

COMPANION GUIDE

SEL for Educators

Practices for Promoting SEL
for Adults in School Settings

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Intentions & Instructions

The SEL for Educators Toolkit consists of a Professional Learning Presentation, Companion Guide, Snapshot, and Reference List. It is intended to be an accessible and actionable synthesis of the research on the social-emotional learning (SEL) of adults in school settings.

It is designed to be flexible and adaptable; educators can review and use these tools in their entirety, or select one or more focus areas. It is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather a starting point on the what, the why, and the how of supporting educators' SEL. Due to the wealth of resources focused on system-level support, this toolkit focuses on what educators can do to support their individual growth.

The SEL for Educators Companion Guide provides additional details about the interactive components outlined in the presentation, as well as, suggestions for pacing, application, and further learning. We hope this toolkit provides opportunities for reflection, conversation, collaboration, and continued growth.

Objectives

- Educators will reflect on the importance and impact of their own social-emotional learning.
- Educators will learn Five High-Leverage Practices to support their own social-emotional development and well-being.
- Using embedded activities, educators will deepen their understanding and strengthen their skills related to the Five High-Leverage Practices.



Audience

For the purposes of this resource, educator refers to *any* adult in a school setting who interacts with students. This can include, but is not limited to, classroom teachers, paraprofessionals, principals, deans, instructional coaches, specialists, special education teachers, and coaches. Although this resource can be used by individuals, we encourage collaboration as a way to understand the content, engage in practice, and to expand perspective by processing in community.

Facilitation Suggestions

To use this tool in coaching, Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), staff meetings, professional development, or training sessions, we offer the following suggestions.

Format

The Toolkit is divided into three sections: The What, The Why, and The How.

“The How” is the longest section, lays out the Five High-Leverage Practices, and mimics the following format:



The Toolkit was not only designed to present content, but also to provide opportunities for engagement and practice. The “Actively Engage” and “Pause & Process” slides should be used as a way to support participants in engaging with and internalizing the content presented. Skipping these slides limits the interactive nature of the resource.

- “Actively Engage”: These slides provide activities that promote application and practice of the described strategy. It is suggested to select one experience from these slides for each session. If timing does not allow for these experiences within a session, resources can be used for follow-up or extension activities. All of these experiences and their supporting documents are included in the next section of this companion guide.
- “Pause & Process”: These slides offer an opportunity to synthesize and reflect on the information provided. It is strongly suggested that participants are given at least five minutes to reflect on these prompts.

Pacing

There is a great deal of content in the Toolkit. We strongly suggest breaking the content into six sessions, approximately 90 minutes each if possible, using the following scope & sequence:

- Framing - The What & The Why of SEL for Educators (Slides 2-25)
- The How - High-Leverage Practice: Examine Identity (Slides 25-36)
- The How - High-Leverage Practice: Explore Emotions (Slides 37-45; recap 2-21)
- The How - High-Leverage Practice: Cultivate Compassionate Curiosity (Slides 46-54; recap 2-45)
- The How - High-Leverage Practice: Orient Towards Optimism (Slides 55-63; recap 2-54)
- The How - High-Leverage Practice: Establish Balance & Boundaries (Slides 64-73; recap 2-63)

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Important Note

None of the outlined practices, skills, or strategies works in isolation; each complements the others. We have created five categories to streamline learning, practice, and application. However, once all five practices have been covered, consistently revisiting and re-engaging in a variety of experiences will reinforce and deepen learning.

Establish a Safe & Supportive Environment for Learning

The order of the Five High-Leverage Practices is flexible. Because they are not sequential, if a different order better meets the needs of the group, the order can be changed. However, it is important that the first session is used to ground in a common understanding through “The Framing: The What & The Why,” as well as to establish objectives, expectations, and connections. Consider the following suggestions for establishing a safe and supportive environment for group learning.

- Utilize [best practices](#) for adult learning.
- Incorporate the [Three Signature Practices](#).
- Establish group [guidelines](#), [agreements](#), or [norms](#).

