



SOURCES

OF STRENGTH



**RESOURCES FOR PRACTICING STRENGTH
DURING THE BREAK**

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LETTER FROM SOURCES OF STRENGTH

The Sources of Strength mission is to create a Well World and we accomplish that by partnering with you to spread **Hope, Help and Strength**. Having a break from school creates a unique opportunity for everyone to engage with Strengths in new ways and discover the simple things we can do as individuals, households, and communities to care for ourselves and each other.

At Sources of Strength we help teams of students and school staff identify their strengths, or protective factors. We've spent the last 20 years talking to people who have gone through tough times, asking them how they got through them. The eight strengths on the Wheel represent their answers, or the categories we can draw strength from: Family Support, Positive Friends, Mentors, Healthy Activities, Generosity, Spirituality, Physical Health, and Mental Health.

We have created a handful of resources for you: check-ins and conversation starters, activities for exploring emotions, and practices for you and for the people in your household to calm, to cope, and to connect this break.

We have compiled these activities and resources from our elementary curriculum and our middle school and high school programs. Share these resources with your friends and neighbors if you like. Learn more on our website at sourcesofstrength.org, and let's practice What Helps Us together.

- The Team at Sources of Strength

For more resources, visit sourcesofstrength.org, follow us [@sourcesofstrength](#) on Instagram & Facebook, and [@sourcesstrength](#) on Twitter, contact us at hello@sourcesofstrength.org.



THE WHEEL



DEFINITION OF STRENGTHS

FAMILY SUPPORT	Whether related to us by blood, or by choice, these are the people who support, nurture and care for us.
POSITIVE FRIENDS	Positive friends lift us up, make us laugh, are honest with us, and are there for us when we need them.
MENTORS	A mentor is an experienced person who shares their insight to help guide us, and help us draw on our own strengths to be the best version of ourselves.
HEALTHY ACTIVITIES	When we feel stressed, healthy activities-- whether they are physical, social, or emotional-- help us unwind, lift our mood, and gain clarity.
GENEROSITY	Generosity can look a lot of different ways, from donating money or time to being intentionally kind to other people. These acts of kindness towards others, big or small, can actually make an impact on how we feel about ourselves.
SPIRITUALITY	Spirituality is practiced in many ways, but at its core we consider what gives a sense of purpose and connection in our spirit. Thankfulness is a profound way to practice spirituality together, no matter what our cultural heritage and/or spiritual tradition.
PHYSICAL HEALTH	When we are injured, we don't have to stay in pain. We can get better, with access to the medical care we need and deserve. Physical and social/emotional pain are often integrated and it's important to take care of our bodies, hearts, and minds.
MENTAL HEALTH	Mental Health is all about getting the support we need and deserve to help us when we are struggling. Our mental health is a very important part of living a healthy life, and oftentimes, getting together with a trusted person, a counselor, or a doctor, can help empower us to overcome internal struggles we might be facing.

NINE STRENGTH-BASED CONVERSATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Below are conversation prompts and activities centered around the eight pieces of the Sources of Strength Wheel. Complete these together as a household.

A few tips as you practice your strength at home this break season:

1. Have fun! Games, music, and laughter are essential ingredients for our mental health and wellness. When we laugh and play, we connect with each other, and relational connections will build up our mental health.
2. When hard things happen, honor and acknowledge them, and then turn toward your strengths. Tell the truth even if it's hard, but make sure to spend the majority of your time not just focused on the hard, but talking about what helps. Who were the Positive Friends who supported you? What are the Healthy Activities that bring you joy? How was your Spirituality a strength? When talking about an obstacle or a challenge, try to focus 10% of the story on what hurts, and 90% of the story on what helps. This allows us to move through difficulty and models healthy strategies for others.

STRENGTHS POSTER

Check-in Prompt: What is giving you strength this break season? Think of the people, places, and things that are helping you mentally, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. What people, places, practices, and activities are you excited about growing this break?

