

Our bodies are a little like a house. We were created with four areas of wellbeing that make up the "walls" of our body. The first area is physical health and involves what we put into our bodies like food and fluid, and what we do with our bodies like movement or physical activity. The next area is spiritual health, and this encompasses how we connect with God, and understanding what His

purpose for our life is. We then have social health, and this includes all the relationships we have with other people e.g. family, friends, teachers etc. The last area is our mental health, and this involves how we think, how we understand and feel our emotions, and the impact our thinking has on our feelings and actions. For health week this year we will be focussing on Mental Health.



**DISCUSSION:** What do you think is means when you are mentally healthy?

Being mentally healthy means being able to take the time to feel, understand and release, our thoughts and feelings about the hard things that happen in our lives. This ensures that when we feel 'stuck' we can get 'unstuck' so that we can continue to do the things we enjoy, fulfil the goals we set, love those close to us, and think kind and be considerate thoughts about ourselves and others.

To be mentally healthy also means we understand our capabilities (what we can do or can't do), and we have safe coping strategies when things get stressful or busy, for example we can complete the chores, homework, or jobs we are given. It also means we can participate in the groups we are a part of like our classroom, family, church, and other groups.

However, just like a house, when our mental health "wall" is weakened through worry and stress about the hard things in our life, the rest of our body's

wellbeing “walls” will become weakened also.

It is always important that we take care of our mental wellbeing, just as much as the other areas of our health.



Like when we play sport or eat fruit and vegetables, this is good for our physical health. When we pray, and go to church this is good for our spiritual health, when we spend time with our friends, family, and people who positively influence our lives, this is good for our social health. And when we learn useful coping strategies, like relaxing and reading a good book, connecting with others when playing active games, going for a walk or playing with your pet this helps our mental health.

A great example of being wholistically well is seen through Jesus. Luke 2:52 [ESV] tells us “And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favour with God and man”.

Let’s break it down more.

Jesus grew in:

- **Wisdom** – He developed His **mental health** through gaining knowledge and understanding.
- **Stature** – He grew **physically** taller and stronger.
- **With God** – His close connection with God supported His **spiritual health**.
- **Man** – His relationships with family and friends improved his **social health**.

Jesus was just like you and I, He went to school, ate the healthy food His mum made him, played with His friends and family, and honoured His heavenly father through prayer and attending temple. He showed us what it was like to grow strong in all areas of our health and wellbeing. His overall health and wellbeing were like a strongly built house.

**DISCUSSION:** What are some of the things that helps to keep our mental health strong?

- Speaking kindly to others and ourselves (improves kind and helpful thoughts)
- Praying daily (connects us to Jesus and helps us feel less alone)
- Socializing with others (connects us to others and helps us feel less alone)
- Reading good books (helps understand the world and others around us)
- Playing wholesome games on the computer or playing active games (helps us move and use our energy in playful ways, or focuses our mind on things that improves our thinking)
- Learning to be okay with loosing (helps us accept ourselves and others)
- Having useful boundaries and limits when using our devices (gives our brains a rest and helps us achieve the other things we would like to do, e.g. tasks and chores)
- Understand when others act and think differently to us (accepting others’ as they are)
- Understanding we are loved unconditionally by God (increases our sense of belonging)
- Going outside to play sports or other outdoor activities (gets your body moving which increases your ability to think happy thoughts, and eases stress)
- Getting good amounts of sleep (helps us rest so we can be focused and alert).
- Eating wholesome and nourishing (helps our brain think clearly)
- Paying attention and noticing when we feel angry, sad, happy, excited (helps us be aware of what is going through being mindful & acknowledging our thoughts/feelings).
- Finding things to be thankful for (gratitude helps our body feel well and taken care of)
- Showing kindness and compassion to others (helps us stay connected to other and is good for building resilience)
- Cuddling a pet animal or watching a pet fish (connecting with pets that love us helps relieves stress)

**[You will notice that many of these activities will also help keep the other areas of our wellbeing strong too, this is a good point to make about the link between each area of wellbeing]**

## Activity: Four Strong Walls

### Instructions:

- Have the group get into smaller groups of four.
- Each person represents a wall of the house, let them choose or tell them what wall they will represent – physical, spiritual, social, mental.
- Get them to link arms firmly at the elbow and face each other making a square/circle.
- Now ask one wall to dip down while still linking arms with the others, see if they can bring the other walls down with them (this represents the “wall” being damaged).
- The other three walls are to stand as straight and strong as possible.
- If you have time, the other walls can each take turns being the “damaged” wall, or you may ask two walls to dip down at the same time.

### WHEN YOU'VE COMPLETED THIS ACTIVITY ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

How difficult was it to stay standing when one of the “walls” was damaged? Did anything make it easier to stand? **[They usually realize that they have to really tense themselves to ensure they stay standing]**

Now ask the people who dipped down what made it easier or harder to pull the others down? **[They usually say when the others stood firmer it was harder to do]**

This activity highlights the importance of keeping all areas of our wellbeing strong, so that we can withstand the different challenges or illnesses that come our way. Also, so that when one area might get damaged the other three are strong enough to keep our bodies functioning.

Finish with a prayer & singing “Let the Son Shine In”, this will consolidate it as the theme song for the week





# DAY 2

Sing the Health Week song:  
"Let the Son Shine In"  
(Sheet music & Audio  
Track on page 38)  
Start or finish with  
this song, or do both



## BIBLE VERSE

You (God) made my whole being. You formed me in my mother's body. I praise you because you made me in an amazing and wonderful way. Psalm 139:13-14 (ICB)



# God Makes Me Good Enough!

## - Feeling up when I'm down

BY SARAI VAOFANUA-STEPHENS

Have you ever felt that you were not good enough? Is there a bully making you feel sad, bad and ugly? This happens to me sometimes. Unfortunately, if we dwell on these bad feelings about ourselves, we can eventually become depressed.



The way I feel about myself is called 'self-esteem' or 'self-worth.' Claire Marsh, who helps people understand their feelings and feel better when they're sad, says that self-worth "is the feeling that you're a good person who deserves to be treated with respect." She also believes that thoughts, feelings and behaviour reflect how we see ourselves. Simply put, if we see ourselves as sad, bad and ugly, then our thoughts, feelings, and actions will be the same. On the other hand, if we see ourselves as being loved, valued and blessed, our thoughts, feelings and actions will be positive and encouraging.

Unfortunately, we often get our self-worth from the wrong places or people. We can often compare ourselves to others, especially on social media. Comparing, however, usually makes us feel worse about ourselves.

The Bible contains many stories about people that can help us learn the best way to develop self-worth.



Let's look at Elijah, who suddenly felt sad and scared when a bully, Queen Jezebel, threatened him. He started thinking he was alone and felt like giving up. He had low self-worth, got depressed and ran far away. God, through an angel, gave him the strength to make a journey to a place where God could speak into his heart. In that desert cave, God quietly shifted his focus away from negative self-talk by reminding him of his self-worth through God's eyes. He gave Elijah three tasks to do, which showed how valuable he was to God. Elijah was then able to think, feel and act bravely (1 Kings 18,19).

David in his fight with a big bully called Goliath, shows what can happen when we have a high self-worth through our connection with God. He then helps us to think, feel and act confidently. When David faced his bully, instead of feeling sad or scared, he chose to believe what God thought of him. He knew God would give him the ability to fight this bully because God had helped him in the past (1 Samuel 17). Now, with these positive thoughts, he used a sling and a stone he used every day as a shepherd in the wilderness to defeat the bully.



Today's key verse was written by David, who knew he was good enough because God created him amazingly and wonderfully. He was worth so much more since God took the time to shape every part of his body before his birth.

A popular saying states, "God doesn't make junk." Whatever He does, He makes sure it's a masterpiece. We are worthy because He sent His precious Son, Jesus Christ, to earth. His actions showed us how much He values and loves us (Ephesians 2:10).

