

Advancing Adult Compassion Resilience:

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Toolkit url: Compassionresiliencetoolkit.org

For ongoing support: WISE@EliminateStigma.org



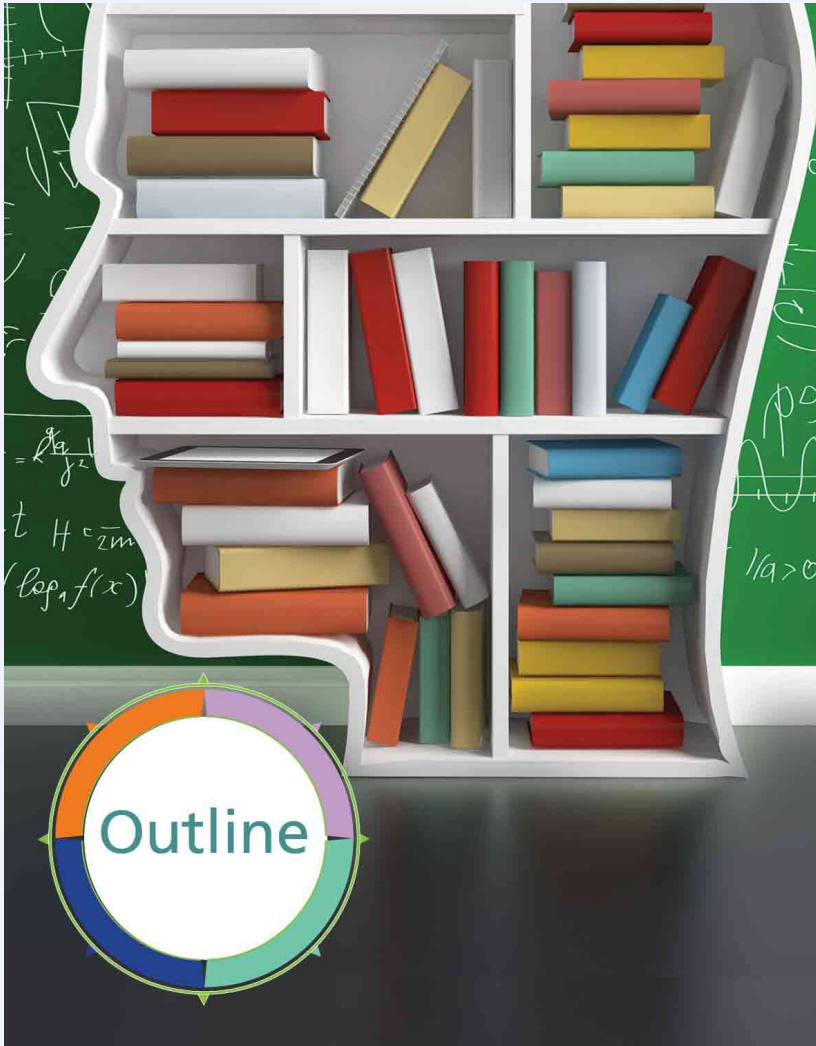


Goals



- Explore leadership and staff practices that establish and maintain consistently compassionate cultures.
- Develop individual wellness strategies that support one's own compassion resilience.
- Mobilize curiosity to continue these important discussions around wellness, compassion fatigue and resilience.

To achieve the goal of consistent compassion, we focus on tools to:



1. Understand what it means to act with compassion and self-compassion
2. Identify stages of fatigue, the underlying causes and our locus of control
3. Minimize what leads to compassion fatigue and maximize what makes us resilient (individual, team and system)
4. Set clear, realistic and aspirational expectations for ourselves and others
5. Set personal and team boundaries to support our ability to meet those expectations
6. Create a sense of accountability in all team members for the culture of our school
7. Put strategies into practice that build and maintain our individual well-being

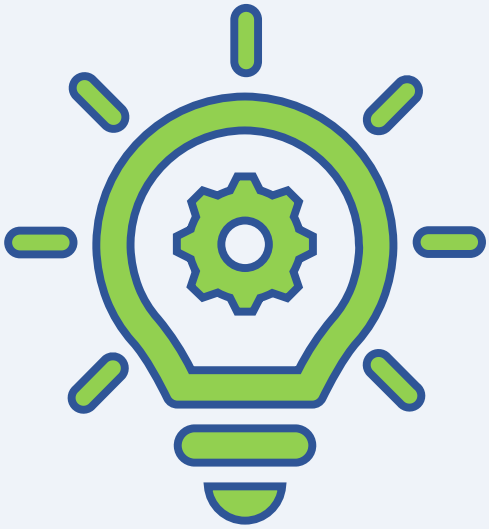


Why do this work?