Activity: Create a household Strengths Poster together. Using crayons, markers, pencils, pens, etc. and a blank piece of paper, cardboard, or poster, ask everyone in your home to draw the things that are giving them strength over the break and over the last several months. These can be people, activities, pets, places, practices, traditions - all the things that fill each person up and make their spirits soar. Have everyone draw at the same time and put down as many things as possible in 5-10 minutes. Keep in mind that you are creating a poster/paper covered in pictures, not a list. Once finished, share together why these things give you strength and hang your poster in your home.

Gratitude Practice: Ask each person in your home to draw three things they are thankful for. You are on your way to starting a new healthy habit!

FAMILY SUPPORT

Check-in Prompt: Who are the people that provide you with Family Support? These can be people in our foster families, step families, biological families, extended families, and chosen families. What is one new healthy practice you can start with the people you consider family support during this break?

Activity: Choose someone you consider family and find a way to let them know you are thankful for them. Mail a care package with letters, artwork, and a homemade meal/treat, or send a small gift. Connect with them virtually through social media, a phone call, or email.

Gratitude Practice: Share with your household three people you are thankful for or three people you are thankful provided you with Family Support.



POSITIVE FRIENDS

Check-in Prompt: What qualities do you look for in a Positive Friend? Have each person in the household share a story about a Positive Friend in their life.

Activity: How can each person in your household connect with a Positive Friend this break? Gather the household and make an action plan for how each person will connect with at least one Positive Friend this break.

Gratitude Practice: Write down the names of Positive Friends or the times you've experienced positive friendship in your life. What qualities did they have that you are thankful for?

MENTORS

Check-in Prompt: Mentors are the people and role models in our lives whom we can trust and talk to. They often inspire and challenge us to be the best version of ourselves. Mentors could be a teacher, coach, parent, family member, or community member. Who is one Mentor that you can reach out to this break? What are some things they have helped you with in your life?

Activity: Write thank you cards to each of your Mentors. Everyone can make their own and personalize them however they wish. Consider sending the card in the mail or as an email, video, or text message.

Gratitude Practice: Write down three people who you look up to and why - whether that person is a Mentor, a Family Support, Positive Friend, coach, celebrity, teacher, or another leader.

HEALTHY ACTIVITIES

Check-in Prompt: What Healthy Activities help you feel joy? What Healthy Activities help you to calm and unwind? What are the things you do to help you energize? What is one new Healthy Activity you can try this break?

Activity: Create a list of break Healthy Activities you can complete together. These can be new skills you are learning (playing an instrument, yoga, new recipes), favorite pastimes (game nights, evening walks, dance parties), and ideas for bringing calm to the home (reading, meditation, writing). See how many Healthy Activities you can complete together!

Gratitude Practice: Take photos of three things you are thankful for today.

GENEROSITY

Check-in Prompt: When was a time that you received Generosity, and what was a time when you practiced Generosity? How did those examples of Generosity impact you?

Activity: Do some research together on local opportunities to display Generosity this break. As a family, set a goal to do one generous act in your community!

Gratitude Practice: Show and tell three things you are thankful for with your household.

SPIRITUALITY

Check-in Prompt: Spirituality reminds us that we are connected to more than just ourselves. We can lift our spirits by practicing our faith traditions, experiencing prayer, mindfulness, and meditation, engaging in our cultural rituals, ceremonies, and customs, and by practicing gratitude. What are some people, places, or practices that lift your spirit? What are some ways you can lift your spirit this break?

Activity: As a household, use art supplies, magazines or photographs to make a map of places that lift your spirit and help you feel like you are a part of something bigger than yourselves. If you can't physically go to this location right now, use your imagination and your memory! Share stories to remember the way it feels to be at/in this spiritual place.

Gratitude Practice: Journal three things you are thankful for. Consider writing a poem or haiku!

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Check-in Prompt: What does Physical Health mean to you? What are things you do everyday that make you feel strong in your body?

Activity: Choose three ways as a household you can practice increasing your Physical Health this break. This could include doing an exercise everyday, a hydration challenge, creating new recipes together, and any other ways the people in your home can think of to keep your bodies strong.