## APPLICATION

Supplies:

- Card
- Pens/pencils

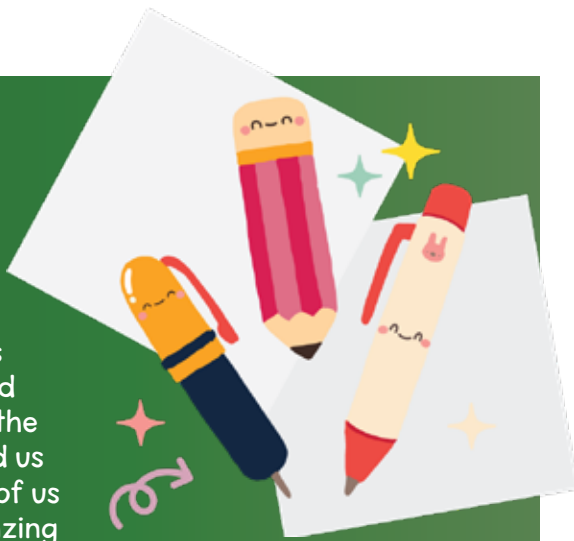
When something happens that causes us to start feeling sad and depressed, ask the Holy Spirit to remind us that God's made all of us personally with amazing and wonderful qualities.

We are loved, valued, and blessed by God! Start repeating God's promises about how much He loves us and sees us as His valuable daughter or son.

Here's a list of promises you can look up and write down on cards. Put them in places you see regularly (like next to your bed, mirror frame, or phone cover) to remind you of your self-worth in Christ Jesus.

- John 3:16-17
- Genesis 1:26-27
- 1 John 3:1
- Matthew 6:26
- Luke 12:7
- Romans 5:8
- 1 Peter 5:7
- Ephesians 2:10
- Ephesians 1:3
- Romans 8:38-39

Ask your parents, pastor or teachers for more.



## Activity: MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL

SUPPLIES:

- A few mirrors
- Camera (this is optional)
- Printer and photo paper (this is optional)

Have a lovely large mirror at the front of the room. Ask the children to go to the mirror one by one (you can have two or three mirrors around the room if you have a large class). They are to say the following phrases to the mirror:

"I am loved by God and wonderful people around me."

"I am enough in my Creator God's eyes."

or "I am amazingly and wonderfully made by God."

Tell them to say this to themselves in their mirrors at home every day, whether they feel good about themselves or not.

Take photos of the children and print them out (you can fit 20 photos on an A4 page). Cut them out and give one to each child to place around the edge of the mirror to display after they've said the phrases to the mirror image of themselves.



## Activity: Positive Affirmation Jar

### SUPPLIES:

- Jars/containers for decorating
- Stickers or other things to use as decoration
- Pens/Pencils
- Small pieces of paper

Show the children a decorated jar or container with uplifting stickers or paint which they can then make promises in class with provided materials.

Depending on their writing and reading ability ask them to write down positive affirmations on small

pieces of coloured paper, such as "I am loved," "I am enough," or "I am amazingly and wonderfully made."

For older children, they can look up and write out Bible verses provided in the devotional to put in the jar for themselves and others.

They then fold the papers and place them in the jar. Whenever they're feeling down, they can randomly select an affirmation to remind themselves of their worth.



## Activity: Gratitude Journal

### SUPPLIES:

- Small booklets
- Pens/pencils

Give each child a little booklet that will become their gratitude journal. Ask them to write on the cover, "Gratitude Journal." Show them one you have done.

Ask them to decorate the cover page and pages with the provided materials.

Then everyday they will need to write down 3 things they are thankful for. Start with page 1 with them so they will know how to do the other days. Show them your first page with 3 things

you have written there to give them some ideas. Or ask them to share with each other so they can feel confident to write their own.

For those not able to write or read properly, provide them with appropriate pictures or stickers, they can put in their journals.

You can also show the older children how to make the booklets with A4 paper, so they can keep making them when they've completed their booklet for themselves and siblings.

If you have limited resources or budgets, the link shows how to make a little booklet from 1 A4 sheet that children can use for their Gratitude journal.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UqsSKJzKC00>



# DAY 3

Sing the Health Week song:  
"Let the Sun Shine In"  
(Sheet music & Audio  
Track on page 38)  
Start or finish with  
this song, or do both



## BIBLE VERSE

"If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it." Genesis 4:7

# Wired for Life

## - NURTURING OUR MINDS IN A Digital Age

BY SHAUN HURLLOW

Have you ever stopped to think about how digital technology impacts your life? From smartphones to tablets, digital devices are everywhere, shaping how we learn, play, and connect with others. Today, let's explore how we can use technology wisely to nurture our brains and wellbeing.

Digital technology offers us incredible opportunities to learn and grow. With just a few clicks, we can access a wealth of information, connect with people from around the world, and explore new ideas and perspectives. These tools can inspire us to think creatively, solve problems, and broaden our horizons.

However, the constant use of digital devices can also present challenges. Excessive screen time can affect our brain development, impacting our ability to focus, learn, and interact with others. It's important to be mindful of how much time we spend on screens and the impact it has on our wellbeing.

To navigate the digital world successfully, we must use technology wisely. This means setting limits on our screen time and prioritising activities that nourish our minds and

bodies. We can engage in outdoor play, read books, create art, or pursue hobbies that ignite our passions.

Setting boundaries around screen time can be a challenge, but it's essential for our wellbeing. We can create a schedule that includes designated times for using digital devices and times for engaging

in other activities. This balance allows us to enjoy the benefits of technology while also nurturing our overall health.

When we do use digital devices, we can do so mindfully. This means being aware of how much time we're spending online and the content we're consuming. We can choose to engage with content that is positive, uplifting, and enriching to our minds and hearts.



While digital technology allows us to connect with others online, it's important not to overlook the value of real-life connections. Spending time with family and friends, engaging in face-to-face conversations, and participating in community activities are essential for our social and emotional wellbeing.

In the story of Cain and Abel, I am reminded of a picture that God creates when he says to Cain, "If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it." Here we see an image of an animal crouching, ready to pounce and consume. Ready to devour. In many ways, digital technology impacts us in much the same way. Unless we learn to rule over it, it will consume our hearts, our minds, our time, and our wellbeing.





As you journey through life in this digital age, learn to rule over technology with wisdom and balance. Learn to use technology as a tool for learning and growth, while also prioritising your wellbeing and real-life connections. By nurturing your minds and bodies, you can navigate the digital world with grace and purpose.

**APPLICATION:** How can we make sure that we rule over our technology?

Here are a few practical steps that we can take:

- 1) Set screen limits and specific times for digital device use
- 2) Keep devices out of your rooms and use it in shared spaces only
- 3) Schedule time for face-to-face connection with your friends and family
- 4) Have device free days - e.g. Device free Sabbath
- 5) Take time to get outside and enjoy the outdoors

If you find yourself struggling with staying on top of how you use your device, speak to a parent or an adult that you trust.



## Then and Now: A Time Travel Activity

**OBJECTIVE:** To help kids compare and contrast life today with life in the 1980's, fostering an understanding of how technology, culture, and daily life have evolved over time.

### SUPPLIES:

- Photos or videos from the 1980's (e.g., pictures of old technology, fashion, cars, and popular culture)
- Photos or videos from today (e.g., current technology, fashion, cars, and popular culture)
- Paper and pencils
- Whiteboard or flip chart



### Activity Steps:

#### INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES):

- Gather the kids and explain that they will be taking a trip back in time to the 1980's to explore how life was different back then compared to today.
- Show them some photos or videos from the 1980's to give them a glimpse of life during that era.