A vision of a compassionate culture

Reflect



- What are some words or phrases that would describe a culture if it was predominately compassionate?
- What might you see or hear?



Compassion Fatigue

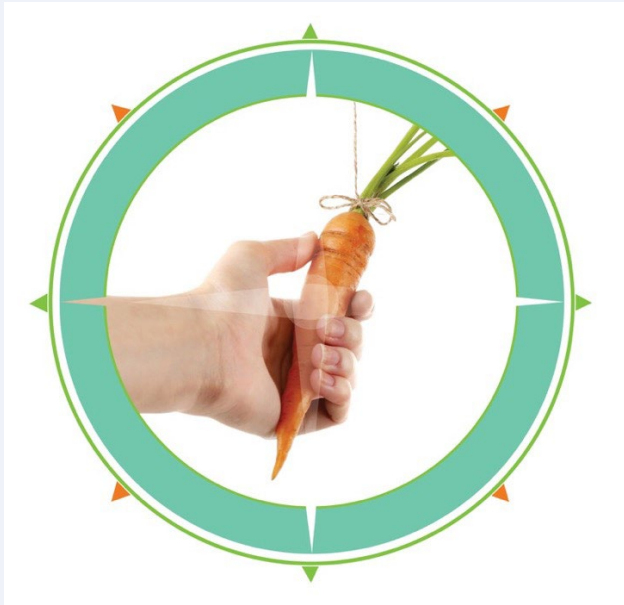


- Secondary trauma, burnout, and compassion satisfaction - ProQOL
- Gradual lessening of compassion over time
- Avoid trying to understand what people face
- Become less effective in our roles
- Life satisfaction decreases

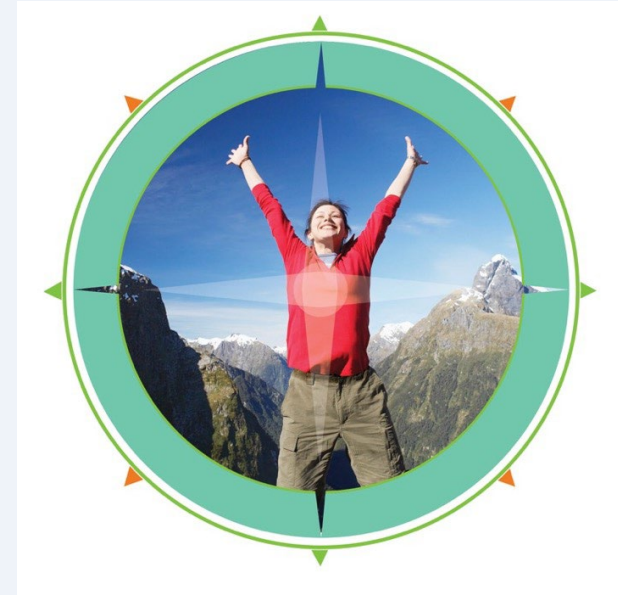


A Driver of Compassion Fatigue

How do you think about behavior?



A matter of motivation
- People do well if they
want to.



A matter of ability and
supports - People do well
if they can.

Move from false beliefs about behavior



Participants/families/colleagues do well if they want to ...