Gratitude Practice: Share three things you are thankful for with a member of your household and ask them to do the same.

MENTAL HEALTH

Check-in Prompt: It is normal to go through ups and downs in life, and we all experience emotions that can feel big or overwhelming. Whether you experience big anger, or anxiety or you feel sad, down, or depressed, what helps you manage those emotions and bring them back down to size?

Activity: Create a Household Wellness Plan or gather to create individual Wellness Plans to help when someone is feeling big emotions. Encourage each person to create a list with ideas that include people, pets, and places where you can find connection and ideas for things that help you experience fun, energy, calm, connection, and reflection. Or create homemade journals together for everyone to practice daily journaling!

Gratitude Practice: Reflect on all the ways you have already practiced gratitude over the break and consider continuing the practice for the next 21 days using art, photography, conversation, or journaling.

ADDITIONAL CONVERSATION PROMPTS

Below are some additional conversation prompts you can use for household discussions, writing prompts, or conversation starters during meals.

FAMILY SUPPORT

- What is an example of a time Family Support was really strong for you?
- Who do you see as your chosen family (i.e. best friends' parents, friends of your parents, a coach, mentor, or friends)?
- What unique traditions do you have in your family?
- How do you provide Family Support to other members of your household?

POSITIVE FRIENDS

- Who is a Positive Friend for you and what do you appreciate about them?
- Share about a time you were a Positive Friend and when someone was a Positive Friend for you.
- How can you become more of a Positive Friend?

MENTORS AND TRUSTED ADULTS

- Who is a Mentor for you and what do you appreciate about them?
- Who is a Trusted Adult that makes you feel safe to be yourself?
- Which adult do you most commonly ask for help, whether with school, a social issue, etc?

HEALTHY ACTIVITIES

- Share a story of how you used Healthy Activities to cope with a difficult situation.
- Name three Healthy Activities you enjoy - include one energizing and one calming activity.
- What is a Healthy Activity you might like to try?
- What is a Healthy Activity you can do solo? What is one you can do with others?

SPIRITUALITY

- What traditions, practices, culture, or religion help you experience Spirituality?
- What are spiritual or gratitude practices that help you?
- Share about a time when you felt peaceful and content.
- Share about a time when you felt connected to something bigger than yourself.

GENEROSITY

- Who do you think is the most generous person you know and why?
- Name a person who has been generous towards you. How have they shown Generosity?
- What is one way you can show Generosity today?

PHYSICAL HEALTH

- Share about a time that medical access was a strength for you or your family or friends.
- How can you keep your body healthy?
- How can you show support for medical and mental health professionals?

MENTAL HEALTH

- When you feel overwhelmed, name the person who helps you feel calm?
- When you are angry, what is an activity you can do to cool down and to cope?
- When you feel sadness, who are the people you want to connect with?

THANKFULNESS

- What are three things you are thankful for today?
- Who are three people you are thankful for today?
- What are three experiences you've had that you are thankful for?
- Write a short thank you note to someone you are grateful to have in your life.

BELONGING

- When is a time you felt that you belonged?
- Who is someone that makes you feel like you belong?
- How do you help others feel that they belong?
- What makes you unique?

GROWING OUR STRENGTHS

- One thing that I have done to grow stronger is _____.
- One thing that I can do to grow in strength is _____.
- A person that I can support in growth is _____.
- What strength have you used in the past week? How did it help?
- Who is someone who has helped you grow in strength? How has this helped you?

CONNECTION

- When did you connect someone else to help?
- When did you connect someone to a Healthy Activity?
- How has someone else connected you to Mental Health?
- How have you connected others to your community?
- Where would you go to connect a struggling friend to help?

ADDITIONAL STRENGTH-BASED ACTIVITIES

Below are some different strength-based activities your household can practice this break.

