

## Unit 5C: The Heroic Response



### Vocabulary:

**Heroic Response** - The Heroic Response is the martial arts empowerment of mindful focus to conquer stress, pain, and fear.

### Teacher's Notes:

## How To Begin and End Each Lesson

### Begin With a Breath Brake

Instruct students to stand at attention, repeat the hand motions and the mantra, **Power Peace Purpose**, and end with a bow. Ask students to take several breaths to clear their minds and prepare to watch the video.

#### Teacher Statement:



*The Breath Brake helps us clear our minds, relax and focus. Focused breathing stops the flow of stress chemicals from the brain. You can close your eyes if you want to. Follow along:*

- ★ *Breathe in through your nose, slowly and deeply. Think of each breath as a wave as it gently raises, holds, and then slowly lowers your body.*
- ★ *Hold it for three seconds.*
- ★ *Breathe out slowly and steadily from your mouth while you feel your body gently relax.*
- ★ *Breathe in and visualize that you are breathing in a powerful light.*
- ★ *Breathe out and imagine you are blowing out any darkness.*
- ★ *Breathe in, hold for 3 seconds, then breathe out. Repeat as needed.*

*Remember when you breathe, you are helping others who need your light. **Power Peace Purpose.***

*There are thousands of children around the world who spend a lot of time in the hospital. Sometimes, they feel very lonely. When you join the Heroes Circle, it makes them feel better. When you do your power breathing you are also teaching your family and friends around you. You are an amazing teacher and a good friend!*

### End with Power Peace Purpose:

Recite and review the Power Peace Purpose mantra with students at the end of each day's lesson. Then, the students bow.



*The Breath Brake helps you restore your power, brings you to a place of peace, and enables you to understand your purpose.*

# Unit 5C: The Heroic Response

## Day 1: WATCH



**Focus: Social Awareness**

Students will watch a video about how your brain controls your body, but YOU control your brain.

### Learning Objectives:

In this lesson, students will:

- Observe how the brain and body naturally respond to stressful situations.
- Identify how you can change the brain and body's natural response with the Heroic Response.
- Practice the Breath Brake and repeat the **Power Peace Purpose** mantra.

### Time Requirement:

15 minutes



### Materials Needed:

Video - [HeroesCircle.org/SupportMaterials5](https://HeroesCircle.org/SupportMaterials5)

### Lesson Process:

#### 1 Begin with a Breath Brake:

Begin with the mantra **Power Peace Purpose**. Then, students bow. Lead students through a Breath Brake.

#### 2 Introduce key concepts:



*Today we will watch a video about the Heroic Response. We will observe how the brain and body normally respond to stressful situations with Fight or Flight. The brain automatically senses danger, pain, or fear and sends signals to different parts of the body. But, remember, you are not your brain, so you can change and control how your brain and body respond. When you recognize that you have a stress response, you can activate the Heroic Response and be more powerful.*

#### 3 Show the video:

Show the video – [HeroesCircle.org/SupportMaterials5](https://HeroesCircle.org/SupportMaterials5)

#### 4 Talk about key concepts:



*We learned that when we experience stress, the Heroic Response is a more mindful response than the natural Fight or Flight response. When we are aware of the signs of a stress response, we can take control of the brain and choose how we respond. Recognizing the signals in the body and paying attention takes practice, just like everything else. A Heroic Response means you can stop and step back from the situation to identify a mindful and powerful response.*

Ask students to recall what they remember from the video.

### Use the following talking points to encourage students to discuss the Heroic Response:



- How does the brain naturally/automatically respond to stress? Responses will vary.
- What makes the Heroic Response a more mindful and powerful response? Why do you think it is called the Heroic Response? Responses will vary.
- Think about what triggers your stress response. What situations stress you out? Responses will vary.

#### 5 End with Power Peace Purpose mantra:

**Power Peace Purpose**. Then, students bow.

## Day 2: THINK



### Focus: Responsible Decision Making

Students will be encouraged to think and talk about the Heroic Response to stressful situations.

**Time Requirement:**

15 minutes



**Materials Needed:** N/A

**Learning Objectives:** In this lesson, students will:

- Describe how the Heroic Response can affect the decisions you make when stressed.
- Analyze how your choice to respond to stress can affect the outcome of the situation.
- Practice the Breath Brake and repeat the **Power Peace Purpose** mantra.

### Lesson Process:

#### 1 Begin with a Breath Brake:

Begin with the mantra **Power Peace Purpose**. Students bow. Lead students through a Breath Brake.

