



# WELL-BEING CURRICULUM

Produced by JTeen

Based on the book  
**“Mastering your mind”**

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**Topic:**

**Hack 1 Healthy Friendships**

**Grade Level:**

**7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade**



# Lesson 1

## Building Healthy Friendships

## **Objective:**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to identify and explain the key characteristics of a healthy friendship. Through class discussions and written reflections, they will demonstrate an understanding of unhealthy dynamics in friendships.

## **Materials Needed:**

- Whiteboard and markers for teachers
- Handouts A,B
- Writing materials for students (notebooks, pens)
- “Mastering Your Mind” book excerpt by Yaakov Barr (pages 11-15)

## **Lesson Plan (40 minutes):**

### **Introduction (5 minutes):**

- Discuss the significance of friendships in middle school and later life.
- Where appropriate include Torah sources (see book excerpt) on the importance of friendships.
- Share any of your own brief real-life example illustrating the impact of friendships on your life.

### **Recognizing Unhealthy Friendships (15 minutes):**

- Introduce the six types of healthy and unhealthy friendships using Handout A.
- Discuss the characteristics and behaviors associated with each type.

### **Group Activity (10 minutes):**

- Divide students into small groups.
- Using Handout B, provide scenarios depicting unhealthy friendships and ask the groups to identify the types of unhealthy friendship in each scenario.
- Encourage groups to discuss why the friendships are unhealthy and what would be the healthy alternative in each scenario.

### **Class Discussion (5 minutes):**

- ➡ Facilitate a class discussion where groups share their findings and insights.

### **Homework (5 minutes):**

- ➡ Briefly summarize the key points from the lesson.
- ➡ Assign students in their own spare time, to consider their own key friendships and to fill out the charts- Handout C





# Lesson 2

**Intuition, Making  
Friends, and Setting  
Boundaries**

## **Objective:**

Building on our understanding of healthy friendships from the previous lesson, students will explore the role of intuition in recognizing positive connections. They will also acquire practical tips for making friends and understand the significance of setting boundaries in maintaining healthy relationships.

## **Materials Needed:**

- Whiteboard and markers for teachers
- Appendix D and Handout E, F
- Writing materials for students (notebooks, pens)
- “Mastering your mind” book excerpt by Yaakov Barr (pages 15-20).

## **Lesson Plan (40 minutes):**

### **Review (5 minutes):**

- Review the concepts of recognizing healthy and unhealthy friendships from the previous lesson.

### **The Power of Intuition (5 minutes):**

- Discuss the role of instinct and intuition in identifying healthy and unhealthy friendships.
- Share any of your own stories or examples from your life where intuition played a role in recognizing healthy or unhealthy friendships. See Appendix D for a further example.

### **Tips for Making Friends (10 minutes):**

- Using Handout E, discuss the practical tips for making friends, such as being yourself, being trustworthy, being open-minded, not being too exclusive, and being patient.
- Share any of your own real-life examples of how these tips can help build friendships.

### **Setting Boundaries (5 minutes):**

- ➡ Using the beginning of Handout F, define boundaries and explain their importance in friendships.
- ➡ Discuss how setting and respecting boundaries can maintain healthy friendships.

### **Group Activity (10 minutes):**

- ➡ Divide students into pairs or small groups.
- ➡ Using Handout F, ask them to discuss the 5 scenarios where setting boundaries is necessary.

### **Summary & Homework (5 minutes):**

- ➡ Briefly summarize the key points from the lesson.
- ➡ Have students write about 3 boundaries they could be putting on their own friendships and how intuition and boundaries might have helped in previous unhealthy friendships.



# Lesson 3

## Confidence and Friendship

## Objective:

In this lesson, students will delve into confidence traps and their impact on friendships. Through scenarios and group activities, they will identify these traps and brainstorm strategies to overcome them. Additionally, they will learn additional strategies for enhancing friendships, such as active listening and practicing self-compassion.