1. Manipulative
2. Just wants attention
3. Not motivated
4. Doesn't care

To strength-based beliefs about behavior



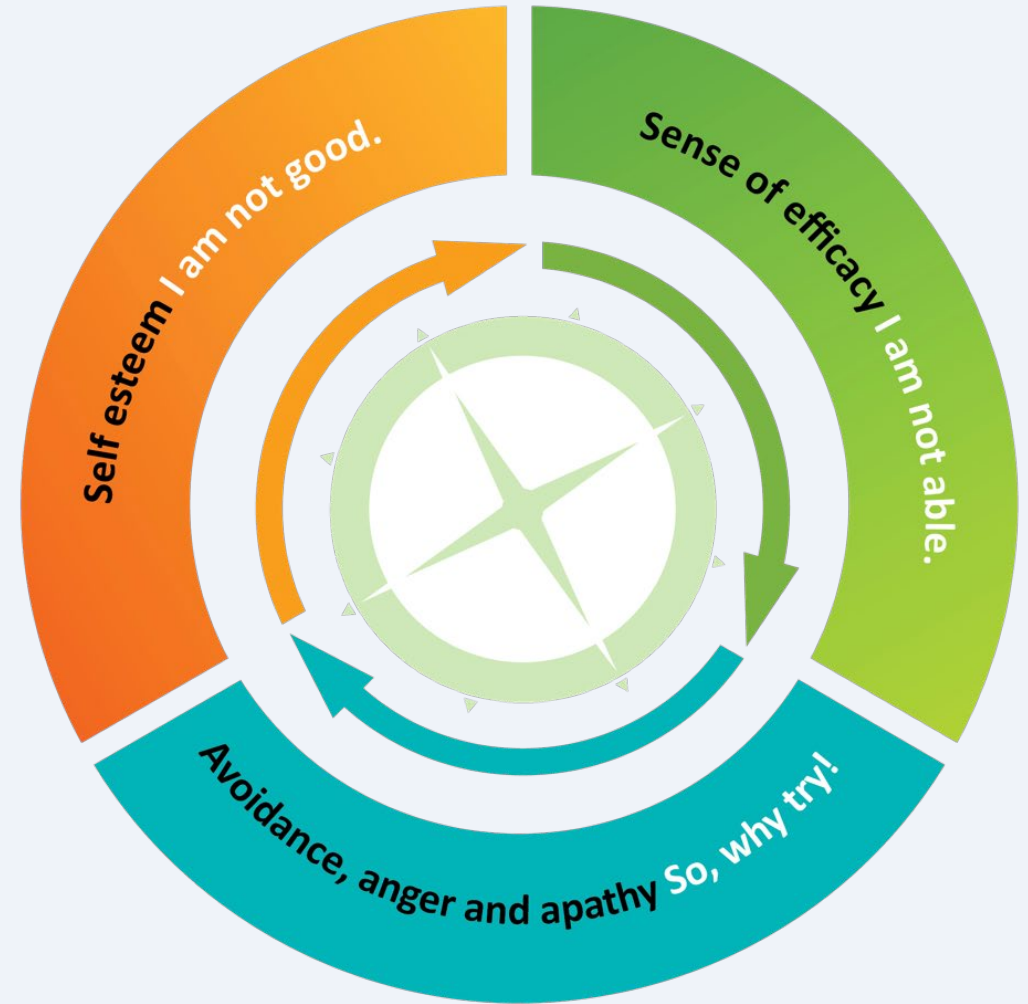
Participants/families/colleagues do well if they can ...

1. Coping in the way they know how
2. Lack skills required
3. Something in their way
4. Together we can figure

<https://www.livesinthebalance.org/>
And Toolkit Appendix

Belief that all behavior is externally motivated impacts how we see others, others see themselves, AND how we see ourselves

Blame and Shame



Another Driver of Compassion Fatigue

The trauma informed care movement has had an unintended consequence for many – an open and unprotected heart. Compassion Resilience builds the skills to maintain open **and** protected hearts.



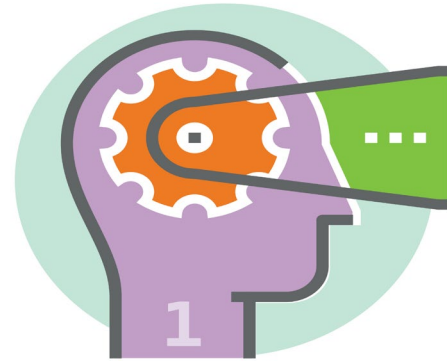
Building Our Compassion Resilience



- The power to return to a position of empathy, strength, and hope after the daily witnessing of challenges that participants, families and colleagues face in the community and workplace.
- To be optimistic in an imperfect world.



Compassionate Action Steps



NOTICE

Be present in the moment and able to recognize signs of distress.



SELF CHECK

Be aware of your initial thoughts and feelings.



SEEK UNDERSTANDING

Suspend appraisals. Listen for feelings and strengths.



TAKE ACTION

Be aware that intention alone is not compassionate action.



DISCERN BEST ACTION

Co-plan with the person to figure out what would be helpful to them.



CULTIVATE EMPATHY

Develop genuine concern based on your connection to what the person is feeling.



Moving from Establishing Empathy to Engaging the Person in Discerning Best Action

Compassion in Action

Section 1

Moving from Establishing Empathy to Engaging the Person in Discerning Best Action



1. Focus on the moment and what's manageable:

- a) "What seems like the next best step for you to do?"
- b) "What feels doable right now?"
- c) "How can I/we be helpful to you, right now?"

