

Good Thinking: An Introduction to Mental Health and Wellbeing for Secondary School Pupils

Lesson plan 8: Recharging our batteries

Lesson objectives

- To understand the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good mental health and how a lack of sleep can affect mood and our ability to learn.
- To appreciate how taking a break and practising mindfulness can support our mental wellbeing.

Resources needed

- PowerPoint presentation
- How Can Food and Drink Affect How We Feel? information sheet

Information and guidance	Activity
Remind students of the link between our physical and mental health and wellbeing. Discuss all the aspects of our physical health that can impact our mental health.	You and your class might like to elaborate on some of these aspects and share examples.
Use the next two slides to discuss the benefits of taking breaks to our mental health and wellbeing. Ask students why they think taking breaks is recommended when studying, working and driving. Ensure they understand the links (e.g. feeling tired may be the initial impact of not taking a break, but that can then impact our mental wellbeing).	Students can answer the true or false statements about taking breaks and give their reasons for each statement, before you reveal the answers.
Go on to learn about the importance of sleep using slides 5 - 7. Share the data about the recommended amount of sleep for young people. Consider how sleep deprivation affects people physically and mentally and discuss the signs that indicate a person needs more sleep (or better-quality sleep). Again, ensure pupils can appreciate the link to mental health and wellbeing.	Ask students to suggest how much sleep they think young people their age should be getting each night. You might ask them to consider how much sleep they think they get each night, and how this compares.
Discuss the way we fuel our bodies and the link between what we eat and drink and our mental wellbeing. Hand out the How Can Food and Drink Affect the Way We Feel? Information sheet and read through as a class, in groups or individually.	Students may wish to make notes on what they learn from the information sheet and may wish to share examples of how food and drink impacts their mood.

Information and guidance	Activity
Discuss the fact that while rest, sleep and diet can all impact our mental health and wellbeing, some people may also need to take medication prescribed by a qualified clinician to manage their symptoms. This will be unique to each individual and will be used alongside the other important factors previously discussed.	You may wish to emphasise the fact that taking medication for a mental health condition shouldn't be viewed any differently from taking medication for a physical health condition.

Suggestions for further activities
<p>Pupils could take the <u>Good Thinking sleep quiz</u> to get recommendations for NHS-approved apps. They could also complete the free, clinically-validated <u>Good Thinking sleep self-assessment</u> which will then provide them with a guiding diagnosis and helpful resources and advice.</p> <p>The theme of 'taking a break' could also be applied to people taking a break from social media to support their mental wellbeing. Students might like to explore this further. You could use the <u>Social media – KS3 and KS4 lesson plan</u> from 'Every Mind Matters' to explore the links between social media and wellbeing in more depth.</p>