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT EXPERIENCES

Examine Identity



Define Values & Pursue Purpose

Reflect on your professional purpose and passion through the exercise [What's Your Why?](#)

Read [Teachers Don't Need to Find Their Why](#) by Paul Murphy and reflect using the [Pursuing Purpose](#) exercise.

Complete this [Defining Values](#) activity to elevate what matters most for you.

Try the [Passion Profiles Activity](#) to identify your passion and the motivations of colleagues.

Engage in the [Creating Metaphors Activity](#) to reflect on your identity and integrity as an educator.

Reflect using the [Gap Analysis Protocol](#) to make a stronger connection between beliefs and practices.



Investigate Power & Privilege

Watch Michael Yates' [TED Talk](#) and reflect using these [prompts](#).

Watch [this video](#) for a quick and accessible explanation of privilege and [this video](#) for a look at systemic racism.

Read [Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack](#) by Peggy McIntosh. Process using this [self-reflection activity](#) or engage others in this [group activity](#).

Read [Why We Can't Afford Whitewashed SEL](#) by Dena Simmons, [The Lens of Systemic Oppression](#) from the National Equity Project, and/or [White Racial Identity and Anti-Racist Education](#) by Sandra M. Lawrence and Beverly Daniel Tatum. Process with others using a [text protocol](#).

Listen to the "Power in Schools" series (Episodes 73, 74, 75 & 76) on the Modern Learners [podcast](#).

Explore the [MSW@USC Diversity Toolkit: A Guide to Discussing Identity, Power and Privilege](#).

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 <p>Uncover Bias</p>	<p>Watch one of the short videos below and reflect using the prompts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implicit Bias in Education (2:40) • How Unconscious Bias Affects Judgement (1:07) • PBS’s Implicit Bias: Peanut Butter, Jelly and Racism (2:26) • Bias in American Schools (10:50) • Video series from UCLA (7 videos, each 5 minutes or less) <p>Read Teachers are as Racially Biased as Everyone Else, Study Shows and consider reflecting with a group using a text protocol.</p> <p>Test yourself for hidden bias using the Implicit Bias Test from Project Implicit.</p> <p>Deepen your learning through a PD module on Anti-Bias Education from Teaching Tolerance.</p> <p>Listen to this podcast on Unconscious Bias in Schools from Harvard EdCast (28 min).</p> <p>Use the Questions & Assumptions Protocol to examine assumptions and potential bias in your teaching materials.</p>
 <p>Reflect on Work Style</p>	<p>Complete one of the following self-reflection exercises. Then share, discuss, and debrief with those whom you work with closely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compass Points • 16 Personalities • Roles in a Social Change Ecosystem • Daring Leadership <p>Engage in the Qualities of an Educational Leader Exercise to explore your own style as a leader/teacher. Discuss and debrief with others.</p>
<p>Bonus Resources!</p>	<p>Engage in the Student Profiles Activity or the Making Meaning Protocol to reflect on your own experience as a student—and how that experience has influenced your practice.</p>

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Explore Emotions



Label Emotions

Read this [Harvard Business Review article](#) on the power of labeling emotions and try one of the included exercises.

Watch Dan Siegel's [video](#) (2:00) for a simple explanation of the neuroscience of naming emotions.

Complete this [reflection exercise](#) using the [Feelings Wheel](#) to consider the multiple layers of an emotion.



Recognize Physical Reactions

Complete this [reflection exercise](#) to consider where and how you feel emotions in the body.

Watch this [video](#) (2:00) about mapping emotions in the body.

Read about how a [body scan practice](#) can help you reduce biological stress and engage in the included guided practice.

Guide yourself through a body scan exercise with one of these two resources:

- [Search Inside Yourself: The Body Scan](#)
- [Stop, Breathe, Think: Body Scan](#)



Respond Rather Than React

Read an accessible synthesis of the [research](#) on the benefits of mindfulness from Mindful Schools.