## Materials Needed:

- Whiteboard and markers for teachers
- Handout G and Appendix H.
- Writing materials for students (notebooks, pens)
- “Mastering Your Mind” book by Yaakov Barr (pages 20-23)

## Lesson Plan (40 minutes):

### Review (5 minutes):

- Briefly recap the concepts of the previous lesson- intuition, making friends, and setting boundaries.

### Confidence Traps (5 minutes):

- Introduce the concept of the key confidence traps, including mind-reading, over-analyzing, and the fear of silence.
- Discuss how these traps can affect friendships.

### Group Activity (15 minutes):

- Using scenarios illustrating confidence traps- Handout G, ask each group to select a scenario and create a role-play that shows characters falling into a confidence trap and then successfully overcoming it. This activity encourages students to actively think about strategies to combat confidence traps in real-life friendship situations.
- Alternatively, using Handout G and the scenarios showing confidence traps in friendships, ask students to identify the traps and brainstorm strategies to overcome them.

### **Further Strategies to Enhance Friendships (10 minutes):**

- ➡ Using Appendix H, discuss more strategies for enhancing friendships, such as active listening, asking open-ended questions, empathy building and practicing self-compassion.
- ➡ In groups of two, role play putting the strategies into practice.

### **Summary & Homework (5 minutes):**

- ➡ Briefly summarize the key points from the lesson
- ➡ Assign students to practice one of the strategies discussed for overcoming confidence traps and write a brief reflection on their experience.

# HANDOUT A:

## TYPES OF HEALTHY AND UNHEALTHY FRIENDSHIPS

- ➔ Consider the characteristics and behaviors associated with each friendship type.

### Six types of healthy friendships

- 1. The Supporter:** A friend who genuinely cares about how you're doing, regularly checks in, and enjoys sharing in your happy moments while being there for you during tough times. This friend isn't just hanging out for their gain; they value the friendship for the real connection.
- 2. The Real Deal:** A friend with whom you can be your true self without worries. Whether you want to join in on their plans or just say no, you feel free to choose.
- 3. The Easy-going:** A friend who brings a sense of ease and happiness. You feel happy, relaxed, and totally yourself when you're around this friend or friendship group.
- 4. The Independent:** These are friends who get that you have a life outside of them! You're free to have other friends, and you don't feel constantly worried and responsible for them.
- 5. The Pillar:** A friend you can talk to about anything, even if it's something bothering you about them. No tiptoeing needed; it's all about being open and honest.
- 6. The Trusted:** This is a friend you can rely on if you want to share your inner thoughts. You know they won't spill the beans to anyone else. It's a bond built on trust.



## Six types of unhealthy friendships

- 1. The User:** If a friend only calls because they want something from you, they are not a real friend.
- 2. The Pusher:** This friend pushes and pressures you to behave in a way that is not in your comfort zone.
- 3. The Stressor:** This friend causes you to feel stressed, unhappy, and not your calm self when you are around them.
- 4. The Reliant:** This friend heavily relies on you, as you are their constant confidant. They drain you because you constantly worry about them and feel overly responsible for them.
- 5. The Volcano:** This friend is so sensitive or unpredictable that you never know what will upset them. You watch every word you say and constantly feel like you are walking on eggshells.
- 6. The Gossiper:** A person who gossips to you about everyone else might make for entertaining conversations, but don't be fooled. Someone who gossips to you probably gossips *about* you.

# HANDOUT B:

## 6 SCENARIOS SHOWING THE SIX UNHEALTHY FRIENDSHIPS

- ➔ Identify the types of unhealthy friendship in each scenario.
- ➔ Why are the friendships unhealthy and what would be the healthy alternative in each scenario.