#### BRAINSTORMING (10 MINUTES):

- Divide the kids into small groups and give each group a piece of paper and a pencil.
- Ask them to brainstorm a list of things they think were different in the 1980's compared to today. Encourage them to think about technology, fashion, entertainment, and daily life.

#### GROUP DISCUSSION (10 MINUTES):

- Bring the groups back together and have each group share their list with the rest of the class.
- Write down their ideas on a whiteboard or flip chart, organizing them into categories such as technology, fashion, and daily life.



### INTERACTIVE COMPARISON (15 MINUTES):

- Show the kids photos or videos from today that correspond to the categories they discussed (e.g., modern technology, fashion trends, popular music).
- Ask them to compare these images with their previous ideas about the 1980's. Discuss how things have changed and what has stayed the same.

### REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION (5 MINUTES):

- Lead a discussion on what the kids have learned from the activity. Ask them to reflect on how different life was in the 1980's compared to today.
- Emphasise the importance of understanding history and how it shapes the world we live in today.

### EXTENSION ACTIVITY (OPTIONAL):

- Have the kids create a time capsule with items representing life today (e.g., a smartphone, a popular toy, a fashion magazine). Encourage them to bury it or store it in a safe place to be opened in the future.

This activity not only helps kids learn about history but also encourages them to think critically about the world around them and how it has changed over time.

Finish with a prayer and singing, "Let the Son Shine In". This will consolidate it as the theme song for the week.



# DAY 4

Sing the Health Week song:  
"Let the Son Shine In"  
(Sheet music & Audio  
Track on page 38)  
Start or finish with  
this song, or do both



## BIBLE VERSE

Don't worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks for what you have.  
7 And because you belong to Christ Jesus, God's peace will stand guard over all your thoughts and feelings. His peace can do this far better than our human minds. Philippians 4:6-7

# Pouncing Tigers

## - Coping when I'm stressed



BY ADRIELLE CARRASCO

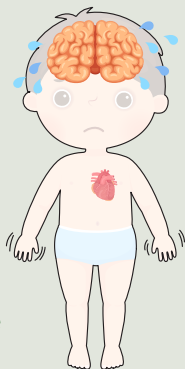
Have you ever been stressed about things out of your control? Have you ever felt overwhelmed by feelings that feel really big and frightening? Maybe it was when you were asked to stand up the front to give a speech, or when late handing in homework or an assignment. Maybe you felt stressed when someone close by got angry, speaking loudly or being aggressive. What about the first time you had to go somewhere new and didn't know anyone there? Most of us will feel stressed from time to time, that's normal, but how we respond to stress in a way that is useful to us is helpful to know.

How do we do that, let's find out more about stress first. Stress is what we feel, when something isn't going the way we'd like it to, or the way we think it needs to go. It is an uncomfortable feeling, and it has a direct effect on how our body feels and the way our brain thinks. Stress can become a bigger problem when we experience it for a long time without the support of others.

### *What does it feel like when we are stressed?*

Well, if a big Tiger were to suddenly pounce into our room how would you feel, how would you respond?

**ACTIVITY:** [Use the diagram on page 32] In situations like this most of us will feel our heart beating faster, we may take faster breaths in and out, our muscles might feel tight, we might start to sweat, our hands might tingle. This is an indication that our survival brain has kicked into gear and sees the situation as dangerous.



This is a normal response because when our survival brain kicks in our bodies instinctively get ready to, fight the Tiger, flee from the Tiger, or freeze and hide from the Tiger. We were created like this to help us in situations like if a Tiger were to suddenly appear. Our body is created to respond quickly and for a short time to help us stay safe from danger.

When our body experiences stressful situations such as bullying, fighting, exam and test stress, when we feel unprepared and our family expects us to do well, our survival brain tends to kick in. The stress can feel more extreme when we feel alone and don't have anybody beside us providing the support we need at that time.

When ongoing stress continues for a while, our body and mind will start to respond in defensive and unhelpful ways. Maybe we start to get angry quicker than usual. We might have trouble sleeping. Sometimes we just want to be by ourselves, and not be with friends or family. We could get headaches or stomach pains. Our schoolwork might be affected, and we may feel like we don't have the motivation to do much in class or at home. Or we may feel like we don't want to do the things we need to do when we are asked or instructed to at school or home. Being aware of the stress and how it is affecting us is important.

There are a few ways we can help to understand, manage and reduce the stress in our lives, and a few suggestions are:

### **HAVE A GOOD ROUTINE:**

Having a good routine means we don't have to worry about what comes next. We can plan our day and understand what is expected from us too.

### TALK WITH SOMEONE:

When possible, we need to find an adult or someone we trust, about how we are feeling. Maybe it's Mum or Dad, or a grandparent, aunt or uncle. Perhaps it's an older sibling or cousin, as long as it is someone we know well and that we feel safe with. Someone who won't judge or make fun of us.



### TRY NEW ACTIVITIES:

There have been times in the last few years, where we weren't able to leave our houses, this made it hard to do interesting, creative, or fun things outside of the house. It can be very rewarding when we try new things or activities.

**DISCUSSION:** What is something new you would like to try?

### MAKE GOOD CHOICES:

Being able to choose for ourselves gives us a sense of freedom and being in charge of our lives. Making choices that benefit us, and the people we love gives us a sense of accomplishment and wellbeing.

**DISCUSSION:** What sorts of choices do you make each day?

### HAVE A GOOD LAUGH:

How many of you like to laugh? Do you know that sometimes just pretending to laugh can make us feel happy? Shall we try it? Laughter floods our bodies with a hormone called endorphins that increase our sense of wellbeing. Finding something funny like a joke or being tickled can help us feel well. Laughing each day is good for our emotional health



### BEING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE:

When we are physically active, we use up energy, especially the energy that comes from feeling stressed or the stress hormone called cortisol. There are so many things we can do to get exercise

in our day, things like bike riding, playing a sport, playing outdoor games, taking the dog for a walk, or walking up and down the stairs are great for reducing stress.

It can be really fun when we do some physical activity with our family or friends. Try to get your family or friends to do some physical activity with you every day.



### EAT GOOD FOOD AND GET GOOD SLEEP:

Eating lots of different vegetables, fruit, and wholegrain foods gives our bodies and minds the best kind of energy to live and think and manage stress. Added to this, when we get good amounts of sleep our bodies get to rest, and rested bodies are more able to manage stress and big feelings throughout the day.



Aim for at least three serves of vegetables and two serves of fruit each day, and try to eat wholegrain foods like grain bread, brown rice, and porridge.

When we go to sleep at night, start getting ready for bed at least 30min before we need to turn off the light, we can relax with a good book, or write in a journal. When we hop into bed make the lights dim or turn off overly bright lights, your brain will notice that it is darker and that it's time to sleep.

Lying in bed while playing, watching or reading on a device will stimulate your mind and cause you to take longer to fall asleep. However, listening



to relaxing music, calming nature sounds like the sound of waves, rain, wind blowing through trees, or a night-time meditation story will calm your mind and help you sleep.

### PRACTICE DEEP BREATHING:

Taking in deep breaths and letting it out slowly (deep breathing) is a great way to reduce stress levels.

#### ACTIVITY:

**Deep Breathing:** Help the children practice by taking deep breaths in for a count of five seconds, hold for two seconds and release to a count of five seconds. You can also try letting out a big 'sigh' or a 'vooooo' sound on the exhale Or you can try the 54321 exercise below.

**The 54321 Exercise:** When it feels like a struggle to stop your mind from thinking anxious thoughts we can try the '54321 exercise'. It is important that we are in place that feels safe when we practice this. We can look around us around and notice:

- 5 things we can see
- 4 things we can hear
- 3 things we can touch
- 2 things we can smell
- 1 thing we can taste

As we use our 5 senses and pay attention to what is around us, it shifts the focus from our anxious thoughts to our surroundings and our body, and gives our brain a chance to reset. We can practice this every time we need a brain-reset. It may feel difficult at first and it gets easier with practice.