Read about three simple [mindfulness practices](#) from Meena Srinivasan that can be incorporated into the school day.

Watch and listen as teachers reflect on their own mindfulness practice and its impact on their work.

- [Finding My Breath: Cultivating a More Compassionate Classroom](#)
- [Mindfulness in Education: Learning from the Inside Out](#)

Engage in a [1-minute](#), [5-minute](#), or [10-minute](#) breathing exercise using a simple shape as a visual cue.

Learn about and reflect on ways to incorporate [grounding practices](#) into your day. Consider using a post-it on your laptop (or some other key spot) with one of the following acronyms as a reminder to take a moment and respond, rather than react: [RAIN](#), [STOP](#), [SNACK](#).

Learn about the ways mindfulness can [reduce unconscious bias](#).

Read [an interview](#) with San Francisco Department of Public Health Program Innovation Leader, Jenée Johnson, to explore the connections between trauma, stress, racial equity, and mindfulness.

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Cultivate Compassionate Curiosity



Apply an Asset-Based Lens

Watch [this video](#) (2:44) and reflect using these [prompts](#).

Watch Chris Wejr’s [TED Talk](#) or Kathy Kramer’s [TED Talk](#) and reflect using these [prompts](#).

Read this [quick synopsis](#) on the “what” and “why” of an asset-based approach in schools, and reflect using a [text protocol](#).

Identify your own strengths (and those of students) through the [VIA Character Strengths Survey](#).



Listen with Empathy

Watch [this video](#) (7:40) and read the corresponding article to further understand the intersection of compassionate curiosity and empathy.

Watch Kwame Christian’s [TED Talk](#) and reflect using these [prompts](#).

Utilize the [Missed Cues Protocol](#) to consider ways we can unpack assumptions and/or listen more deeply to students.

Practice empathic listening by role-playing authentic scenarios related to students, staff, or families.

- [Active & Intentional Listening Guidelines](#)
- [7 Ways to Respond to Students with Empathy](#)
- [7 Tips for Empathic Listening](#)
- [Handbook for Facilitating Difficult Conversations in the Classroom](#)



View Behavior as Communication

Read [Understanding Behavior as Communication: A Teacher’s Guide](#) or [Behavior is Communication](#) and reflect using a [text protocol](#).

Explore these four [visual representations](#) of content and reflect using a [text protocol](#).

Watch [Dear Teacher: Heartfelt Advice for Teachers from Students](#) and reflect using these [prompts](#).

Read [Lens as a Paradigm](#). Consider the ways in which your lens impacts the way you view student behavior and how you might change your lens or shift your focus.

Bonus Resources!

Read [To Understand Your Students, Use ‘Compassionate Curiosity.’](#) Reflect using a [text protocol](#).

Engage in the [Profile of a Student Activity: Alternative Students](#) as a way to reflect on and discuss your view of students and their behaviors.

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Orient Towards Optimism



Recognize Negativity Bias

Watch this [short video](#) (2:00) or this slightly more [in-depth video](#) (6:00) to understand negativity bias.

Read this [blog post](#) about negativity bias and strategies for getting past it.

Consider the way [Kindness Practices](#) can combat negativity bias.



Reframe & Retrain the Brain

Read [How to Get Past Negativity Bias in Order to Hardwire Positive Experiences](#) or watch Rick Hanson's TED Talk on [Hardwiring Happiness](#) and try his HEAL approach.

Read [Changing How Educators See Negative Behaviors](#) and reflect using a [text protocol](#).

Engage in "[The Best Ever](#)" protocol to reflect on a past positive experience.



Practice Gratitude

Read how [gratitude changes the brain](#) or how [gratitude can get us through hard times](#).

Watch a [short video](#) (4:10) on the connection between gratitude and the science of happiness.

Watch Kerry Howells' [TED Talk](#) about gratitude in education and reflect using these [prompts](#).