FAMILY SUPPORT

- Call a family member, “just because”
- Take a sibling out for a fun activity
- Write your own family break mad lib
- Create a new family tradition
- Cook dinner for your family
- Recreate an awkward family photo
- Thank someone for being your family

POSITIVE FRIENDS

- Choose one friend to commit to checking in with once a week
- Plan a watch/listen party with friends
- Write a note thanking someone for being a Positive Friend
- Host a game night, party, or themed event with your Positive Friends
- Set a goal with a Positive Friend and work together to achieve it

MENTORS

- Tell your Mentor they’re doing a great job
- Challenge a Mentor to do a TikTok dance with you
- Ask a Mentor to tell you about a story about a time they learned a lesson
- Schedule a check-in with your Mentor
- Read a good book with your Mentor and then set up a time to discuss it

HEALTHY ACTIVITIES

- Take a one-hour screen break
- Cook or bake a new recipe
- Walk to a park
- Read a great book
- Try a new food
- Watch the clouds
- Cuddle with a pet
- Create a truly epic playlist
- Paint or draw
- Go on a hike

GENEROSITY

- Split wood for an elder in your community
- Shovel a neighbor’s walkway
- Buy gifts from small local businesses
- Do a litter pickup in your neighborhood
- Read a story to a younger sibling or neighbor
- Listen without any agenda
- Help an elderly neighbor or single parent
- Volunteer for a cause you care about

SPIRITUALITY

- Close your eyes and take the deepest breath you’ve taken all day. Repeat 3 times.
- Look at the night sky
- Name three things you are grateful for right now
- Practice yoga
- Pray
- Watch a live musical performance
- Sit by water and just breathe

PHYSICAL HEALTH

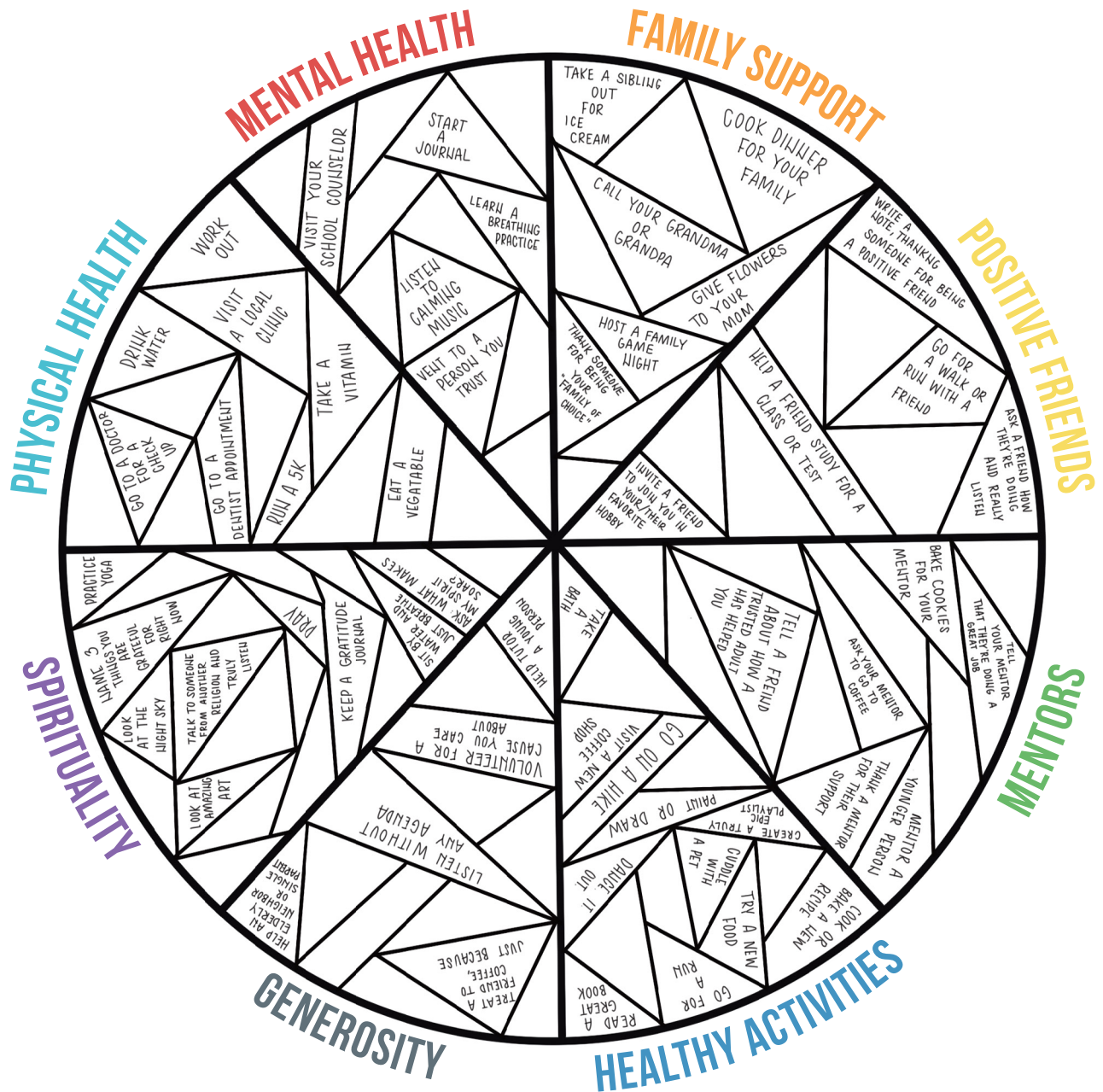
- Schedule a doctor or dentist appointment
- Take a shower or bath
- Give yourself a hand/foot massage
- Go for a walk or run
- Choose a healthy snack
- Sit in the sun
- Take a vitamin and eat a vegetable
- Floss (dance or dental practice)
- Get an annual physical
- Drink water