### TAKE TIME TO PRAY:

We are encouraged in Philippians 4:6-7 to "ask God for everything we need" and that "God's peace will stand guard over all your thoughts and feelings". God will provide the peace our minds need in anxious times; His peace is more powerful and can calm our minds better than we can do on our own most times.



## ARTS & CRAFTS: ONE DAY AT A TIME

### SUPPLIES:

- A daily routine for each child (page 33)
- Pens
- A routine is an important part of having less stress or anxiety in our lives.
- Create a routine you can follow each day. Make sure you put the days, times, and activities for everything you do. Also, remind yourself to eat good food and drink lots of water. Then include a good time to start getting ready for bed (30 min before lights out), writing down what you will do to relax, and then write the time the lights will go out.

## Game: SCRIPTURE POP-UP

### VERSE:

*God's Peace will stand  
guard over all your  
Thoughts and feelings*

- Assign each child a different word from the bible verse Philippians 4:6 **Don't worry about anything, but pray and ask God for everything you need, always giving thanks for what you have.** If you have a lot of children, give several children the same word.
- Have the children mix themselves up and crouch down. As you read the verse, children should each jump up when they hear their word. Then have them quickly crouch down again.
- Reread the verse a number of times in several ways — fast, slow, in a high voice, in a low voice. Finally, read the verse and have kids pop up and stand in a line — in order like the verse.

This is just a fun way to learn the verse and use up some energy

# DAY 5

Sing the Health Week song:  
"Let the Sun Shine In"  
(Sheet music & Audio  
Track on page 38)  
Start or finish with  
this song, or do both

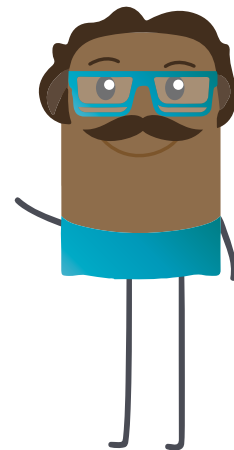


Get the children to repeat  
or ask someone to read  
the Bible verse for today's  
devotional

## BIBLE VERSE

"My dear brothers and sisters, always be more willing to listen than to speak. Keep control of your anger." James 1:19 ERV





# The Jealous King

## - Responding To Anger

BY DAN CARRASCO

Why would anyone be angry at one of the most beloved characters in the Bible, David. He was just a shepherd boy, when he killed the giant Goliath, using nothing more than his sling and five smooth stones. His Dad (Jacob) had sent him to deliver food to his three oldest brothers, who were camping with the other soldiers in King Saul's army (King Saul was Israel's very first king). Goliath, a giant Philistine, had provoked King Saul's army, by saying that none of them were brave enough to fight him. Every day, Goliath stood in front of the Israelite army shouting for them to "send out their best champion". If the Israelite soldier won the Philistines would surrender and become the Israelites' slaves, but if Goliath one then the Israelites would become the Philistines slaves.



### David, The Giant-Slayer

It sounded easy enough, but after many weeks not a single soldier of King Saul's army had stepped forward. No one, that is until David came to visit his brothers. What an amazing finale to the story, when David stepped forward and did what so many others were afraid to even try doing. He killed Goliath and became one of the youngest heroes in all of Israel's history.

It was because of this courageous effort that David

become known to King Saul. By the time David was old enough, King Saul had put him in charge of the many soldiers in his army. David was a good soldier and led the army to many victories. Soon the people of Israel learned to respect David for all his bravery and triumphs over their enemies. The soldiers trusted David, and why not? They felt safe when David was in charge.



Upon returning home from a battle, King Saul was anticipating shouts of praise from the people who ran to greet him. However, to his disappointment, the people instead shouted praises for David. In fact, many of them sang songs and danced before David saying, "Saul has killed his thousands, but David has killed ten thousand." To King Saul, this was an insult, after all he was their king and David was just one of his soldiers. King Saul was infuriated, and it seemed that everywhere he went the people only wanted to see David and not him. As this happened over and over again, King Saul became jealous and resented David.

### The Moody King

One evening, David noticed that King Saul was acting oddly, he seemed to be in a bad mood. As was David's routine, whenever King Saul was worried or stressed, David would play his harp for him. This always calmed King Saul down. But this

time, as David started to play his harp, the King looked up at him and became very angry. Just looking at David, made King Saul think about how much everyone loved David more than him. King Saul was so angry that he could not stop himself, he picked up a spear (a bit like a javelin today), and with an almighty “harumph” hurled it at David. He wanted to pin David to the wall with the spear, that’s how angry he was. Twice he tried to hit David with the spear, and he missed both times.



David, who had a sharp eye had the chance to pick up the spear and throw it back at King Saul, but he didn’t. Instead of getting revenge, David fled from King Saul’s anger.

In this story we see how King Saul let his emotions get the better of him. He believed that it was David’s fault he got angry. But the only person who was in control of his anger was himself. He didn’t stop to think before acting on his temper. Because he lost control, he put David in danger from being really hurt.

Unfortunately, the story doesn’t end well for King Saul. The anger he had for David was so great it completely ruined their friendship. He thought about it so much that eventually it caused King Saul to become emotionally unwell and resulted in him no longer being King.

## *What happens when you get angry?*

All our feelings are messengers. They give us important information about what is going on in our body in response to the things that happen around us. So, it is important to listen to them and find safe and healthy ways in which to express them.

When we are angry, our brains and our bodies go into ‘fight’ mode. We tend to want to fight back so we can protect our feelings and ourselves. We may feel our heart racing and our breathing gets shallow and quick. Our bodies feel a rush of energy and sometimes we literally see the colour red! This is a normal reaction. And it can be hard to control our responses when we feel angry.

As soon as we notice anger in our body, it helps to stop, notice that we are angry, take some deep, calming breaths, tell ourselves that it is okay to feel angry and then take the time to think about how we would like to respond in a way that is safe and kind.

Sometimes, it may feel very hard to do this, especially when the person we are angry at continues to behave in a way that is making us madder. Again, in these situations, it helps to stop, take some more deep and calming breaths, acknowledge that you are very angry and then walk away to find a safe adult to talk to so they can help you and manage the situation for you.

Unlike King Saul, we may not feel so angry that we end up throwing a spear at others, but sometimes we “throw” hurtful words at those we feel angry at, especially if they’ve done or said something to hurt us first.

The bible tells us in James 1:19 that sometimes when we are angry it is useful to listen, rather than it is to speak too quickly in return. In other words, when we take the time to breathe and acknowledge our anger and find ways to express it safely and kindly, it will help us not to instantly reply with angry words as soon as we have been hurt. To be a follower of Jesus means we can ask Him to help us, so that when someone does or says something that might hurt our feelings, we can stop ourselves from responding harshly out of anger.

When we are angry our reasonable brains go offline – so thinking is almost impossible!!

Perhaps we could use the STOP, THINK, ACT traffic lights method. The first step is to use the word “STOP”<sup>1</sup>

1 Source: [lifeskillsadvocate.com/blog/stop-think-act/](https://lifeskillsadvocate.com/blog/stop-think-act/)





**S.T.O.P.** – Stop before we react. Take some slow, calming breaths. Observe what we are feeling in our bodies and ask ourselves why? Ask yourself if you need an adults help. Proceed to the next step.

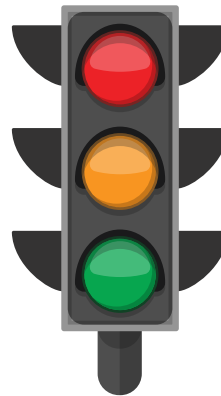


**THINK** – Next, state the problem. What's happening right now that is causing stress, upset, or frustration? What feelings—either physical or emotional—are happening as a result of this problem? Think about a solution or an alternative. What's the best way to resolve the issue?