#### 2 Review key concepts:



*Remember the video we watched about The Heroic Response. We know that the brain controls much of what your body does, but as a powerful martial artist, YOU control your brain. You can override the natural fight or flight response and retrain the brain to respond to stress with the Heroic Response. First, we must recognize that we have a stress response, and then we can activate the Heroic Response.*

Ask students to share what they remember or learned from the video.

#### 3 Think about key concepts:



*Today we will think about how we experience and respond to stress. Sensei Richard said that feelings of stress are just a matter of how you perceive a challenge. If you see something as a big deal, your brain can make you feel stressed out. When you feel that way, it's easy to become overwhelmed, overreact, or act negatively. As a martial artist, your greatest strength is your ability to take control of your brain. When you breathe in light and blow out the darkness, you aren't just relaxing your muscles. You're also telling your brain that you are in control and it's time to stop sending stress chemicals to the rest of your body.*

Ask students to recall key concepts or what they remember from the video.

#### 4 Talk about key concepts:

**Discuss the following talking points as a whole class, in a small group, or in partner pairs:**

- The teacher will provide an example of a stressful situation and explain how they managed it. Alternatively, you may choose to use the example below.

**Teacher Example:** *I feel stressed when students talk while I'm teaching. I can feel my neck and shoulder muscles tighten, and my heart beats faster. Sometimes, I even have trouble taking a deep breath. When I recognize my stress response, I stop what I'm doing, take a moment in the hallway or at my desk, or take a Breath Brake to clear my mind and stop the stress signals from flowing.*

- Describe a situation that may lead to experiencing a stress response. Responses will vary.
- How do you feel the stress in your body? Which muscles feel tight? Does your heart race? Responses will vary:
- How does the Breath Brake activate the Heroic Response? Responses may include:
  - It can bring you calm, peace, and joy. It can release pain, fear, and anger.
  - It stops stress signals from the brain so that you can think clearly and make good decisions.
  - It helps you take control of your brain so that you can respond mindfully.
- Imagine that a teacher is yelling at you in front of your classmates. What should you think about as you decide how to respond? Responses will vary.

#### 5 End with Power Peace Purpose:

**Power Peace Purpose.** Then, students bow.



# Unit 5C: The Heroic Response

## Day 3: DISCUSS



### Focus: Relationship Skills

Students will engage in discussions about the Heroic Response.

### Learning Objectives:

In this lesson, students will:

- Identify how the Heroic Response can impact your ability to communicate mindfully.
- Analyze how the Heroic Response can impact your ability to manage relationships.
- Practice the Breath Brake and repeat the **Power Peace Purpose** mantra.

### Time Requirement:

15 minutes



**Materials Needed:** N/A

### Lesson Process:

#### 1 Begin with a Breath Brake:

Begin with the mantra **Power Peace Purpose**. Then, students bow.  
Lead students through a Breath Brake.

#### 2 Review key concepts:



*Remember the video we watched. We learned that the brain automatically prepares your body to respond to stress with the fight or flight response. But you control your brain, so you can stop and replace the automatic response with a Heroic Response. That powerful, mindful response allows you to think clearly and make good decisions.*

Ask students to recall and describe other key concepts from the video.

#### 3 Discuss key concepts:



*Today, we will talk more about recognizing a stress response in your body. Pay attention to your body when you experience muscle tightness, tension, a change in your voice, breathing difficulty, and so on. Where do you feel it? What does it feel like? It takes practice, but once you observe and recognize stress in your body, you can control how your brain responds. You can override the fight or flight response and choose the Heroic Response.*

### Use the following talking points to encourage discussion about the Heroic Response:



- How can you recognize the stress response in your body? What should you pay attention to? Where do you feel stress? Responses may include:
  - Muscle tightness, trouble breathing, change in your voice, heart racing, sweating
- What makes the Heroic Response so powerful? Responses will vary.
- How could the Heroic Response help you avoid arguments and conflicts? Responses will vary.
- How does the Heroic Response create calm and peace? Responses will vary.

#### 4 End with Power Peace Purpose:

**Power Peace Purpose**. Then, students bow.

## Day 4: APPLY

### Focus: Self-Management

Students will work independently to apply the concepts from the video to a self-reflective activity about the brain's stress response system.

**Learning Objectives:** In this lesson, students will:

- Reflect on how breathing helps rally the energy inside you and gives you power.
- Identify how to recognize triggers and your stress response to initiate the Heroic Response.
- Practice the Breath Brake and repeat the **Power Peace Purpose** mantra.