Write a [gratitude letter](#), keep a [gratitude journal](#), and/or take a [gratitude quiz](#).

Bonus Resources!

Utilize both creativity and community through the [Inspired Image Protocol](#) from SRI to reflect on and share positive and impactful elements of your work in schools.

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Establish Balance & Boundaries



Understand the “Cost of Caring”

Read about the signs and impact of the "cost of caring" and learn about coping strategies:

- [NCTSN: Secondary Traumatic Stress Fact Sheet](#)
- [‘I Didn’t Know It Had a Name’: Secondary Traumatic Stress and Educators](#)
- [Compassion Fatigue: How California Can Improve Teacher Retention](#)

Complete the [Professional Quality of Life Self-Assessment](#).

Read [When Teachers Experience Empathic Distress](#) and engage in a [self-compassion practice](#).

Listen to the podcast episode [Demoralized, Not Drained](#) from Harvard EdCast.

*** You do not have to address these challenges alone. ***

Professional resources are available to support you in this work. Ask your employer or professional association about opportunities, resources, and assistance.



Form Healthy Habits

Read about [Six Stress Busting Strategies](#) and complete the self-reflection from the California Surgeon General.

Read about [seven habits](#) of healthy educators, suggestions for [fitting in fitness](#), and ideas about improving your [sleep routine](#).

Read [Creating Healthy Habits](#) from the National Institute of Health.

Try the *New York Times*' 28-day [Healthy Habits Well Challenge](#).



Ask for Help & Learn to Say No

Read [It's OK to Say No](#) and process using a [text protocol](#).

Watch Heidi Grant's [TED Talk](#) and reflect using these [prompts](#).

Read [Every Teacher Needs a Mentor](#) and consider seeking out or starting a mentorship program.

Connect with colleagues who will engage with you using the [Tap In/Tap Out](#) strategy.

Bonus Resources!

Read [Safeguarding the Mental Health of Teachers](#) and [The Necessity of Boundaries](#).

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Appendix A

SUGGESTED PROTOCOLS

Text-Based Protocols

All protocols below can be used to reflect on, discuss, and improve understanding based on a common text.

- [Block Party Protocol](#)
 - “Think-pair-share” activity for pre-reads
- [Chalk Talk](#)
 - Provides a silent processing opportunity
- [Final Word](#)
 - Encourages active listening and structured sharing
- [Four A’s](#)
 - Dissect a text’s alignment with personal beliefs and values
- [Planting the Seed](#)
 - Processing in small groups to encourage deeper understanding
- [ProMISE Protocol Using Courageous Conversations](#)
 - Encourage understanding of a text using a compass framework
- [Save the Last Word](#)
 - Allows small groups to process a text
- [Text-Based Seminar](#)
 - Develop comprehension in a larger group
- [Text Rendering](#)
 - Structures a process to dissect a text
- [Three Levels of Text](#)
 - Improve comprehension and connect the text to work in schools in a three-step process
- [Wagon Wheels Adapted for Text](#)
 - Improve comprehension and connect the text to work in schools

Protocols for Deeper Discussion

The protocols below can be used to support discussion based on specific topics but are not text dependent.

- [Continuum Dialogue](#)
 - Build community with colleagues around potentially polarizing topics
- [Ping Pong Protocol](#)
 - Discuss an issue or explore a topic of interest common amongst colleagues
- [Triad Protocol](#)
 - Solicit feedback when creating or revising policies or practices

All protocols courtesy of [School Reform Initiative](#).

Appendix B

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS



What's Your Why?

Reflect on your professional purpose through the following prompts.

Why did you go into this work?	
Why do you stay in this work?	
What gets you to show up day after day?	
What is most rewarding about your work?	
What about your role excites you?	
Ultimately, what do you want to achieve in this work?	

