



*When you can truly incorporate love and appreciation into your life,
then you will be able to receive more and more positive energy.*



Month One

Positive and Negative Energy & Self-Awareness

As a teacher of middle school aged students, you already know that much of their life is consumed with finding out who they are and what they are good at. Children learn quickly who in the class is the “brightest”, who is the most “attractive” and who has the most friends. Their life is full of making comparisons in order to find their place in their mini-society of friends and family. This comparison shopping to try on other images is filled with anxiety. Modern social media has magnified the competition with unnatural and unrealistic expectations. Airbrushed photos of models cause young girls to diet to try to be model thin. With social media, much of the messaging is contrived to make the sender look smarter, more attractive and actively acquiring goods and services others should want. This creates stress as younger and younger students feel compelled to one up the other. By using the lessons in this guide, you can combat this race and competition. The parent guides will also assist you in bringing the lessons home so you are partners in supporting each young person to be:

- self-aware of who they are
- self-accepting of their gifts without making comparisons to others
- active in their self-care of mind, body and relationships
- engage in activities with self-preservation in mind

The first step in the journey of discovering self is an internal awareness of what makes you “you” — your likes and dislikes, values, passions, and purpose. In this first month, we have guided journal sheets for you to provide to your students to use for self-reflection. We also have activities that explore and make clear some the things that make each of your students who they are. It’s up to you how you implement the program. The resources are here for you to use.

- ✓ You can play the video of Master Ted Sun as an introduction to the program.
- ✓ Set the ground rule that during this program and activities no one is allowed to be mean or unkind during activities and after during informal interactions especially on social media.
- ✓ Start with the visualization experience and try to do it each morning to start the day.
- ✓ Introduce this month by discussing positive and negatives. Here are two suggested activities:
 - **Positive/Negative Wheel**
First each student fills out their “wheel” slices. Then pair three students to compare their visions of positive and negative. Have them use their discussion to fill out a new wheel that incorporates all of the positive and negative things, people,



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experiences that they could agree represent the three of them. Then have each group present to the class their shared wheel. Capture on the board or flip chart the commonalities that exist. For example, are people who complain negative? Are people who make you laugh positive?

○ **Circles Activity: What Strengths Do I Have?**

For this activity you will need little sticky notes about 1 inch size and enough Circles handouts for the class. Each student will need 12 sticky notes and a pen/pencil. You must set ground rules of kindness, acceptance and honesty in discussions.

First give out the Circles. Turn over the page to the blank side.

Tell the students to imagine one thing that they accomplished that made them proud. They should write down a brief few words about what they accomplished.

Then ask them to turn over the paper and think of three words that describe their strengths that made that accomplishment happen. They should write each of the three words on a sticky note and put it on their outer circle.

Then make groups of three.

The first student to go has his circle page turned around so they can relate the story of their accomplishment.

The other students listen and then think of words that describe why the student was successful. One word goes on each of three sticky notes.

The student turns over their circle and the two students add their six notes to the outer circle. Each student of the three gets to tell their success story and get three sticky words in their outer circle.

Then everyone goes back to their seat with their circles.

Have each student read all the words on their sticky notes in their outside circle. There should be the three they put there and six more from the other two listeners. Sometimes, the same words will come out like **brave** or **caring**. After reading the words that describe their success, they then choose the three sticky notes that they believe captured their strength in that accomplishment.

Have them put those three inside the inner circle.

Then go around the room and ask each student to say their three strengths out loud to the class. The class can applaud each person's strengths. They can add this page to their journal and write about their experience.



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Please refrain from asking to see their journal. Explain that this is something they do for themselves. Their journal is a conversation with themselves. If they want to be successful and happy, they need to know their feelings, their strengths and how to manage their lives. To do this, the journal offers “prompts” or sentence beginners to get them to reflect. As they answer these questions, they will learn more about who they are and what they need to remember about their strengths.

Young people these days face unrealistic standards of physical beauty, monetary resources, unrealistic consumption and lack of specific guidance about maintaining meaningful relationships. In Month Two we will introduce loving yourself and being grateful for your “gifts”. It is the inner beauty that is important and to combat the negativity that comparisons in media and social media, we need to give our students tools. Developing the inner character traits of trustworthiness, kindness, integrity are things everyone can do. Distinguishing between inner and outer beauty is key to inoculating our youth against current societal norms and providing the path to healthy relationships and strong self-worth.

Students can journal every day or choose to do it weekly. This is for them to decide.

You are providing the motivation to journal when you do in-class visualizations and the activities that reinforce positive self-image.

