



Connections for Catholic School Districts

The Ministry of Education's ***Mental Health Literacy Modules for Grade 10 Career Studies (GLC20)*** provide a ready-made opportunity to enhance learning about mental health and well-being. The modules highlight how students can build their mental health literacy in preparation for their transition to post-secondary education and/or the job market. This makes the modules a strategic place to embed faith in mental health learning by linking these lessons to Catholic Social Teachings and the Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations.

Moreover, the support of students' well-being and mental health aligns with Catholic Social Teachings by honouring and protecting the dignity of every student. This document provides some suggestions to integrate faith as you support students' mental health literacy. Take a look at faith-based learning through the lens of mental health to find even more ideas.

"When baking a loaf of bread, one of the first ingredients to prepare is the yeast. A relatively small amount of yeast must be added and carefully worked into the dough in order to have maximum effect. For teachers in Catholic schools, **CGEs act like the leaven in the bread**. As in baking, the results are not the same when yeast is added after the loaf has already been baked. It is important to recognize CGEs, not as the icing on the cake, but rather as the leaven in the bread."

Source: *Stewards of the Gift, Civics Grade 10, 2010, page 8*



STUDENT VOICE

- Before you begin, consider inviting students to review the [Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectation Prompts](#) and highlight the ones they feel support mental health and connect best to careers and future planning.
- You may also wish to encourage students to engage in scripture by identifying personal passages that resonate with what they have learned.



TRY IT!

As students reflect on the many connections between their faith and their mental health and well-being, consider taking time to reflect, as well. How does faith support you? Which practises are most meaningful in your own life? Are there any you'd like to enhance?



MODULE 1: STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING STRESS AND NAVIGATING BALANCE

Check-In: Understanding what you're good at and what you can do

- We are all wonderfully made! The Catholic faith teaches that each person is unique with their own gifts and talents. This is an opportunity for students to reflect on their unique gifts and talents.
- Students could also use the Catholic Graduate Expectations as a reference point for their reflection.
- Within some of the questions, students might also highlight how faith supports their well-being (e.g., How do you spend your free time? What are you passionate about? What activities make you feel empowered?).

Discussion prompt:

- What skills and abilities within the Catholic Graduate Expectations come naturally to you?
- Which faith practices do you lean on most often?

Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations

4 (a) Demonstrates a confident and positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others.

4 (g) Examines and reflects on one's personal values, abilities and aspirations influencing life's choices and opportunities.

Scripture

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. *Psalm 139:14*

For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. *Ephesians 2:10*

Virtues and Values

Hope, Wisdom, Love, Joy, Self-Control, Perseverance, Gentleness, Forgiveness, Humility

Minds On: Building a shared understanding of stress

- Within this activity, students learn that there are varied definitions of stress and that our experiences may be impacted by our identities and lived experiences.

Discussion prompt:

- How does faith influence our experiences of stress?

Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations

2 (a) Listens actively and critically to understand and learn in light of gospel values

2 (c) Presents information and ideas clearly and honestly and with sensitivity to others

7 (f) Respects and affirms the diversity and interdependence of the world's peoples and cultures.

Scripture

Let no evil talk come out of your mouths, but only what is useful for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. *Ephesians 4:29*

Virtues and Values

Wisdom, Compassion, Empathy, Humility



MODULE 1: STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING STRESS AND NAVIGATING BALANCE	
<p>Video: Understanding stress management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students might be invited to consider how they can draw upon their faith to respond to the everyday ups and downs and challenges we all face. • Students might also consider how judgement or discrimination based on faith may be a source of stress. 	<p>Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations</p> <p>2 (a) Listens actively and critically to understand and learn in light of gospel values.</p> <p>7 (f) Respects and affirms the diversity and interdependence of the world’s peoples and cultures.</p> <p>7 (g) Respects and understands the history, cultural heritage, and pluralism of today’s contemporary society</p> <p>Scripture My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy, because you know that the testing of your faith produces endurance; and let endurance have its full effect, so that you may be mature and complete, lacking in nothing. <i>James 1:2-4</i></p> <p>Virtues and Values Wisdom, Understanding</p>
<p>Getting back in our optimal stress range – routines and strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are many routines and strategies that students could draw on from their beliefs and faith to support their mental health and help them manage stress • Educators could also suggest and/or lead the class in a variety of additional faith-based strategies, such as prayer or Christian meditation. <p>Discussion prompt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do you make faith part of your day-to-day routine? • How do your faith and faith-based practices help keep you in the optimal zone? • What strategies have you tried or learned about through faith? 	<p>Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations</p> <p>3 (a) Recognizes there is more grace in our world than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges.</p> <p>4 (b) Demonstrates flexibility and adaptability.</p> <p>4 (e) Sets appropriate goals and priorities in school, work, and personal life.</p> <p>4 (f) Applies effective communication, decision-making, problem-solving, time and resource management skills.</p> <p>4 (h) Participates in leisure and fitness activities for a balanced and healthy lifestyle.</p> <p>Scripture May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. <i>Romans 15:13</i></p> <p>Virtues and Values Humility, Gentleness, Faith, Hope, Community</p>