- 1. Scenario:** Emma's friend frequently vents to her about her problems, making Emma feel overwhelmed by her constant negativity. Emma starts feeling anxious whenever the friend approaches.
- 2. Scenario:** Daniel's friend gets easily angered over trivial matters and directs his frustration at Daniel. Now, Daniel feels like he's walking on eggshells around his friend, afraid to upset him.
- 3. Scenario:** Miriam was once a close friend of Shifra, but Shifra began spreading rumors and sharing Miriam's secrets with others. Now, Miriam can't trust Shifra and feels betrayed.
- 4. Scenario:** Yaakov constantly pressures his friend Avi to skip school and hang out in the local park. He insists that it's the only way to have fun.
- 5. Scenario:** Sarah's friend always asks for help with her homework, but she never offers to help her in return. Whenever Sarah needs assistance, her friend says that she's too busy or unavailable.
- 6. Scenario:** Leah's friend can't make decisions without consulting her for advice, even minor choices like what to wear or eat. She becomes stressed when Leah is unavailable.

# HANDOUT C:

## WHAT ABOUT YOUR FRIENDSHIPS?

- ➔ Think about your 4 key friendships and fill out the charts to see if they fall into the healthy or unhealthy categories.

Do any of your friendships fit into these categories?

Types of healthy Friend	Friend 1	Friend 2	Friend 3	Friend 4
The Supporter				
The Real Deal				
The Easy-going				
The Independent				
The Pillar				
The Trusted				

Types of Unhealthy Friend	Friend 1	Friend 2	Friend 3	Friend 4
The User				
The Pusher				
The Stressor				
The Reliant				
The Volcano				
The Gossiper				

Mastering Your Mind: 10 Proven Life Hacks for Teen Happiness and Success.  
**Yaakov Barr (2024)**

# Appendix D:

## An Example Demonstrating Intuition.

Rachel had a new friend named Gitty, who initially seemed friendly and outgoing. They quickly became close, but over time, Rachel noticed some concerning behavior. Gitty sometimes made fun of Rachel in front of their other friends and called her a nickname that she knew Rachel didn't like. At first, Rachel wasn't sure how to react. She thought maybe it was just playful teasing and that she should brush it off. However, her intuition kept nagging at her, making her feel uncomfortable about how Gitty treated her. Rachel realized that deep down, she felt hurt and upset by Gitty's actions, even though Gitty claimed it was all in good fun.

Rachel decided to trust her intuition and address the issue. She talked to Gitty about how she felt, expressing that the teasing was hurtful and that she wanted their friendship to be respectful and supportive. Gitty's response was dismissive, and she continued with the hurtful behavior.

Rachel's intuition told her that this wasn't a healthy friendship. Despite the initial bond they had formed, Rachel decided to distance herself from Gitty and seek out friends who treated her with kindness and respect.

# HANDOUT E:

## 8 PRACTICAL TIPS FOR MAKING GOOD FRIENDS

### 1. Be YOU

So many teens try so hard—too hard—to make friends and yet complain that it doesn't work. They try to impress, show off, look cool, crack jokes, and “talk big.” Although this might make them popular in the short term, it won't create real friendships in the long run. So ditch the show. Be yourself.

### 2. Be loyal and trustworthy

Loyalty means supporting someone even in challenging situations. It means being honest and caring, no matter what. Trustworthy means keeping what is said to you private and not gossiping behind your friend's back.

### 3. Be open-minded

It is human nature to judge people based on initial impressions and decide if “they are my type or not.” Sometimes, our first impressions may be correct, but we still need to keep an open mind.

### 4. Be patient

Friendships have to be natural, and they can take a while to develop. Take the time to get to know the person. Remember that different people will also have different qualities, which will take time to discover and appreciate.

### 5. Avoid being exclusive

If possible, it's always better to have a wide social circle. Have friends with different personalities and interests rather than one overly intense friendship. It's a risk worth taking!

## **6. Look after yourself**

If there's a certain activity that you don't want to do, or you feel that you need some "me time," then be ready to put yourself first. That sometimes means saying "no," even if it disappoints someone else. A good friend is one who cares and supports you, but it doesn't mean you are meant to be their "therapist" and be fully responsible for their emotional health.

## **7. It's okay if you argue**

Even the closest of friends are going to have disagreements at times. With good friends, an argument should not mean the end of the friendship, rather you will both know how to step back, cool off, and make amends by working things out.