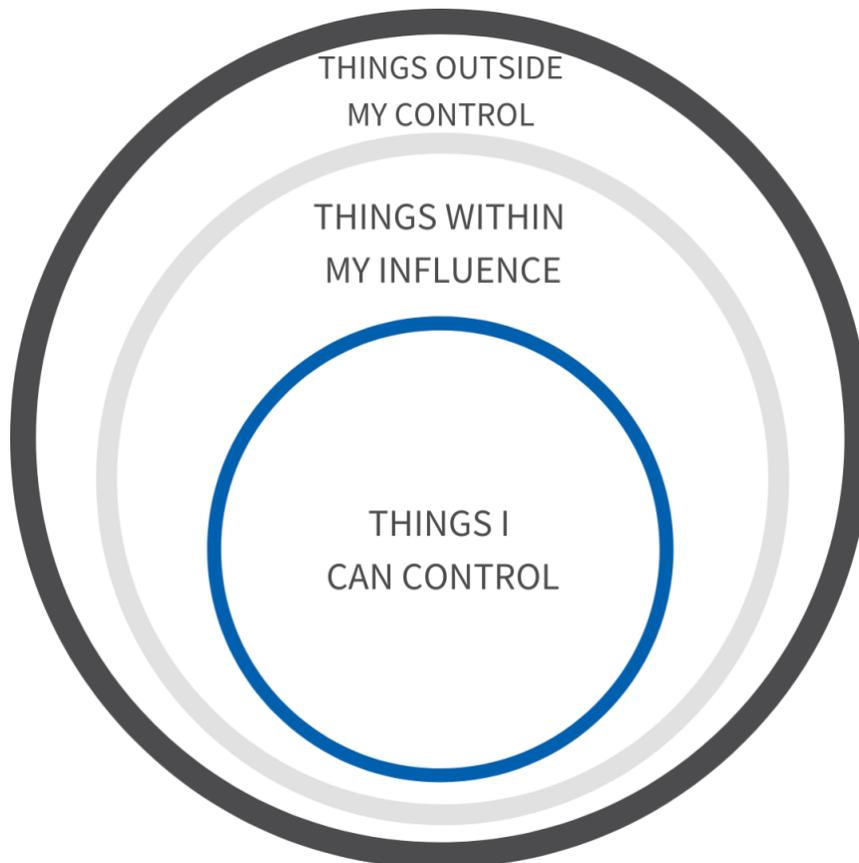
Reflect Individually: What do your answers have in common? What themes do you notice?

Discuss with Others: How are your answers similar? How are they unique? What themes do you notice?



Pursuing Purpose

- After reading [Teachers Don't Need to Find Their Why](#), reflect using the prompts below.
- What is your reaction to this quote from the reading?
“Teachers do not need to find their WHY. They simply need to be allowed to pursue it.”
- What obstacles do you face in pursuing your purpose? Record your identified obstacles here:



- Identify one or two obstacles that are within your Circle of Control.
- Record a concrete action step you can take to overcome those specific obstacles.
I can more fully pursue my passion by ...



Defining Values

1. From the list on the following page, choose and write down every core value that resonates with you. *Do not overthink your selections.* As you read through the list, simply write down the words that feel like a core value to you personally. If you think of a value you possess that is not on the list, be sure to write it down as well.
2. Go through the list a second time and repeat the same process. Consider covering the first list as you do so. If something still resonates, record it a second time. If something new strikes you as important, record that as well.
 - Compare the two lists. How similar or different were they?
 - Did you notice anything different the second time through?
3. Looking at both of your lists, circle the **five** that you feel are **MOST** important to you in your role in a school.
 - What five values did you pick?
 - Why did you pick these five?
 - Do you think these have always been or will always remain the same? Why or why not?

List #1	List #2

Adapted from [Carnegie Mellon University Career and Professional Development Center \(CPDC\)](#) and [TapRoot® Root Cause Analysis](#).

Continued on Page 19.