**ACT** – Try out the best plan. If you're not sure what the best strategy is, the best action is to communicate that to someone else in the environment. Sometimes the best emotional control is to say, "I need help right now."

Anger is an emotion that occurs naturally in our bodies in response to the things that happen around us. How we respond to it is important. If we are not able to STOP before we respond, it is likely that we will respond in an aggressive or hurtful way. When we STOP, we are better able to respond thoughtfully, in a way that helps us be safe for ourselves and others. It also helps us respond kindly, while setting boundaries to stop others from hurting us further. So, when we feel anger in our bodies in response to something hurtful why not apply "STOP" first then "THINK" and "ACT"?



Use the diagram on page 34.

Was there a better way King Saul could have reacted to the angry emotions he was feeling towards David? **[Encourage the children to think of ways to alleviate the stress, jealousy, insecurities of Saul towards David]**

#### **SUGGESTED RESPONSES:**

- Acknowledged his feelings and tried to work out a way to overcome them
- Spoken to someone he trusted and asked for their help
- Noticed when his anger was getting more intense and identified why (similar to the above)
- Prayed to God for guidance
- Practiced deep breathing when becoming angry
- Got for a walk to release the energy from his emotions
- Talked to David about how he was feeling
- Count to 10 slowly before responding
- Applying the STOP, THINK, ACT traffic lights method.

## Game: Quick and Slow

Play a listening game with your group. Divide into teams and spread each team member out throughout your space. Have the first person from each team meet with you at a particular spot and give them a sentence (orally) that they have to convey to the rest of their team. Only repeat the sentence once – this is a listening game, after all! The first person must then run to the next person in the team, whisper the sentence in their ear, and then take that person's place. That person then runs to the next person on the team, whispers the sentence

in their ear and takes that person's place. This continues until the last person returns to you. The last person then tells you the sentence. The team closest to the original sentence and gets back first wins. The person who returned to you and told you the sentence is now the first person on the team. Continue this until all the kids have had a chance to be the first person. (Note: be sure the kids are spread out far enough – perhaps one in each corner of a room and one in the middle. Also, be sure that each child only repeats the sentence once.)

### POSSIBLE SENTENCES TO USE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

1. The old, ugly cat clawed the big, black dog on his nose.
2. People don't usually eat pickles for breakfast, but sometimes they eat eggs.
3. There was a white seagull that soared through the sky and grabbed a piece of bread from the small child.
4. Who ate all the tomatoes that were set out on the purple tablecloth?
5. The weather was about to turn nasty – just in time for the crazy class picnic.



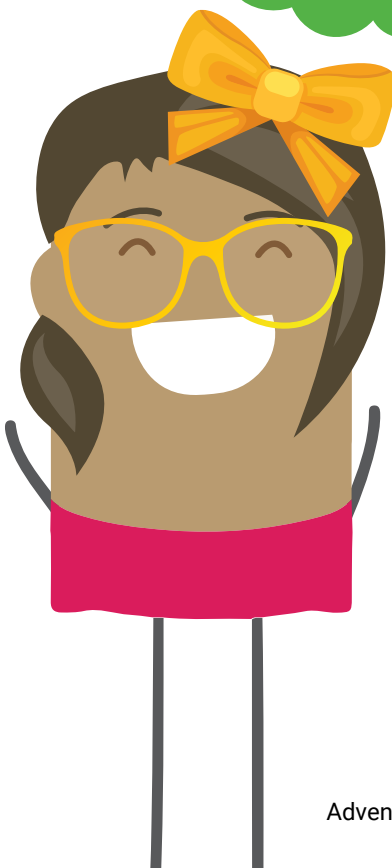
Use the following questions to aid your discussion:

- Did any team get the sentence right every single time? Did any team NEVER get the sentence right? What made it hard to get the sentence right?
- This was a listening game—you had to listen very carefully to get the sentence right.
- Did anything make it difficult for you to listen? Explain.
- How do you think this game relates to James 1:19-21?

## Conclusion

In this game, it's important to be very QUICK to listen. You all had to listen carefully the first time and then remember what was said. In the same way, we need to listen very carefully to what people say to us. We should not always think about what we want to say next – instead, we should listen to what others say. Listening is an essential skill and can make a big difference in how we respond to someone when we are hurt; it also helps with responding to someone appropriately when we are angry.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://cherigamble.com/2015/08/13/a-lesson-for-children-on-anger-from-james-119-21/>



Colour me in



# DAY 6



Sing the Health Week song:  
"Let the Son Shine In"  
(Sheet music & Audio  
Track on page 38)  
Start or finish with  
this song, or do both

#### BIBLE VERSE

You are my strong shield,  
and I trust you completely.  
You have helped me,  
and I will celebrate  
and thank you in song.  
Psalm 28:7 CEV

Get the children  
to repeat or read the  
Bible verse for today's  
devotional

# Pillow Fights and Battle Shields

## - Navigating Difficult Times

BY ADRIELLE CARRASCO

When was the last time you had a pillow fight? Did you know that “pillow fights” have been around since ancient Roman times? Soldiers would play fight each other using “pillows” made from cloth stuffed into a sack. The winner would be the one who landed the most blows on their opponent.

I remember having pillow fights with my friends when I was young, it was fun to try and hit them with my pillow while trying to defend myself from being hit by their pillow in return. Sometimes I would try to hide from a flying pillow using my pillow as a shield, that would work quite well, but what worked better was when I used second pillow as a “shield”. The protection a “shield” provided would mean I wouldn’t get pummelled so much by their pillows. It could also mean I was more likely to win, as I was hit fewer times by their pillow. A shield was always a good idea if I could get one.

In ancient times proper shields were part of a warrior’s armour, and were carried close to the body, using an arm and hand grip attached to the back of the shield. They varied in size and shape and were made from lots of different materials such as wood, animal hides, woven fabric, or any material that could stop, block, or deflect objects from hurting the warrior who carried it. A shield gave protection to the vulnerable parts of the warrior’s body, and could be moved around depending on where the warrior needed guarding. A shield wasn’t so big or heavy that the warrior couldn’t walk or run while carrying it, and they weren’t so small that they didn’t provide adequate protection. The shield allowed the warrior to move, or fight, while at the same time helping them to feel protected.

A shield could also tell other warriors what side they belonged to. Many warriors would paint a blazon

or insignia (an image that represents a family or country) on the front of their shields using particular colours. This represented the leader, country, or group they fought for. Sometimes a shield symbolised the values or the characteristics of the person who carried it. For example, a lion, eagle or other strong animal represented strength, a snake might represent wisdom, a cross represented God or the faith they had in Jesus. Various colours like white could represent purity or faith, while other specific colours would represent the family they belonged to.

**DISCUSSION:** What type of blazon would a shield you carried have on it, what colours would you use?



These days shields are rarely seen unless they are part of a make-believe superhero’s costume like ‘Captain America’ or carried by police officers, but on tough or challenging days, wouldn’t it be great if we had something like a shield to protect us? An example of a tough day could be when you wake up late making you feel anxious, then get to school late where you receive a detention making you feel angry. Later you receive a mark for an assignment or test that wasn’t what you were hoping for, and now you feel disappointed.

At break time you become worried because you lose something valuable or important to you. In the afternoon you get into an argument with your friend or a family member, and this makes you feel sad and hurt. When days like this happen, it is ok to feel miserable or overwhelmed. A tough day can even make us feel like we’re under attack or alone, and we just want to feel safe, or in control again. On days like this it’s helpful to have supportive people around us, these are the people who act like a shield in our life. A supportive person can be a good friend, Mum, Dad, brother or sister, or other family members. They could even be a person like your





teacher, pastor, pathfinder leader, or anyone who you are able to go to for support on days when you feel vulnerable, disappointed, angry, worried, sad and hurt, or out of control.