## **8. Just do it**

Summon the courage and approach potential friends. Don't wait. Be bold. Take the risk and speak up. The worst that could happen is the person you approach is not interested in being your friend. Yet alternatively, the best that can happen is that this person will become your new friend. It's a risk worth taking.

# HANDOUT F:

## 6 SCENARIOS SHOWING BOUNDARY SETTING

Boundaries are like invisible lines that we draw around ourselves to protect our feelings and personal space. Just like how we might have rules at home or at school, boundaries in friendships help us feel comfortable and respected. By setting a boundary you're letting them know what's okay and what's not okay with you. Respecting boundaries means listening to your friend's wishes and not doing things that make them uncomfortable. Basically, boundaries are about making sure everyone feels happy, safe, and respected in the friendship.

### Scenario 1: Constant Borrowing

- Michal and Dina have been friends for a long time. However, Dina frequently borrows money from Michal and never pays her back. This has started to strain their friendship, and Michal feels taken advantage of.

**Boundary Setting:** Michal realizes that setting a financial boundary is necessary. She has a conversation with Dina, explaining that she's happy to help occasionally but can't continue lending money without repayment. They agree to a plan for repaying the borrowed money.

### Scenario 2: Invasion of Privacy

- Simon and Binny are best friends. Simon recently discovered that Binny has been going through his personal belongings and reading his private journal without permission.

**Boundary Setting:** Simon recognizes that his privacy is being violated. He talks to Binny, explaining how important it is for friends to respect each other's personal space and privacy. He sets a clear boundary that his personal belongings are off-limits without his permission.

## Scenario 3: Excessive Demands on Time

- ➔ Zissy and Abbey are close friends, but Zissy starts calling Abbey multiple times a day and expects her to be available at all hours. Abbey feels overwhelmed by the constant demands on her time.

**Boundary Setting:** Abbey understands the need to set boundaries for her time. She has an open conversation with Zissy, expressing her feelings and explaining that she needs some space for her own activities and responsibilities. They agree on designated times for phone calls and hangouts.

## Scenario 4: Overstepping in Relationships

- ➔ In Simon and Binny's friendship, Binny often interferes in Simon's other friendships, offering unsolicited advice and making negative comments about Simon's friends.

**Boundary Setting:** Simon recognizes the need to set boundaries around friendships. Simon talks to Binny, explaining that while they value Binny's friendship, it's important for Binny to respect Simon's choices in friendships and refrain from intrusive comments.

## Scenario 5: Sharing Personal Information

- ➔ Although Dina and Michal have been friends for a while, Dina often shares Michal's personal stories with others without her consent.

**Boundary Setting:** Michal feels her trust has been breached. She has an honest conversation with Dina, expressing how important trust is for their friendship. Michal sets a clear boundary that personal stories and secrets should remain confidential unless explicitly told otherwise.



# HANDOUT G:

## CONFIDENCE TRAP SCENARIOS

### **Scenario 1:**

#### **Situation:**

Miri has been friends with Shelly for a while, but Miri has noticed that Shelly has become distant recently. Miri assumes that Shelly's upset with her for something she has done.

#### **Confidence Trap: Mind-Reading**

Instead of asking Shelly if everything is okay, Miri continues to speculate and becomes anxious about their friendship.

### **Scenario 2:**

#### **Situation:**

Danny received a text message from his best friend that seemed abrupt and not as friendly as usual.

#### **Confidence Trap: Over-Analyzing**

Danny spends hours analyzing every word of the message, wondering if he did something wrong and if his friend is mad at him.

## **Scenario 3:**

### **Situation:**

Rafi said something stupid when he was having a discussion with a group of friends.

### **Confidence Trap: Replays**

Instead of seeing it as a normal occurrence, Rafi ruminates and replays what he said over and over in his mind, which makes him feel rather miserable and nervous for the next time he is chatting with his friends.