2. Listen for and reconnect them to their strengths to open their minds to solutions:

- a) "I heard your frustration and anger clearly. I also got a glimpse of your strength. You seem to have some ideas about what you'd like to do about this."
- b) "When you can't see your own strengths, who do you trust to help you to see them?"

3. Focus on the recent past, when the challenge was not a barrier for them:

- a) "I noticed recently that you were able to ____ (feel or act in a certain way). What was different about that time?"
- b) "Sounds like this has come up for you in the past. Is there anything about how you dealt with it then that would be helpful to remember now?"
- c) "When you felt this in the past, what was one of your strengths that allowed you to deal with it?"

4. Change perspective and focus on desire to change:

- a) "What do you see as the benefits of dealing with this challenge?" "What might be the ramifications if you do not?"
- b) "If you could operate with a clear head and light heart right now, what do you imagine you would do?"

5. Recognize when the person feels stuck and assist them to think about what it would take to become unstuck: (If you want to offer suggestions, be sure to ask for permission first.)

- a) "You seem stuck right now. Do you need some time before you can think about next steps?"
- b) "Who is 'on your team' that you trust to offer suggestions?"
- c) "You seem a bit stuck when it comes to ideas for what to do next. Would you like me to offer some options to get your own ideas flowing?"
- d) "We both have seen others (other organizations) face similar challenges, would it be helpful to talk about what we remember worked for them?"

6. Change expectations > change attitude:

- a) "I've need you to ____ because of ____; and I also realize that sometimes things get in the way of meeting expectations. When you're unable to ____, I need you to let me know as soon as possible so we can work to reduce the impact."





ZEALOT — We are committed, involved, and available, ready to problem solve and to make a difference. We are willing to go the extra mile.



UNWELL vs. RENEWAL — A place of illness, fatigue and state of overwhelm or hardiness, resiliency, and transformation.

COMPASSION RESILIENCE

BURN OUT

Unwell vs. Renewal

Compassion Fatigue's Path

(Cycle is from work of Eric Gentry, PhD, 2012)



IRRITABILITY — Anger and cynicism, diminished creativity, sadness, feeling helpless or hopeless.




ZOMBIE — A sense that you can't ever do enough, inflated sense of importance, sleeplessness, sense of persecution.



WITHDRAWAL — Overwhelmed by complexity, chronic exhaustion, physical illness, difficulty empathizing, feeling numb to other's pain, absenteeism.



IMPORTANT
REMINDER!

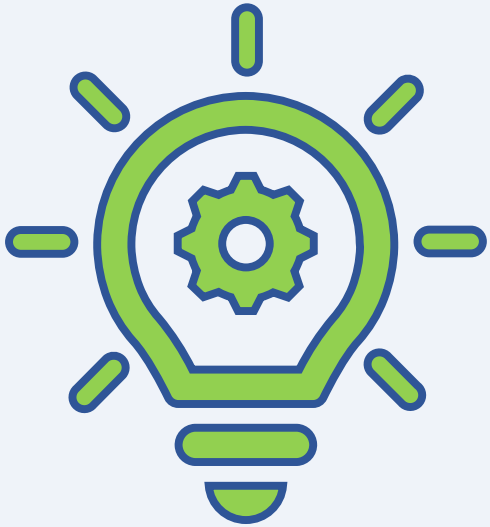


Compassion fatigue is a
NORMAL response to
complex and overwhelming
circumstances.

And, we can intervene
early to lessen the impact.

Reflect

- Which of these stages can you relate to the most – regarding yourself, a co-worker, friend, family member...?



