

Putting Our Oxygen Masks on First

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Pre-Good Teaching Conference



How are You Feeling Today?



Grounding Activity

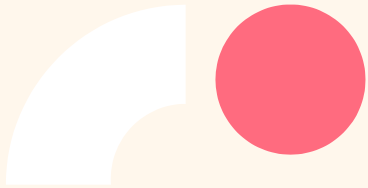
A Golden Thread

The image features a dark red background with a decorative border. The border is composed of golden threads, glowing spheres, and starburst patterns. The threads are thin and curved, weaving through the space. The glowing spheres are larger and have a bright yellow-orange center. The starburst patterns are intricate, with many small dots radiating from a central point. The overall effect is one of elegance and warmth.

Intentions for Today

- I will have compassion for my colleagues and myself as we all learn to cope with high levels of stress, burnout, and compassion fatigue
- I will use the resources provided to help mitigate stress for myself and my members





01
**WORKING
CONDITIONS**

Truths
Data from Recent Survey



What We Know

- COVID caused challenges in our schools and affected the teaching and learning environment
- Stark realities showed up in equitable distance learning opportunities and the use and distribution of technology
- Staffing shortages added undue stress for all educators
- Educators were scapegoated and blamed for the shortcomings in the educational system by parents and political entities

Teachers' primary motivations for entering and staying in the profession are to help students and make a positive difference.

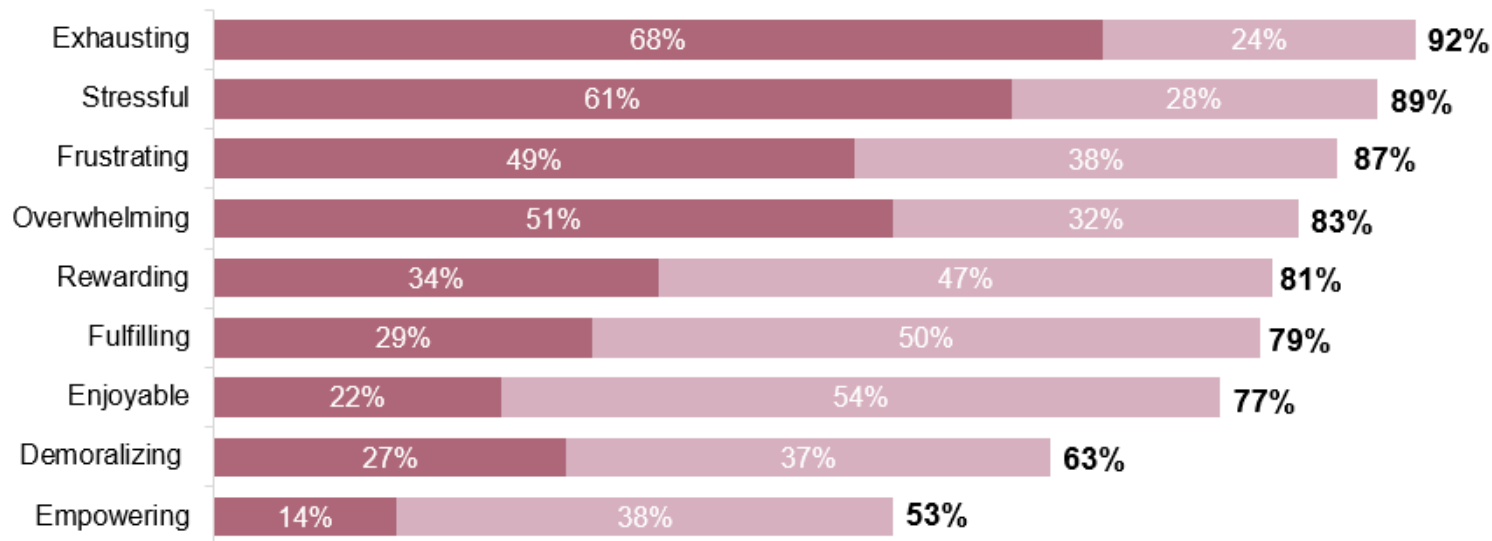
Reasons for becoming a teacher/continuing to teach.