## **Scenario 4:**

### **Situation:**

Mindi and Shira have not known each other for too long and are hanging out after school. Their conversation suddenly stops and goes silent.

### **Confidence Trap: Fear of Silence**

Feeling nervous and uncomfortable with the silence, Mindi quickly fills the gap in the conversation by bringing up a random topic.

# Appendix H:

## Further Ideas For Enhancing Friendships

- 1. Active Listening:** Active listening involves fully focusing on what the other person is saying without interrupting or immediately formulating a response and showing them with your body language that you are listening. It's a powerful way to avoid jumping to conclusions, misinterpreting cues, and making the other person feel listened to.
- 2. Asking Open-Ended Questions:** Encourage students to ask open-ended questions that invite deeper conversation. Instead of assuming or mind-reading, they can ask questions like, "Is everything okay? You seem a bit quiet today. Is there something on your mind?" This opens the door for their friends to express themselves more freely and provides a clearer understanding of their feelings and thoughts.
- 3. Empathy Building:** Encourage students to put themselves in their friends' shoes. If they are aware of another person's struggles, or their friend's behavior seems off, they can try to understand what might be going on in their friend's life. This can lead to more compassionate and empathetic responses rather than being insensitive or jumping to negative conclusions.
- 4. Practicing Self-Compassion:** Self-compassion is the practice of being kind and understanding toward oneself, especially during challenging or uncertain situations. Teach students that it's okay to have moments of doubt or insecurity in their friendships, and they should treat themselves with the same care they would offer to a friend. When they catch themselves in a confidence trap, they can remind themselves that it's normal to have such thoughts but that they can work through them constructively.





# JEALOUSY



# Lesson 4

## Understanding and Overcoming Jealousy

## Objective:

As we investigate jealousy in relationships, students will recognize its negative consequences and explore practical strategies to manage and overcome jealousy. Through class discussions and personal reflections, they will gain insights into how jealousy can harm friendships, academics, and family dynamics.

## Materials Needed:

- Whiteboard and markers for teachers
- Handout H
- Writing materials for students (notebooks, pens)
- “Mastering Your Mind” book by Yaakov Barr (pages 23-26)

## Lesson Plan (40 minutes):

### Introduction (5 minutes):

- Begin by defining jealousy as a feeling of envy or resentment toward others, often triggered by the other person’s perceived advantages or successes.
- Where appropriate include Torah sources (see book excerpt) on the importance of friendships.
- Explain that jealousy is a common human emotion and can occur in various aspects of life, including friendships, school, and family.

### The Damage Caused by Jealousy (10 minutes):

- Discuss the negative effects of jealousy, such as damaged relationships, increased stress and anxiety, and low self-esteem.
- Using Handout H, discuss examples of how jealousy can harm friendships and personal well-being and use any of your own examples if you have.
- Facilitate a class discussion or with small groups where students can share their thoughts on jealousy and its effects and encourage students to share their experiences with jealousy if they feel comfortable doing so.



### Noticing Jealousy (5 minutes):

- ➔ Explain the importance of recognizing and acknowledging feelings of jealousy as the first way of overcoming it.
- ➔ Discuss common physical and emotional signs of jealousy, such as comparing, insecurity, resentment, and negative thoughts.

### Reducing Jealous Behaviors (5 minutes):

Introduce strategies for managing and reducing jealous behaviors:

- ➔ **Less Comparing/Looking:** Teach them to minimize excessive comparison and jealousy-triggering behaviors.
- ➔ **Less Copying:** Emphasize the importance of finding one's unique path rather than imitating others.
- ➔ **Don't pull others down:** Help students understand that although it's normal to pull down those we are jealous of, it doesn't help one's jealous feelings.

### Promoting Self-Acceptance (10 minutes):

- ➔ Discuss the idea that jealousy often stems from a lack of self-acceptance and self-worth.
- ➔ Encourage students to recognize their own qualities and strengths (however small) by writing a list of them.
- ➔ Explain how focusing on what they are grateful for in their lives can counteract jealousy.