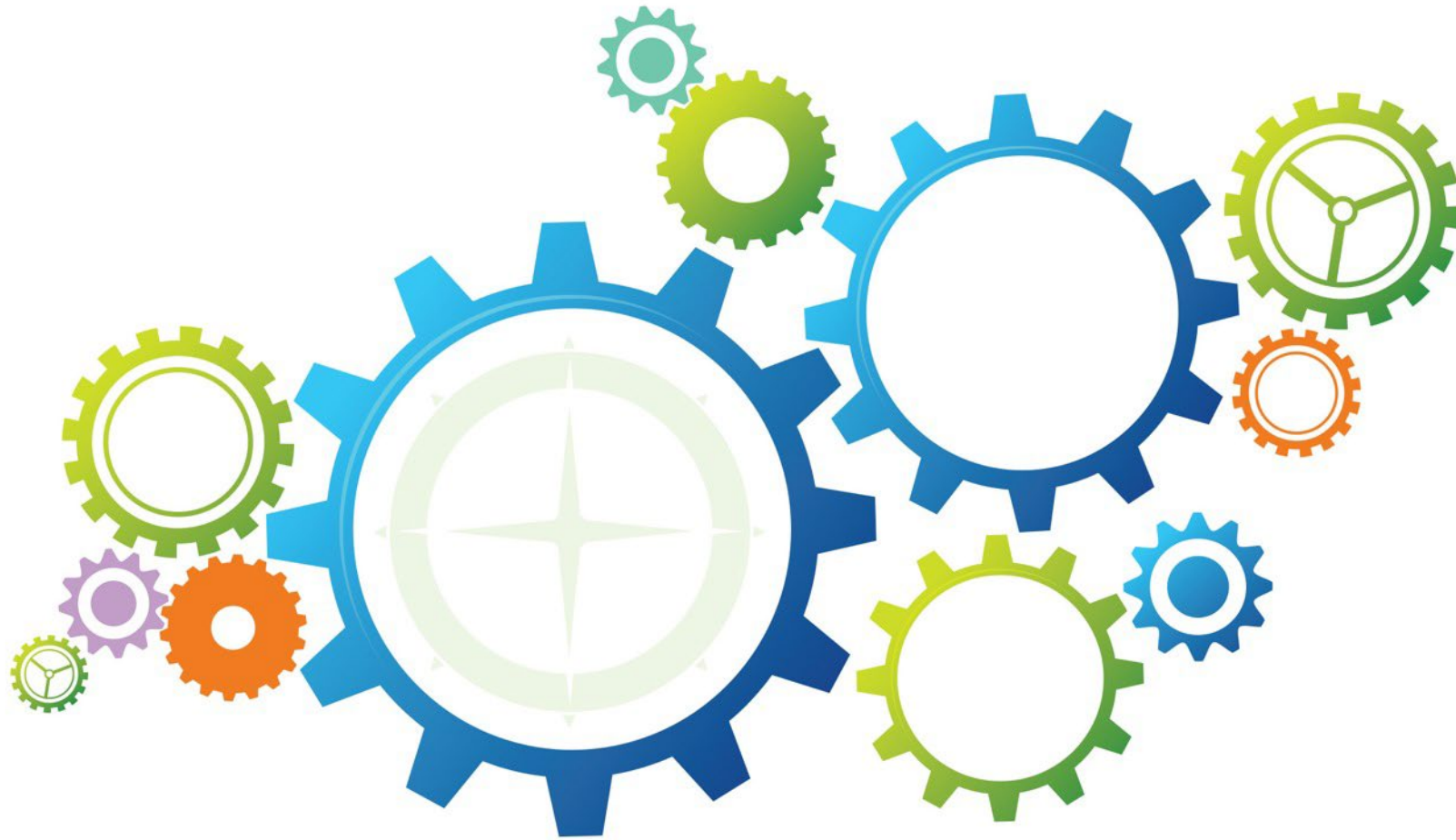
- What feelings and experiences might contribute to a person getting “stuck” in one of these stages – even to becoming one’s norm?
- How would getting stuck in one of these stages impact your ability to act with compassion during your workday?

Journal

- Jot down a mantra, quote, or mindset that has been helpful to you in minimizing compassion fatigue.



System Drivers of Compassion Fatigue and Resilience



Drivers of Compassion Fatigue and Resilience

1. Get a piece of paper or open a word document.
2. Make one list of the things in your life that drive your fatigue.
3. Make one list of the things in your life that drive your resilience.
4. Look at the list and cross off those things you do not have control over in the next month.
5. Consider how much time you spend thinking/talking about the things that are crossed off.
6. Consider how much time would be healthy for you to spend thinking/talking about these things.
7. Of the things not crossed off on your list, select one or two of your drivers and determine what action you will take over the next month to build upon or address this driver.