MENTAL HEALTH

- Color the Tangled Ball of Emotions
- Make a list of 3 self-care strategies to try
- Reach out to your school counselor
- Start a journal
- Learn a breathing practice
- Pick a Strength you’d like to grow and write down one idea of how to do that

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- SOURCES**
OF STRENGTH

STRENGTH CHECK-IN

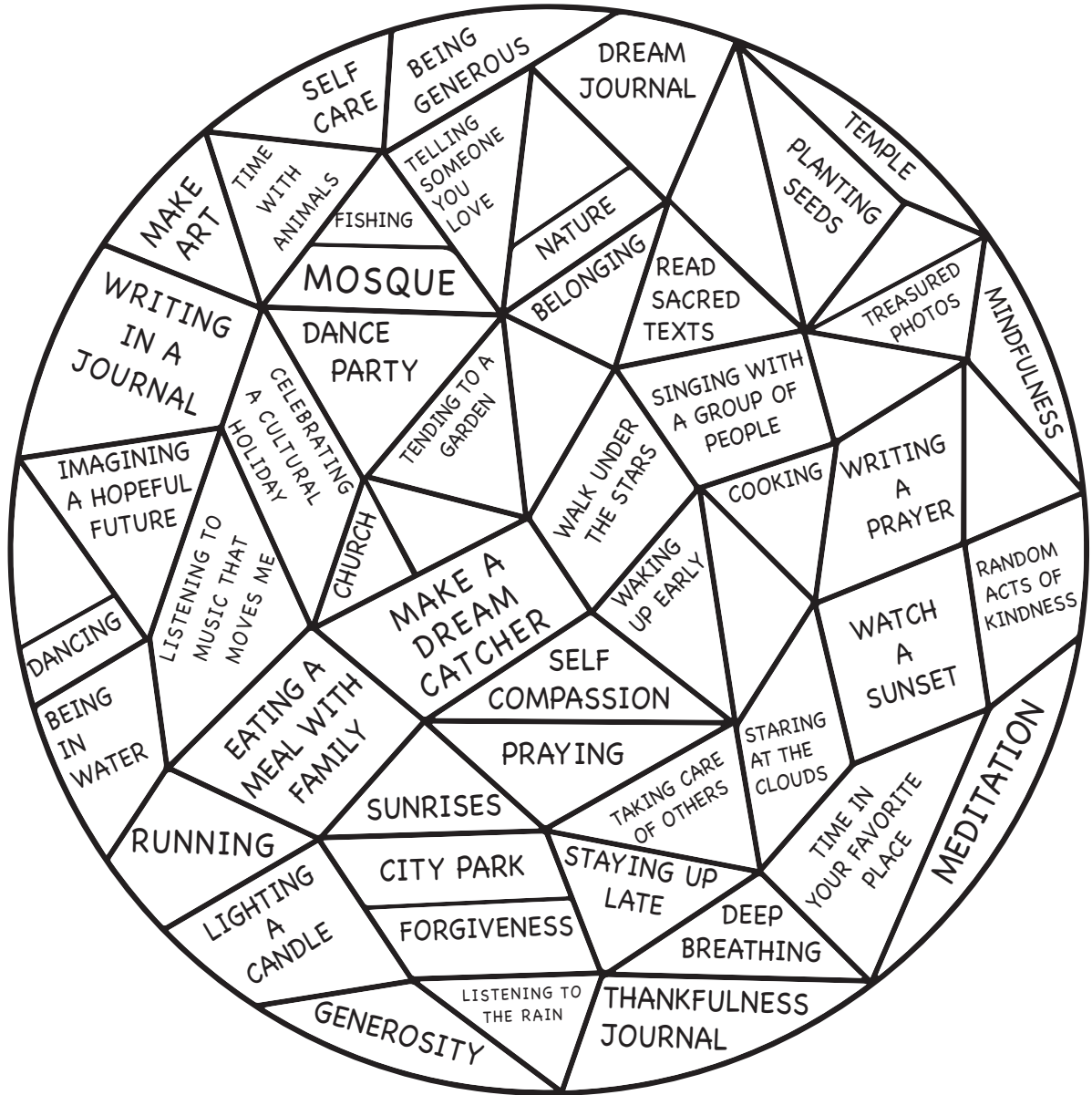


DIRECTIONS

COLOR IN THE ACTIVITIES ACCORDING TO THE INSTRUCTIONS BELOW.
FILL IN BLANK SPACES WITH OTHER WAYS TO PRACTICE STRENGTH

- ☐ = Activity I regularly do
- ☐ = Activity I've done recently
- ☐ = Activity I'd like to try

SPIRITUALITY



CHOOSE THREE COLORS TO REPRESENT THE DIFFERENT
PEOPLE, PLACES, AND PRACTICES WHERE
WE EXPERIENCE SPIRITUALITY

- ☐ MYSELF
- ☐ PEOPLE I KNOW
- ☐ OTHER PEOPLE IN THE WORLD

Name: _____

CHECK IN!

HOW DO YOU FEEL?



I FEEL AWESOME!



I'M DOING WELL.



NOT GOOD, NOT BAD, I'M FINE.



I AM ANGRY!



I FEEL SAD.



I FEEL WORRIED OR ANXIOUS.



I AM TIRED!

WHAT'S A STRENGTH YOU USED THIS WEEK?

MY STRENGTHS SELF-CARE CARD

1. Positive Friends I can talk to (list name and phone number):

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. Trusted Adults I can talk to:

- a. Family:
- b. Community:
- c. School:

3. If I am feeling down or sad, I can do these activities:

a. Physical activities/stress relievers (such as walking, biking, working out, yoga):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

b. Quiet, calming activities (such as taking a nap, writing in my journal, petting my dog):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

c. Concentration activities (such as watching a funny show, reading a novel, writing thank you notes):

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

4. Some things I can do to help others right now are:

- a.
- b.
- c.

5. Three things that I am grateful for:

- a.
- b.
- c.

6. Something good that has happened today or yesterday even in the midst of tough stuff:

If I am concerned about my thoughts right now, I can call a counselor at _____ or Suicide and Crisis Lifeline at 988

I have Strengths, and I am strong enough to ask for help if I need it.

One adult I can ask is _____ and their phone number is _____