Supportive people are the ones who understand us, hear us and help us see the hard things that happen to us in a useful way, which makes them seem less difficult. They remind us that we are good enough just the way we are, even when we lose or don't achieve how we want to. They validate our feelings and help us understand what or

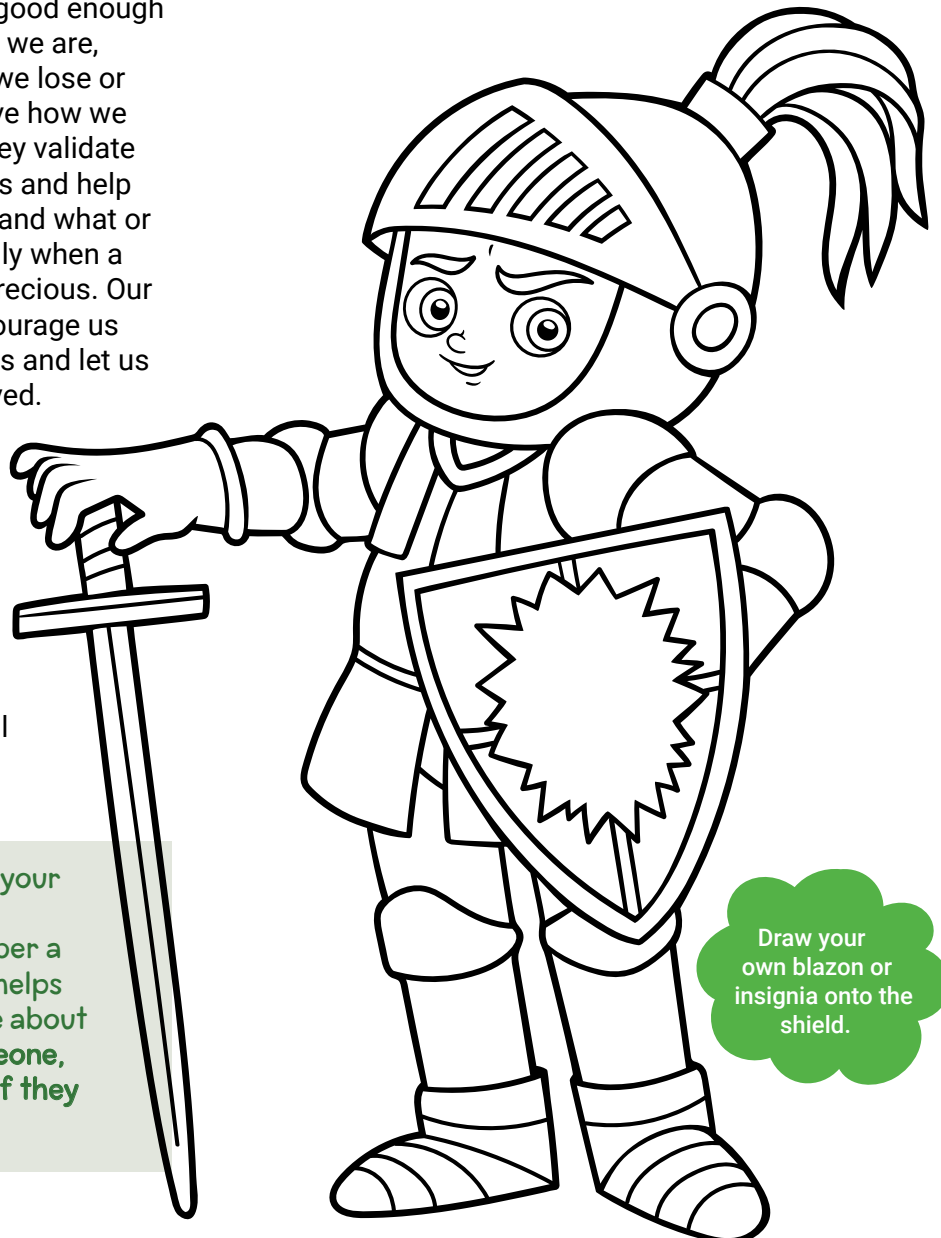
why something has happened, especially when a loved one dies, or we lose something precious. Our supportive shields are people who encourage us and help us work through the hard times and let us know we are important, special, and loved.

Having the support of someone else gives us the courage to carry on, or strengthen us with encouraging words so we don't give up. They don't stop us from experiencing the tough days, but they do make those days easier and more bearable to live through. Through their support they provide protection against the unhelpful thoughts that go through our minds or when things go wrong.

**DISCUSSION:** Who are the people in your life who are like "supportive shields" when you have a tough day, remember a supportive person is someone who helps you feel safe, in control, and positive about yourself. [Ask them to think of someone, but don't pressure them to answer if they are shy or unsure what to say.]

I love how the bible calls Jesus our strong shield. Like the supportive people in our life, He has the ability to provide protection during the tough days we experience. He does this when we ask Him to be with us. We can pray to Jesus to give us strength and comfort when we feel sad; we can ask Him to help us feel safe and to think clearly when we are frightened or worried, or we can ask Him to help us speak kindly and respectfully to others when we are hurt or upset. We can also ask Him to help us love ourselves, the way He loves us. The great thing about Jesus is that He is never far away, He is always with us, He is our constant support, He is our strong shield.

Jesus loves us unconditionally, no matter what happens in our life the Bible tells us that there is nothing that can separate us from His love (Romans 8:38-39).



Draw your own blazon or insignia onto the shield.

## Activity 1: Balloon Worries

### SUPPLIES:

- A balloon for each child.

Sometimes our worries can seem huge and overwhelming, but Jesus tells us to give our problems and concerns over to him. I Peter 5:7 says "Cast all your cares upon Him because he cares for you." Is there a worry or concern you have at the moment? Let's use these balloons to cast them over to Jesus, let me show you how.

[Invite the children to think of a worry or concern they have. Share a few ideas together. Give everyone a balloon and ask the children to blow them up but not tie them. Younger children will need some help from adults. Ask the children to say a one-line prayer out loud or quietly – if they don't have any concerns ask them to pray for somebody else who shared their idea. Tell the children when we give our worries to Jesus we can let go of them and they become smaller. Let the children let go of their balloon and let it whiz around the room getting smaller and smaller.]



## Activity 2: My Safe Person

### SUPPLIES:

- Each child receives a piece of the Worries template.
- A pen

I want you to think about a person in your life you could share your worries with. Someone who encourages you and helps you work through the hard times and lets you know you are important, special, and loved. Someone who won't judge you or make fun of you.

Now on your handout put their name at the top then in the space provided write out your worry or concern. Once you have completed this task, fold up the paper and tape it down. Now keep this worry in a safe place and don't let anyone else read it. When you see your safe person next time, you can either share with them what you wrote on it, or give it to them to read.



You'll find the template on page 35.

## Craft: Make a Shield, Create a blazon

### SUPPLIES:

- Paper plates (or anything that can be made into a shield), see resources.
- Coloured pens, pencils, crayons, paint (whatever they can use to draw and colour images on their shields)
- Long thin strips of card, long enough to make an arm and hand grip.

Remember what we shared earlier about what our blazon or insignia could look like, and what colours we might use if we had a shield? Let's create a shield or blazon that represents us, the

people who support us, and Jesus.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

- Get the children to design a blazon on the front of the shield, decorating as they want, ensuring they use their chosen colours.
- On the back of the shield create two grips, one goes over the thickest part of the forearm closest to the elbow, and the other to be used by the hand, going over the palm of the hand. Both grips should align with the length of the child's forearm.

You are welcome to use the shield template on page 36.