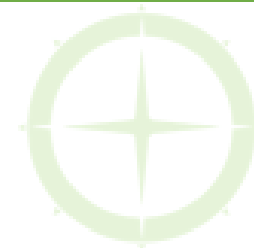
EXAMPLE

Drivers of Fatigue

- *Too many initiatives* L
- ~~Paperwork~~
- **Focusing on the problem**
- ~~Student mental health needs~~
- **“Us” vs “Them” attitude**
- *Overwhelming demands of the jobs*
- *Meeting everyone's expectations (student, administration, staff, state)*
- **Competing home vs job responsibilities**
- ~~Amount of testing~~ L
- *Student behaviors* L
- *Challenging parents* L
- ~~Lack of resources/funding~~ L
- **Unrealistic expectations for role**
- *Too many meetings* L
- **Colleagues speaking badly about students**
- **Always being “on”**
- *Emails*
- *Racism and other forms of oppression*
- **Systems working in isolation** L
- *Uninformed supervisors/administrators* L
- **Time**
- *Lack of support community agencies*

Drivers of Resilience

- **Recognition and appreciation** L
- **Setting staff boundaries** L
- *Students recognizing staff's hard work/impact*
- **Student success and progress** L
- **School wide celebrations of success**
- **Staff circles**
- **Humor**
- ~~Staff and administrative support~~ L
- **Productive meetings**
- *Thoughtful gifts from other staff*
- **Having fun together – potlucks**
- *Time for collaboration* L
- **Food (in lounge)**
- *Family partnerships* L
- ~~Hearing “thank you” from students~~
- **Building meaningful relationships with students**
- **Working on special projects with students**
- ~~PTO/PTA Events~~
- *When systems are working effectively* L
- **Co-curriculars** L
- **Focusing on positives and purpose** L
- **Watching other students build relationships with each other** L



Expectations

Expectations – paint a picture of how we think things “should” be

- Realistic/unrealistic
- Clear/unclear
- Stated/unstated
- Aspirational/a barrier to growth
- Unrecognized



Impact on Relationships

Need for awareness and transparency → supports self-accountability and responsibility by all

Expectations



Reflect or Journal



- What impact has your unrealistic self-expectations had on your well-being?
- What has the impact been of others' unrealistic expectations of your capacity?
- How do you assess if expectations are being set at a helpful aspirational level?



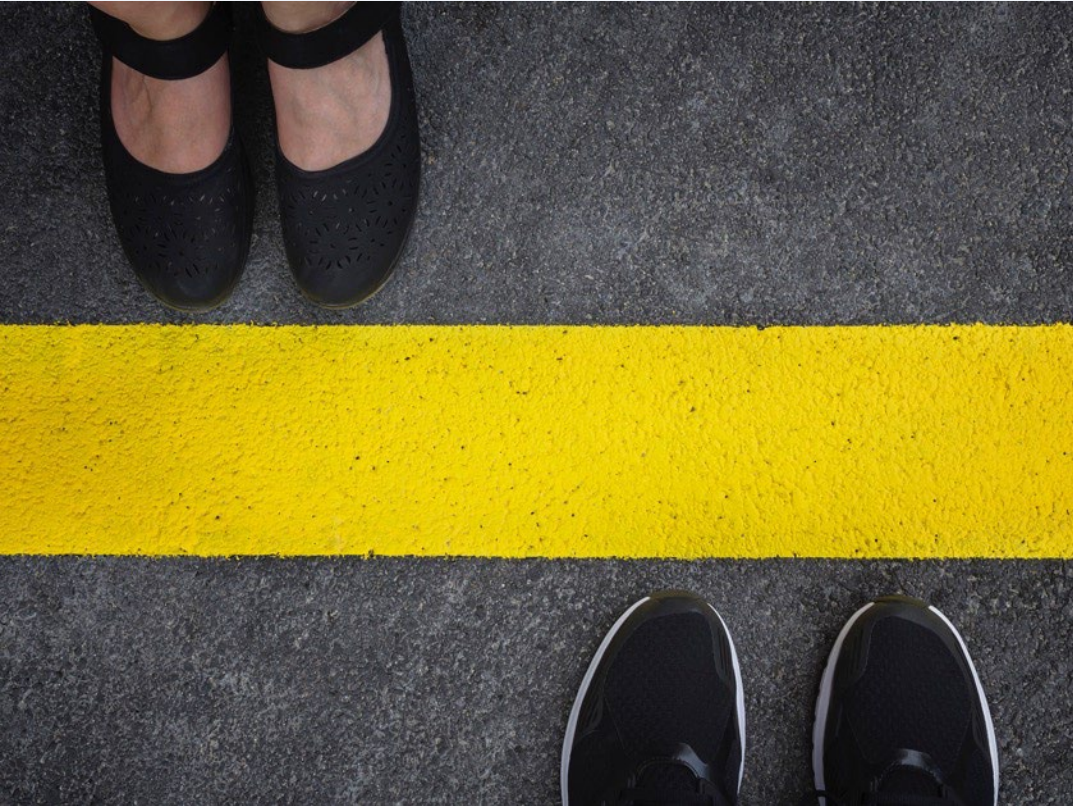
Behaviors at work that are helpful to the workplace culture – Our YESES