Defining Values

Common Values

Authenticity
Achievement
Adventure
Authority
Autonomy
Balance
Beauty
Boldness
Compassion
Challenge
Citizenship
Community
Competency
Contribution
Creativity
Curiosity
Determination
Fairness
Faith

Fame
Friendships
Fun
Growth
Happiness
Honesty
Humor
Influence
Inner Harmony
Justice
Kindness
Knowledge
Leadership
Learning
Love
Loyalty
Meaningful Work
Openness
Optimism

Peace
Pleasure
Poise
Popularity
Recognition
Religion
Reputation
Respect
Responsibility
Security
Self-Respect
Service
Spirituality
Stability
Success
Status
Trustworthiness
Wealth
Wisdom



Uncovering Bias

Implicit Bias in Education (2:40)	How Unconscious Bias Affects Judgement (1:07)	PBS's Implicit Bias: Peanut Butter, Jelly and Racism (2:26)	Bias in American Schools (10:50)	Video series from UCLA (7 videos, each 5 minutes or less)
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- What caught your attention or surprised you in this video?
- In your own words, how would you describe the term unconscious or implicit bias?
- How do you see unconscious or implicit bias showing up in your work as an educator?
- Did you find anything in the video particularly striking or thought-provoking?
- What are you left wondering after watching the video?



[Recognizing Privilege: Power to All People](#)

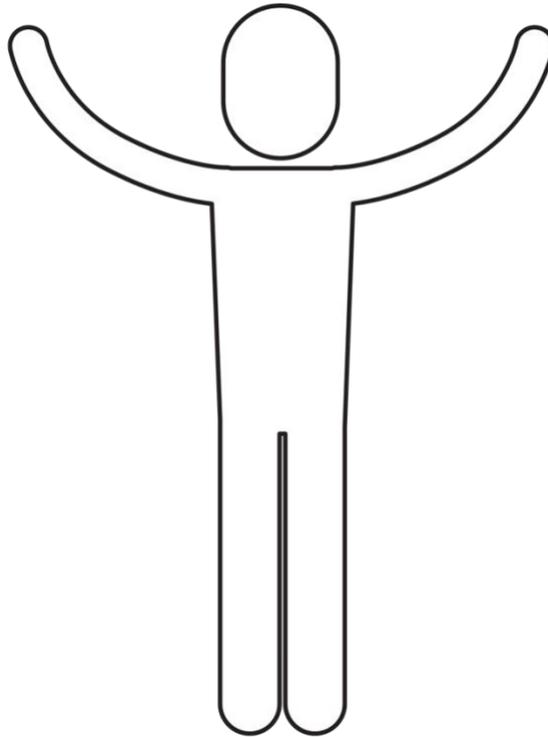
Michael Yates | TEDxTexasStateUniversity

- What caught your attention or surprised you in this video?
- In your own words, how would you define the “Culture of Power”?
- Did anything in the video relate to your personal experiences?
- According to Michael Yates, why is it important for all people, regardless of identity, to learn about power and privilege?
- Did anything in the video raise questions for you?
- How do you see the ideas Yates discusses relating to your work as an educator?



Recognizing Physical Reactions

- Recall a positive experience you had recently (or use the same one as the previous page). On the outline below, identify the location of *physical* sensations you felt in your body during this experience. Label the areas with descriptions of the sensations (calm, relaxed, tingly, warm, etc.)
- Recall a negative experience you had recently (or use the same one as the previous page). On the same outline above, identify the location of *physical* sensations you felt in your body during this experience. Label the areas with descriptions of the sensations (tension, sweaty, racing, hot, etc.)