MODULE 1: STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING STRESS AND NAVIGATING BALANCE	
<p>Consolidation: Analyzing personal stress management strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> When analyzing personal stress management strategies, educators could prompt students to think about if the strategy aligns with their beliefs. You might also invite students to think about how some elements of faith don't depend on time, place, resources, etc. (e.g., we can remember scripture wherever we are). <p>Discussion prompt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the strategy uphold human dignity (my own and others)? Does it help me strengthen my relationship with God? 	<p>Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations</p> <p>1 (g) Understands that one's purpose or call in life comes from God and strives to discern and live out this call throughout life's journey.</p> <p>3 (d) Makes decisions in light of gospel values with an informed moral conscience.</p> <p>Scripture If any of you is lacking in wisdom, ask God, who gives to all generously and ungrudgingly, and it will be given you. <i>James 1:5</i></p> <p>Virtues and Values Honesty, Truth, Integrity, Faith, Moral Discernment</p>
<p>Exit card</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students might choose faith-based strategies as something they want to work on or try. Students might also highlight how routines tied to faith help them make stress management strategies and routines part of their daily lives (e.g., attending church, liturgies at school, family-based prayer). 	<p>Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations</p> <p>4 (e) Sets appropriate goals and priorities in school, work, and personal life.</p> <p>Scripture Without counsel, plans go wrong, but with many advisers they succeed. <i>Proverbs 15:22</i></p> <p>Virtues and Values Honesty, Integrity</p>



STUDENT VOICE

When asked about stress management strategies, Ontario students shared how their faith supports their mental health. When asked what helps them manage stress for instance students said:

- “Talking to God”
- “Praying many times throughout the day”



MODULE 2: KNOWING WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW TO SEEK SUPPORT	
<p>Check in: Thinking about what grounds you</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This video introduces connection to nature as an example of a grounding practice. Things that ground us help us feel calm, connected, and present in the current moment. • Students may wish to consider how their faith and faith practices ground and guide them in their everyday lives. 	<p>Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations 1 (I) Integrates faith with life</p> <p>Scripture that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. <i>Ephesians 3:17</i></p> <p>Virtues and Values Faith, Community, Wisdom</p>
<p>Minds on: Video – Recognizing signs stress is becoming problematic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider inviting a school, board, or community faith leader (e.g. Chaplain, parish priest, youth ministries leader) to introduce themselves and share a range of faith-based practices and services. 	<p>Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations 2 (a) Listens actively and critically to understand and learn in light of gospel values.</p> <p>Scripture I can do all things through him who strengthens me. <i>Philippians 4:13</i></p> <p>Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, I will hear you. <i>Jeremiah 29:12</i></p> <p>Virtues and Values Wisdom, Understanding, Courage</p>



MODULE 2: KNOWING WHEN, WHERE, AND HOW TO SEEK SUPPORT	
<p>Action & Consolidation: Identifying and understanding possible supports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When identifying possible supports and building a personal navigation plan, students might make connections to their faith in terms of who they connect with for support. For example, they might mention faith leaders, chaplains, or faith-based groups. • This activity could also relate to Catholic Social Teachings and the importance of caring for each other’s dignity. 	<p>Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations</p> <p>3 (a) Recognizes there is more grace in our world than sin and that hope is essential in facing all challenges.</p> <p>4 (a) Demonstrates a confident and positive sense of self and respect for the dignity and welfare of others.</p> <p>6 (a) Relates to family members in a loving, compassionate and respectful manner</p> <p>Scripture Ask, and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. <i>Matthew 7:7-8</i></p> <p>Virtues and Values Hope, Love, Community, Courage</p>
<p>Exit card</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students might identify some faith-based supports as people or places they can access when they need help for their mental health. • Students might identify their faith as a reason for reaching out for support, supporting others, or connecting others with support. 	<p>Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations</p> <p>4 (e) Sets appropriate goals and priorities in school, work, and personal life.</p> <p>Scripture Where there is no guidance, a nation falls, but in an abundance of counselors there is safety. <i>Proverbs 11:14</i></p> <p>Virtues and Values Honesty, Integrity, Courage</p>



Supportive Transitions/Mindful Practices to Support Your Mental Health

- Consider offering an opportunity to pray or engage in [Christian meditation](#)
- Many additional activities are available through [Faith and Wellness: A Daily Mental Health Resource](#) (created by School Mental Health Ontario and the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association)

References

- [Ontario Catholic School Graduate Expectations](#)
- Stewards of the Gift, Civics Grade 10, 2010, page 8
- [Bible: New Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition \(NRSVCE\)](#)