DAY 7



Sing the Health Week song:  
"Let the Sun Shine In"  
(Sheet music & Audio  
Track on page 38)  
Start or finish with  
this song, or do both

# God's Love never Ends

BY ADRIELLE CARRASCO

How wonderful that we have been able to learn more about our feelings and the way we think this week.

Remember the analogy of the House from the start of the week? Our bodies are like a house, and when we keep all the walls of our house strong our bodies will stand strong too. We have four areas that make up the health and wellbeing of our bodies. They represent the four walls of our house: physical, social, spiritual, and mental, and each area is as important as the other. The way we think and feel is part of our Mental Health, which has been the theme for our week.

God certainly has created us with amazing brains! We discovered a lot about how He wants us to have thriving minds, through developing healthy routines, building resilience, and having compassionate thoughts and feelings for ourselves and each other.

What were some interesting things you discovered about how we think and feel?

When you get a chance to do so, share with someone else what you have learned this week. When we share what we learn it helps us to remember the lesson and helps us use what we learn in our daily lives.

Finally, don't forget how much God loves all of us. He loves us just the way we are, He loves us when we are afraid, stressed, anxious, or even angry. He loves us when we do great things and when we make mistakes or fail. There is nothing that can ever separate us from His love, in His eyes, we will always be worth loving no matter what.

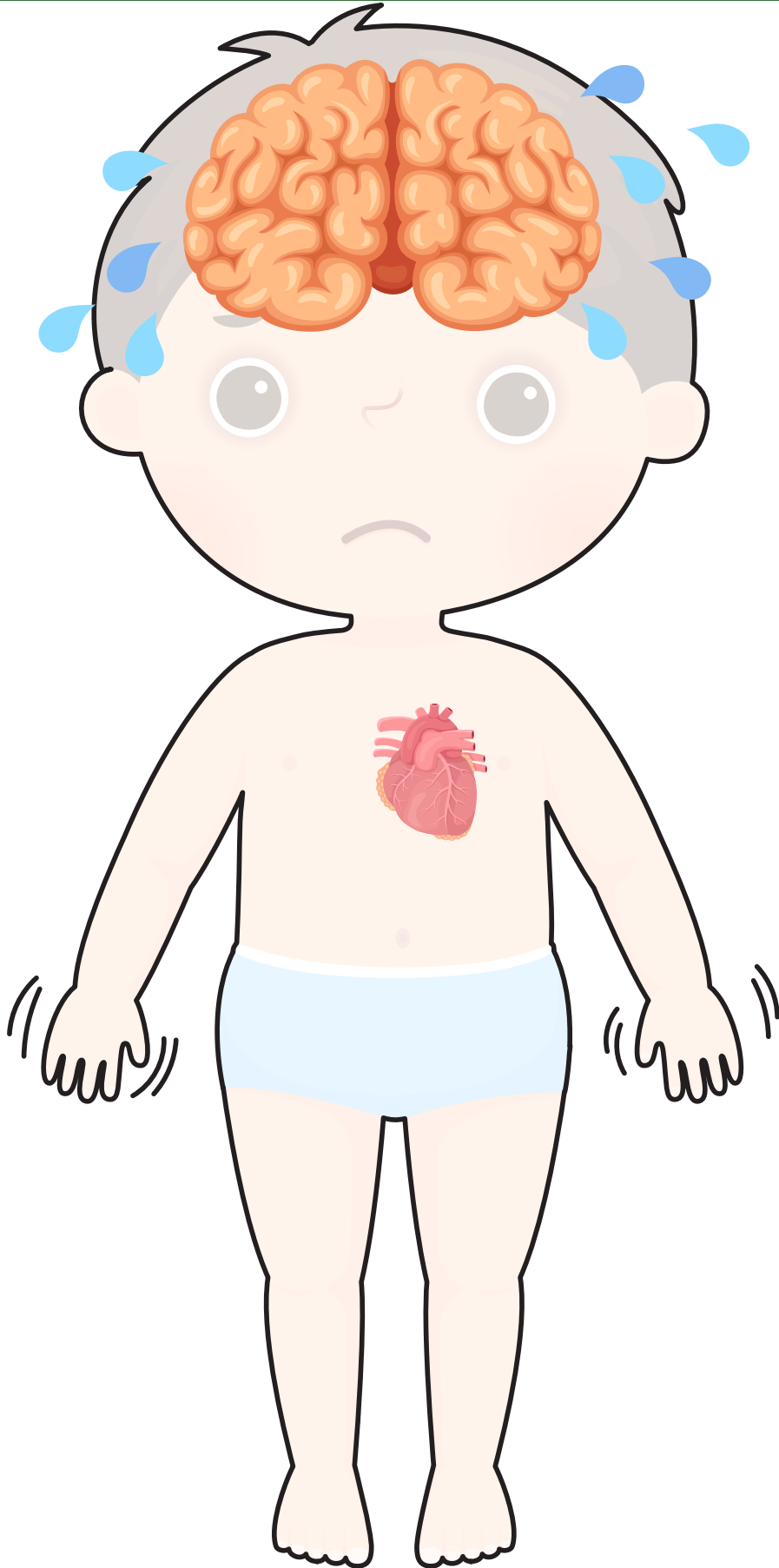
## Activity: Find OUR WORDS FOR The Week

N G N I D N A T S R E D N U L  
 G O S P I R I T U A L W E F A  
 Z O I B R E A T H I N G L C C  
 L W L T C H E F R I E N D S I  
 M O R I A O T S A F E T Y I S  
 D L S P A M M R I M E E A K Y  
 I L C S R T R P O C I C A I H  
 V I R C L P H I A P R L N N P  
 A P E C T I U R F S P E Y D D  
 D L E I H S A U L F S U X Q I  
 D E N R E Y A R P R A I S E G  
 J H V E G E T A B L E S O U I  
 L A T N E M O U T D O O R N T  
 L A N O I T O M E A H V N M A  
 T L U F P L E H A J I L E W L

There are many words in this word-find that we have learned about this week. See how many you can find. Words can go in any direction. Words can share letters as they cross over each other.

- |             |          |               |
|-------------|----------|---------------|
| Affirmation | Fruit    | Praise        |
| Breathing   | Goliath  | Prayer        |
| Compassion  | Help     | Safety        |
| David       | Helpful  | Saul          |
| Digital     | Kind     | Screen        |
| Elijah      | Love     | Shield        |
| Emotional   | Mental   | Spiritual     |
| Exercise    | Outdoor  | Support       |
| Family      | Physical | Understanding |
| Friends     | Pillow   | Vegetables    |

*What does it feel like when we are stressed?*

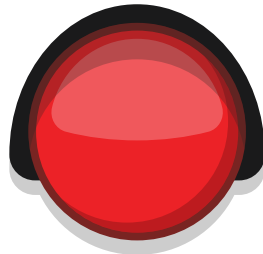
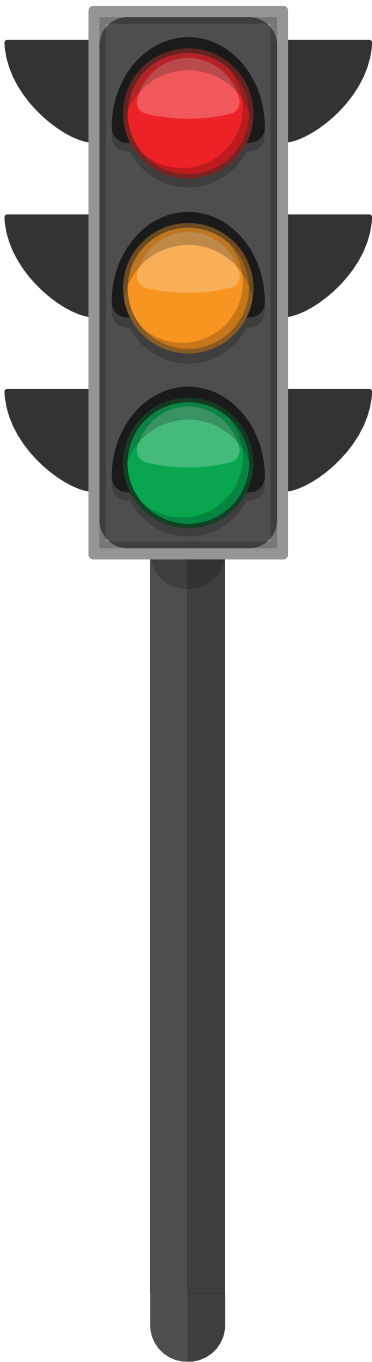