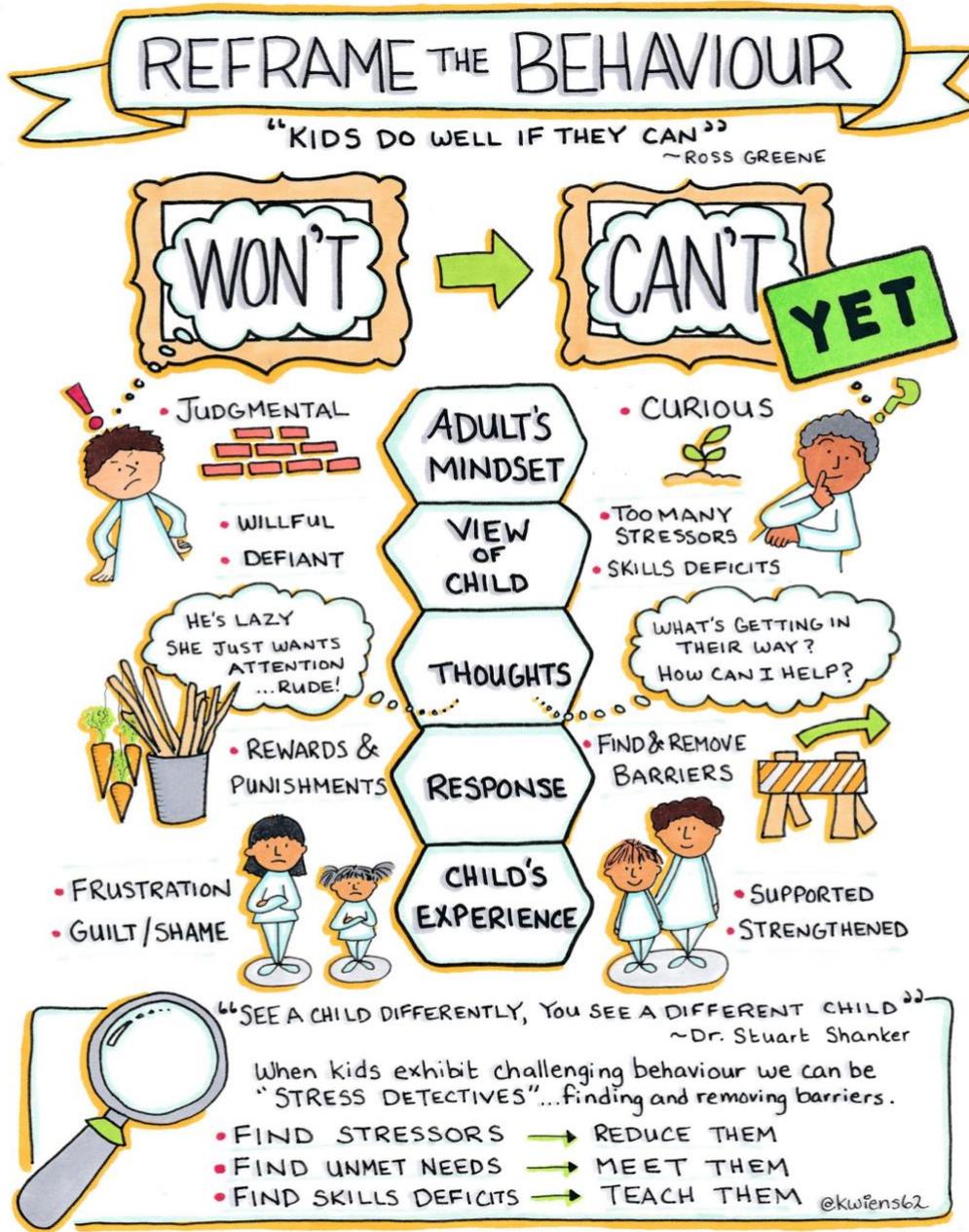


- To what emotions do these physical reactions relate?
- What do you notice about your physical reactions to the two different experiences?
- How could this information inform your work with students, staff, and families?



Learning through Visuals

Explore these four visual representations of content from Kristin Wiens and reflect using a [text protocol](#).

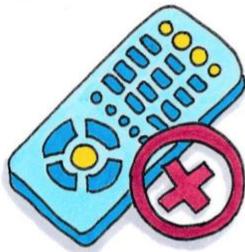


Kristin Wiens, Twitter [@kwiens62](#)

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RETHINKING POWER NEEDS

@kwiens62



POWER IS NOT LIKE A
REMOTE CONTROL
WHERE ONLY ONE PERSON HAS
ALL THE POWER AND CONTROL.