- Acknowledgement of each other and our work
- Having meeting roles, agendas and starting and ending meetings on time
- Setting and communicating clear boundaries with yourself, each other
- Setting time for celebrations
- Flexibility with start and end time of work day
- Trust in each other's capabilities
- Being open & honest with each other when we need to take time away to meet our needs
- Not responding to work email after hours
- Connecting with one another as human beings

NOs to support our YESES

- Working non-stop throughout the work day
- Extra duties
- Working extra without getting paid for it – working outside contracted hours
- Summer work
- To saying “yes” to everything
- To conversations that you don't have time for in the moment
- To the “just push through-it” culture
- Negativity that is not productive – work place gossip
- To staying up late

Tips for Setting Compassionate Boundaries



1. Know what you want to say “Yes” to in your life (values and priorities).
2. Be proactive. Have “meetings” to discuss boundaries. Structure offers safety for both sides.
3. Just say it! Don’t make them guess. Use simple and direct language.
4. Reinforce by pointing out the violations **IN THE MOMENT**.
5. Give explanations that are specific, relevant to the other person, and offer shared solutions.
6. Back up your boundary with action. If you give in, you invite people to ignore your needs.

Boundary language examples:

To respond to angry participant/parent/colleague:

- “I want to work with you to figure this out. It will be hard if our brains are not calm enough to think it through. How about we take a 5-minute break.”

To say no to extra commitments:

- “Our system’s goals are really important to me. I’d like to discuss what can come off my plate or what I can do differently before taking on anything new.”



“Compassionate people ask for what they need. They say no when they need to, and when they say yes, they mean it. They’re compassionate because their boundaries keep them out of resentment.”

Brené Brown



Staff Culture

- Culture = the essence of how groups of people interact – integrated pattern of knowledge, beliefs and behavior
- What staff/leader attitudes and behaviors encourage you to bring your best self to work?
- Create staff culture agreements - commitments staff make to each other that turn into behaviors they can openly talk about, celebrate, and redirect when they get off track.



Rogers All-Staff Behavior Agreements

To create an environment of belonging and inclusion that demonstrates respect for the dignity and diversity of all people, we seek to consistently behave in the following ways:

1. Be open and welcoming to all through your presence, tone, words and body language.
2. Speak up when you see problems or conflict in the workplace with a solution-focused, strengths-based perspective.
3. Seek to understand and value diverse perspectives.
4. Work together as a team to accomplish goals.
5. Seek support when needed, respond to requests for help, and offer to assist team members when possible.
6. Prioritize and support work life balance and individual wellbeing.
7. Use transparent and direct communication.
8. Practice effective use of communication technology (Teams and email).
9. Hold self, peers, and others accountable to these agreements and other commitments with respect.



Care for Self



"Self-care is not an indulgence. Self-care is a discipline. It requires tough-mindedness, a deep and personal understanding of your priorities, and a respect for both yourself and the people you choose to spend your life with."

~Tami Forman

MIND



Mindfulness and Growth Mindset
Organizing our schedule, commitments, workspace, etc
Appreciative Inquiry Reflection on Competence

SPIRIT



Core Values aligned with the school mission
Balance work and play to renew self

STRENGTH



Stress Resilience to deal positively with the challenges of life
Build healthy habits around physical well-being and end unhealthy habits

HEART



Self-Compassion
Emotional regulation planning for adults
Relationship building with colleagues

What Is Self-Compassion?



Self-Kindness
Be loving towards ourselves
instead of self-critical.



Common Humanity
Everyone suffers. You are
not perfect. No one is.
You are not alone.



Mindfulness
Notice our struggle. Feel it,
instead of being reactive.
Be with it, avoiding
self-judgment or overreaction.

When you feel like you have fallen short,
how do you practice self-compassion?

A Break for our MIND

Reflect

- Think of one unrealistic expectation that you have of yourself.
- Think of one unrealistic expectation that someone has of you.

Journal

- Write down an affirmation for each of these that you can use when you feel the expectation coming into play.

