



## Inner Strength Teen Program Course Outline

The Inner Strength Teen Program rests on a solid pedagogical academic foundation and challenges students to reach for their highest potential. This program weaves together a practical introduction to mindful contemplation exercises, the art and science of kindness, the basics of adolescent brain science, and perspectives of cultural change. Its goal is to support whole-person growth and wellness by empowering students with easy to use tools to manage stress and confusion and to help them connect the dots between the challenges they face and large-scale changes and habits developed over long periods of historical time.

| Lesson Name                                     | Description  |
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| 1. What Is Mindfulness?                         | Students will learn about the time-tested value of mindfulness tools and its contemporary applications, establishing a learning base for the 12 week course.   |
| 2. I Am Not My Thoughts                         | Students will begin to see that who they are can be separated from repetitive or habitual thoughts that randomly cross their minds. This teaches them to find calm in the midst of challenges.   |
| 3. Cultivating Care                             | Students will learn basic exercises that help them expand their capacity to care and experience generosity towards self and others.  |
| 4. Seeing Freshly; aka The Chocolate Meditation | Students take a very familiar experience – eating a piece of chocolate - break down the experience to see how many micro-movements, sensations, and brain commands it takes to engage in such a simple activity. This teaches them curiosity, observation, and the interrelationship between thought, feeling, and physiology. |
| 5. How Our Brains Evolved                       | Students will learn about the different parts of the brain. They'll discover the brain is also an organ they can train and gain greater mastery over their inner world and their outer responses.  |
| 6. The Teenage Brain                            | In this lesson, students will discover the fascinating new insights from adolescent neuroscience that point to a unique period of brain development during the teenage years. This helps them understand their own experience.   |



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| 7. Mind, Thought & Awareness         | Students will learn the difference between mind, thought, and awareness. They will discover how to work with awareness to make better choices in life.  |
| 8. Working With The Body             | Students will learn a simple and powerful technique to connect with their immediate physical experience. They will learn to take care of proper hydration, nutrition, rest, and exercise.   |
| 9. Why Are We So Stressed?           | In this lesson, students look at the last 800 years of cultural change, seeing how various movements in history brought about greater individual autonomy, self-authorship, and interiority while those very same positive changes also resulted in a weakening of social supports.       |
| 10. Why Am I So Stressed?            | This lesson looks at the specific stresses teens' experience. It identifies some of the causes, makes space to explore the experience, and also teaches teens to distinguish between positive and negative coping strategies. Teens learn to contextualize their challenging experiences. |
| 11. The Art & Science of Relatedness | Students work on the art of relatedness, looking at how mindfulness practices, which illuminate their reactions and pre-conceived ideas, help them better understand and communicate with their friends and adults in their lives.  |
| 12. Conscious Transitions            | Students consciously wrap up their program. Managing endings and transitions well is an invaluable skill, necessary for students as they move on from home and high school into higher education and the workforce.   |