POWER IS LIKE A CANDLE.
YOU CAN GIVE A CHILD POWER WITHOUT
GIVING AWAY ANY OF YOUR OWN POWER.



YOU DON'T HAVE A SET
AMOUNT OF POWER
~ LIKE A BUCKETFUL.
THERE ARE WAYS TO GIVE A
CHILD POWER WITHOUT
LOSING ANY OF YOUR OWN.

KIDS DON'T WANT YOUR POWER. THEY WANT THEIR OWN.

RICHARD LAVOIE



WHEN A STUDENT FEELS THEY HAVE

POWER WITH
THE ADULTS
AS WELL AS

POWER WITHIN
THEMSELVES

THEY'LL HAVE LESS NEED TO SEEK

POWER OVER
OTHERS

A NEW UNDERSTANDING OF
POWER CAN HELP WITH THIS



“SEE A CHILD
DIFFERENTLY...
SEE A DIFFERENT
CHILD”

STUART SHANKER

6 WAYS TO HELP KIDS MEET THEIR POWER NEEDS



1. OFFER CHOICE, NOT ORDERS
2. GIVE RESPONSIBILITY
3. START WITH STRENGTHS
4. EXPRESS INTEREST RATHER THAN PRAISE
5. ASK FOR THEIR OPINION
6. ASK FOR THEIR HELP

6 POINTS TO REMEMBER



1. AVOID POWER STRUGGLES
2. AVOID MAKING THREATS
3. GROWING POWER NEEDS ARE A HEALTHY PART OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT
4. RESPECT BOUNDARIES
5. THE RULES (NOT THE ADULT) SHOULD BE OBEYED
6. REFLECT ON YOUR OWN NEED FOR POWER & CONTROL

“THE REALITY IS THAT NO ONE WINS A POWER STRUGGLE” ROSS GREENE

Kristin Wiens, Twitter @kwiens62

Continued on Pages 26-27.



GUIDING QUESTIONS

WHO DO I
WANT TO BE
IN THIS
SITUATION?



HAVE I MADE ENOUGH
DEPOSITS INTO THIS
CHILD'S EMOTIONAL
BANK ACCOUNT?



WILL THIS
BUILD OR BREAK
TRUST?



AM I CALM,
ALERT AND
READY TO
SUPPORT THIS
CHILD?



AM I BEING
INTENTIONAL ABOUT
THE ENERGY I AM
BRINGING TO THIS
SPACE?



DOES THIS CHILD
HAVE A SENSE OF
BELONGING IN OUR
SCHOOL?



AM I OFFERING
OTHERS AND MYSELF
UNCONDITIONAL
POSITIVE REGARD?



IS THIS A GOOD
USE OF THIS
CHILD'S TIME?



ARE WE HAVING
ENOUGH FUN?



@kwiens62

GUIDING QUESTIONS INSPIRE US TO KEEP
MOVING FORWARD WITH INTENTION AND PURPOSE

Kristin Wiens, Twitter [@kwiens62](https://twitter.com/kwiens62)

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BEHAVIOUR IS COMMUNICATION

@kwiens62



Kristin Wiens, Twitter @kwiens62



[Strengths Based](#)

- What caught your attention or surprised you in this video?

- In your own words, how would you describe the term “strengths-based approach”?

- How do you see a strengths-or asset-based approach impacting your work as an educator?

- Did you find anything in the video particularly striking or thought-provoking?

- What are you left wondering after watching the video?



TED Talk Reflection

Speaker: _____

Title/Topic: _____

Notes

- What was the speaker's main takeaway?

- What caught your attention or surprised you in this video?

- Did anything in the video relate to your personal experiences?

- Did anything in the video raise questions for you?

- How do you see the ideas discussed in this talk relating to your work as an educator?

Contact

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