### Summary & Homework (5 minutes):

- ➔ Briefly summarize the key points from the lesson
- ➔ Assign students to write down about a time when they experienced jealousy in the past and how they could have overcome it using the strategies learnt.
- ➔ Ask them to identify one strategy from the lesson that they can apply the next time they feel jealous.

# HANDOUT H:

## THE IMPACT OF JEALOUSY

### **Example 1: Jealousy in Friendship**

Jonathan and Michael have been best friends since childhood. However, when Jonathan sees Michael getting closer to a new friend, he begins to feel jealous. Instead of talking to Michael about his feelings and working on them, Jonathan starts distancing himself and becomes resentful. This jealousy strains their friendship, and Michael senses Jonathan's negative emotions, causing tension. Jonathan's jealousy damages their once-strong bond, leading to a strained and less enjoyable friendship.

### **Example 2: Academic Jealousy**

In a school setting, students often experience jealousy when they perceive their peers as more academically successful than them. Yael becomes jealous of her classmate Rivka's consistent top grades. Instead of finding ways to improve her own study habits and accepting herself the way she is, she becomes resentful and less motivated to excel. This jealousy harms her grades and overall well-being by increasing stress and anxiety.

### **Example 3: Jealousy in Family**

Jealousy can also affect family dynamics. Consider siblings Michael and Yael, who both want a close group of friends to hang out with. When Michael keeps getting invited out to see his friends, Yael becomes jealous. She compares herself unfavorably to her brother, leading to feelings of inadequacy and self-doubt. She checks every time he goes out to see if he is going to see his friends. This jealousy damages their sibling relationship and takes a toll on Yael's self-esteem and mental well-being.

# Hack 1 - Healthy Friendships Quiz

Note: Some questions may have more than one correct answer

1. What is a potential negative consequence of unhealthy friendships?
  - a) Increased self-esteem
  - b) Decreased stress
  - c) Negative peer pressure
  - d) Feeling unhappy
2. Which one of these will help you make good friends?
  - a) Make yourself extra friendly and cool
  - b) Be trustworthy
  - c) Try only pick potential friends who are similar to you
  - d) If it doesn't work immediately then find a different person to be friendly with
3. What is the main purpose of using your instinct to recognize healthy friendships?
  - a) To make you suspicious of everyone
  - b) To help you find friends who are exactly like you
  - c) To warn you about potentially negative friends
  - d) To make you overly critical of your friends
4. When it comes to unhealthy friendship types, what is a sign of a stressor?
  - a) Making you laugh and have fun
  - b) Causing you to feel tense and uncomfortable
  - c) Listening and providing emotional support
  - d) Always agreeing with you

5. How can less comparing help you overcome jealousy?
  - a) By not focusing on others and what they have
  - b) By stopping you from thinking that others have more than you
  - c) It doesn't
  - d) By focusing on your negative aspects
  
6. Which strategy(s) helps in managing jealousy in friendships?
  - a) Talking negatively about your friends
  - b) Sharing your jealous feelings with someone you trust
  - c) Understanding your feelings
  - d) Ignoring your feelings
  
7. What are some signs of someone experiencing jealousy in a friendship?
  - a) Complimenting their friends
  - b) Encouraging their friends' successes
  - c) Feeling resentful of their friends' achievements
  - d) Supporting their friends' goals
  
8. What qualities should a person have to make friends?
  - a) Be okay if there are arguments
  - b) Be willing to lie when necessary
  - c) Be open-minded and non-judgmental
  - d) Be patient
  
9. What are some common confidence traps?
  - a) Over-analyzing the conversation
  - b) Trying to work out what the other person is thinking
  - c) Making sure that there are no silences in the conversation
  - d) Stay away from people; it's less stressful
  
10. Which one of these is an unhealthy friendship type?
  - a) The volcano
  - b) The earthquake
  - c) The spender
  - d) The user

# ANSWERS

1. C.D

2. B

3. C

4. B

5. A.B

6. B.C

7. C

8. A.C.D

9. A.B.C

10. A.D