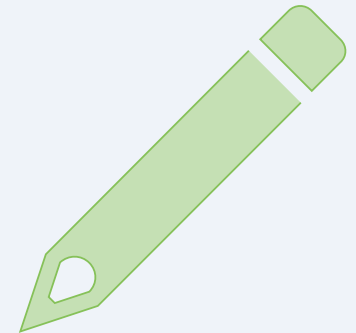
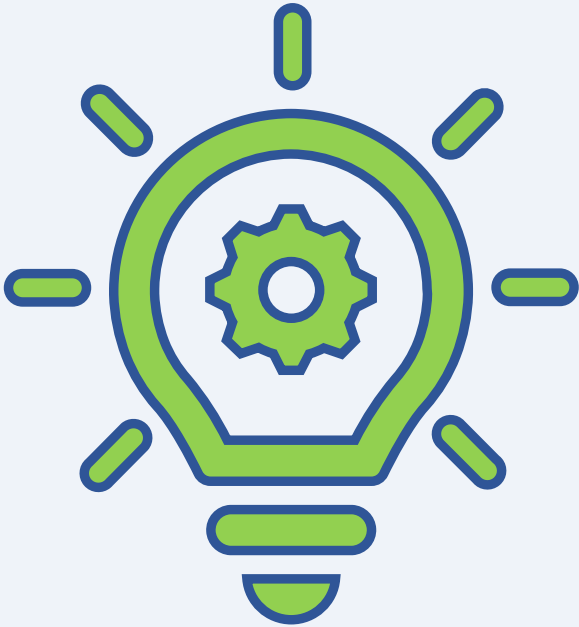


A Break for our SPIRIT



Journal

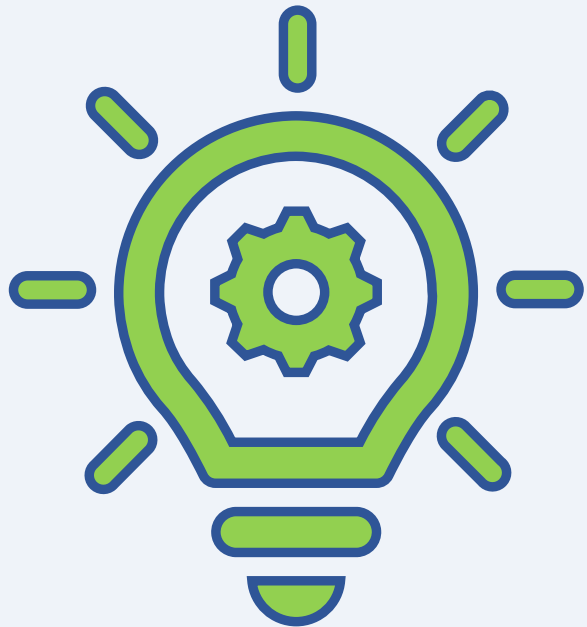
- When do you feel most alive, most like yourself?
- What are you doing?
- What or with whom are you surrounded?



A Break for our Strength

Listening and Responding to Stress in your Body

Journal



- How does your body let you know that you are experiencing stress?
- What responses to stress do you want to do more of to build your stress resilience?
- What responses would you like to change?



Equity and Compassion Resilience Connections

- Both are a journey where no one is the “expert” on the content
- Building of awareness of personal biases during self-check, Compassion in Action Steps
- Oppression’s impact on one’s feelings of compassion fatigue
- Locus of Control, where do we have control when looking at large societal issues such as oppression
- “Healthy behaviors” activity, incorporation of behaviors that promote equity

Equity and Compassion Resilience Connections (continued)



- Use of compassionate boundaries setting around topics of equity
- Elevating of staff voices to leadership
- Incorporation of equity concepts into culture agreements
- Individual wellness strategies needed to stay engaged in equity work
- Approaching wellness from a holistic approach that avoids being prescriptive



Questions?

A Break for our HEART

Commonalities



- “**Just like me**, this person is seeking happiness in their life.”
- “**Just like me**, this person is trying to avoid suffering in their life.”
- “**Just like me**, this person has known sadness, loneliness and despair.”
- “**Just like me**, this person is seeking to fill their needs.”
- “**Just like me**, this person is learning about life.”

THANK YOU

*Thank you for the relationships you build,
and the strategies you implement, that
improve the present and future lives of
participants, families and each other.*

CompassionResilienceToolkit.org

WISE@EliminateStigma.org

wise END
STIGMA
TOGETHER
one story at a time

ROGERS
Behavioral Health