# My Daily Planner

DAY	Morning	Afternoon	Evening	Fruit, vegetables, water
SUNDAY				
MONDAY				
TUESDAY				
WEDNESDAY				
THURSDAY				
FRIDAY				
SABBATH				

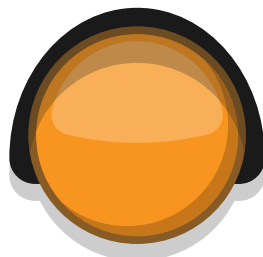
\*Remember to include times next to what you will be doing and to record how many serves of fruit, vegetables and water you have.

# STOP, Think, ACT Method



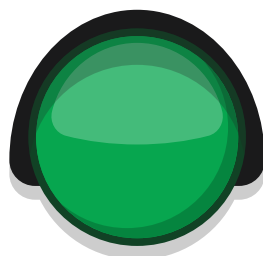
## STOP

Stop before we react.  
Take some slow, calming breaths.  
Observe what we are feeling in our bodies and ask ourselves why? Ask yourself if you need an adults help.  
Proceed to the next step.



## THINK

Next, state the problem. What's happening right now that is causing stress, upset, or frustration? What feelings—either physical or emotional—are happening as a result of this problem? Think about a solution or an alternative. What's the best way to resolve the issue?



## ACT

Try out the best plan. If you're not sure what the best strategy is, the best action is to communicate that to someone else you feel safe with. Sometimes the best emotional control is to say, "I need help right now."

# Worries Template

My Safe Person: \_\_\_\_\_

My worry or concern: \_\_\_\_\_

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My Safe Person: \_\_\_\_\_

My worry or concern: \_\_\_\_\_

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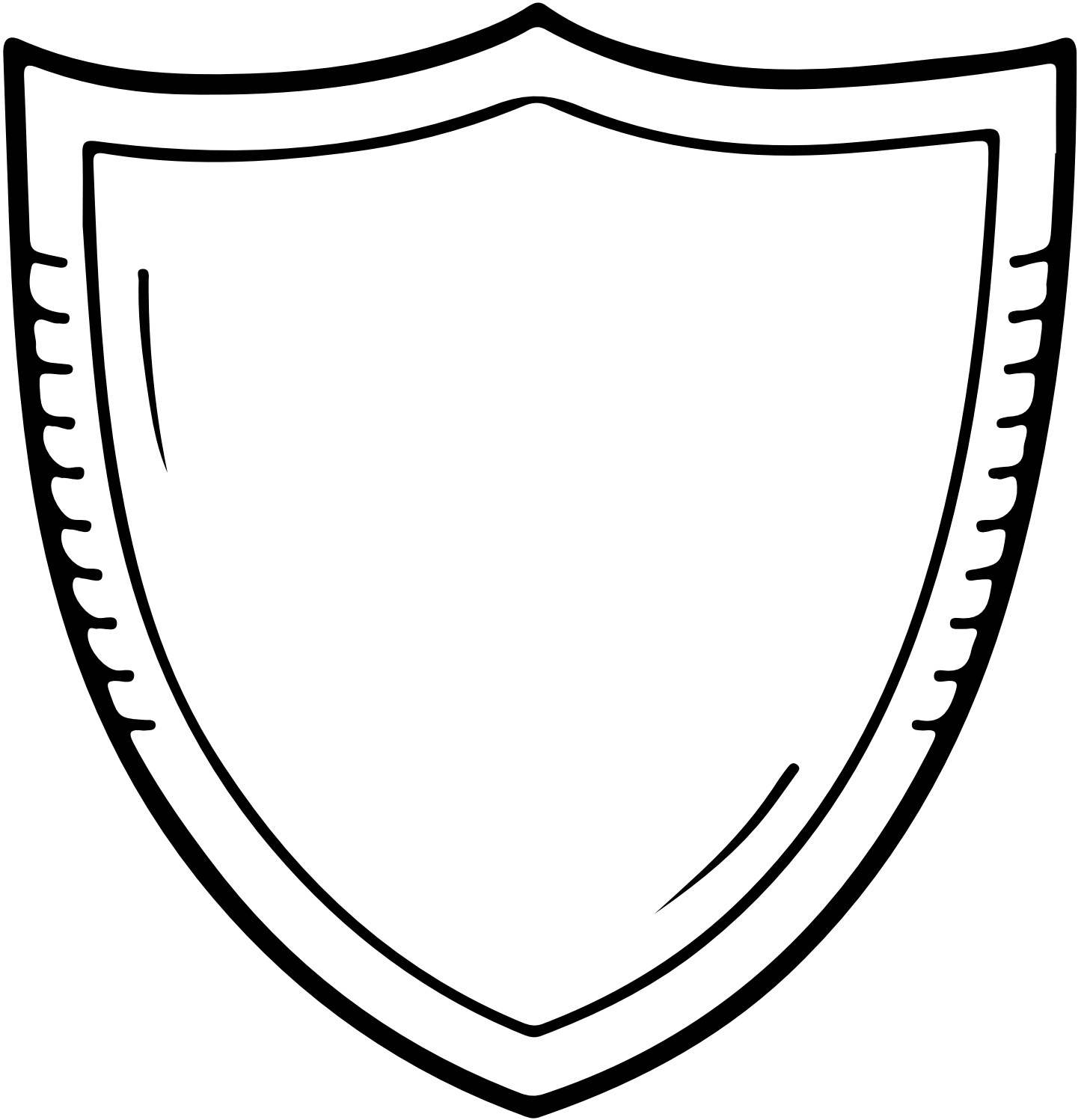
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*Make a shield, Create a blazon*





SCAN TO LISTEN



# Melody Only: Let The Son Shine In

Adventist Health Week 2024

N. Paul

Intro  
Swing

4/4

F C G/B C/E

5 F C G C

Verse

9 C G7

When your heart is hurt-ing and you've lost your song; You find it hard to fit or feel that

12 C

you be - long. Or you think you're bad and you're not ve - ry strong, When you

15 G C Chorus F

feel like there's no way\_ through: There's no val - ley too deep,\_ no

18 C G/B C/E F

sha-dow too dark that the Son can not shine in. Grab His strong, lov-ing hand, and the

22 C G G7 C

bless-ings He's planned. Let Him help, let Him res - cue\_ you.\_

NZPUC 2024

SCAN TO LISTEN



# Let the son shine in

N. Paul

Swing

Intro

## Adventist Health Week 2024

Glockenspiel

Voice

Piano

5

Glock.

Vo.

Pno.

9 Verse

Glock.

Vo.

Pno.

When your heart is hurt-ing and you've lost your song; You find it hard to fit or feel that you be - long.

C G7

NZPUC 2024

13

Chorus

Glock.

Vo.   
 Or you think you're bad and you're not ve - ry strong, When you feel like there's no way — through:

Pno.

17

Glock.

Vo.   
 val-ley too deep, no sha-dow too dark that the Son can not shine in. Grab His

Pno.

21

Glock.

Vo.   
 strong, lov-ing hand, and the bless-ings He's planned. Let Him help, let Him res-cue — you. —

Pno.



Adventist  
Health