### Time Requirement:

15 minutes



### Materials Needed:

ACTIVITY SHEET -  
5C: HEROIC RESPONSE

## Lesson Process:

### 1 Begin with a Breath Brake:

Begin with the mantra **Power Peace Purpose**. Then, students bow. Lead students through a Breath Brake.

### 2 Review key concepts:



*Yesterday, we talked about the importance of recognizing your stress response as a first step in changing how you respond. We discussed paying attention to common responses like muscle tightness, tension, trouble breathing, and a faster heartbeat. When you can recognize where and how you feel a stress response in your body, you can stop, think, and activate the Heroic Response to respond with power.*

### 3 Personalize key concepts:



*Today we will talk about your stress response and how paying attention to that response in your body can help you manage stress more effectively. First, let's talk about these ideas – as we discuss, think about how you would answer the questions. Then you will apply your ideas to an activity sheet about your experiences.*

**Use the following talking points to encourage students to reflect and personalize the key concepts.**



- Recall a recent stressful experience. Where did you feel muscle tightness or tension in your body? Responses will vary.
- Once you recognize your stress response, how could you change it? Responses will vary.
- Describe how you typically/often manage stress (think about your anger). Are you quick to react? Do you shut down? Do you fight back? Responses will vary.
- Describe how the Breath Brake helps you respond more powerfully to stress. Responses will vary.

### 4 Apply key concepts:

Distribute the ACTIVITY SHEET - 5C: HEROIC RESPONSE. Ask students to work independently to complete the activity sheet.

### 5 End with Power Peace Purpose:

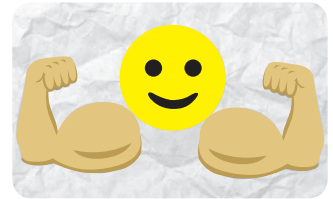
**Power Peace Purpose**. Then, students bow.

# Activity Sheet - 5C: HEROIC RESPONSE

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Use all the words in the box to write a paragraph to describe the Heroic Response.

stress response    muscles    tight,  
mindful    think    stop    brain  
powerful    fight or flight    Breath Brake



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As a powerful martial artist in the Heroes Circle, your purpose is to teach others the skills and techniques you learn. Who will you teach about the Heroic Response?

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What other Heroes Circle techniques could you teach others?

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## Day 5: SHARE



**Focus: Self-Awareness**

Students will share their learning about the Heroic Response.

**Learning Objectives:** In this lesson, students will:

- Share insights and observations about the Heroic Response.
- Share how the Breath Brake allows us to breathe in the light and respond powerfully to stress.
- Practice the Breath Brake and repeat the **Power Peace Purpose** mantra.

**Time Requirement:**

15 minutes



**Materials Needed:**

ACTIVITY SHEET - 5C:  
HEROIC RESPONSE

### Lesson Process:

#### 1 Begin with a Breath Brake:

Begin with the mantra **Power Peace Purpose**. Then, students bow. Lead students through a Breath Brake.

#### 2 Review key concepts:



*This week, we learned about the Heroic Response as a powerful and mindful response to stress that can replace the fight or flight response. With practice, you can recognize the stress response in your body. Then you can train your brain to respond to stress with the Heroic Response.*

#### 3 Share the learning:



*Today, you will share your learning about the Heroic Response. You can share about your stress response and how you can choose control and the Heroic Response. Also, you can share how you plan to teach others about the Heroic Response.*

Ask students to reflect on their completed activity sheet, ACTIVITY SHEET - 5C: HEROIC RESPONSE, and share their responses with the class, in small groups, or with a partner.

**Use the following talking points to encourage students to share more about their learning:**



- Give an example of how or when you can begin using the Heroic Response. Responses will vary.
- What is the importance of the Breath Brake in the Heroic Response? Responses will vary.
- How can recognizing your stress response help you respond more mindfully? Responses will vary.
- How can the Heroic Response help you and others? Responses will vary.

#### 4 Summarize key concepts:

*We learned about the Heroic Response to stress. With practice, you can recognize your body's stress response and once you do, you can take control. You can retrain the brain to respond mindfully and powerfully with the Heroic Response. As we move forward as powerful martial artists, tune in to your body's stress response and activate the Heroic Response.*

#### 5 End with Power Peace Purpose:

**Power Peace Purpose**. Then, students bow.