	Been teaching more than 5 years %	Been teaching 5 years or less %	
Particularly important to younger teachers.	Helping students	66	80
	Making a positive difference in our world today	56	80
	Job security	33	20
	A work schedule that includes summers off	32	30
Particularly important to newer teachers.	Health and retirement benefits	30	11
	The opportunity to teach a subject you are interested in or care about	28	29
	Interesting and engaging work	21	22
	The salary	11	4
	The opportunity to collaborate with colleagues	8	2
	Having family members who are/were teachers	4	13

Teachers express a range of emotions regarding their position, but exhaustion and stress are the most commonly felt.

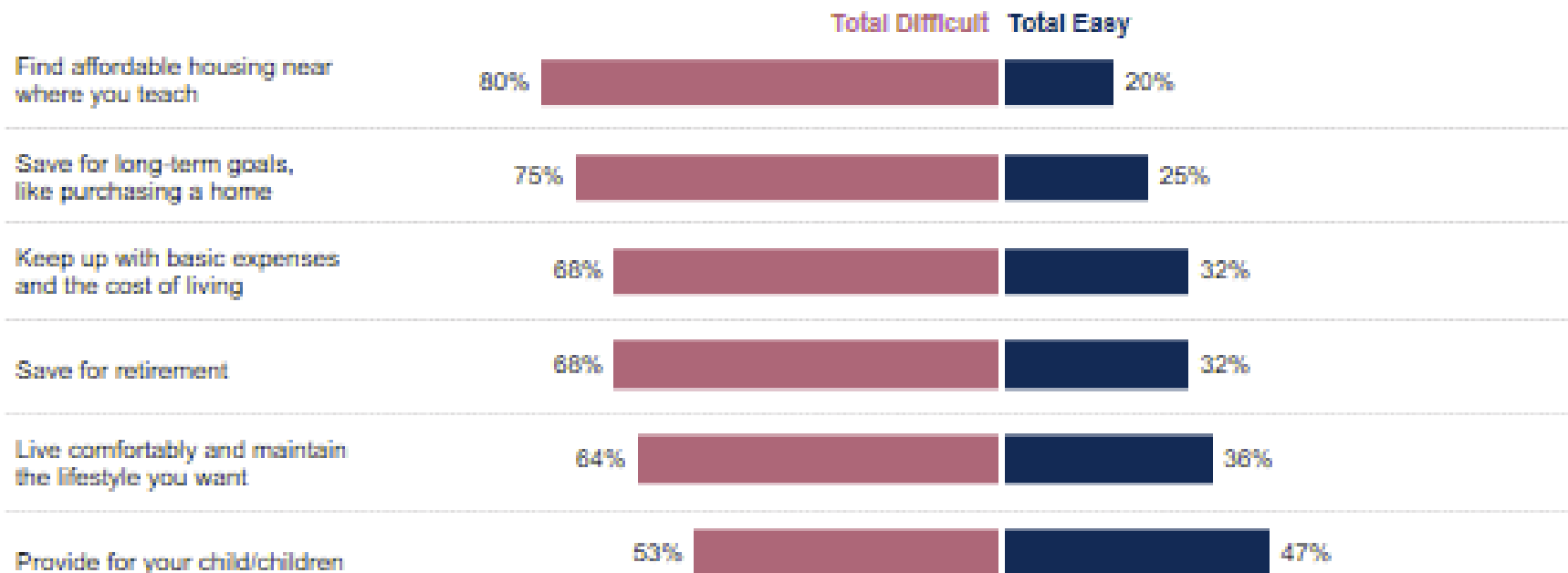
% describes the work of teachers.

■ Very well ■ Somewhat well



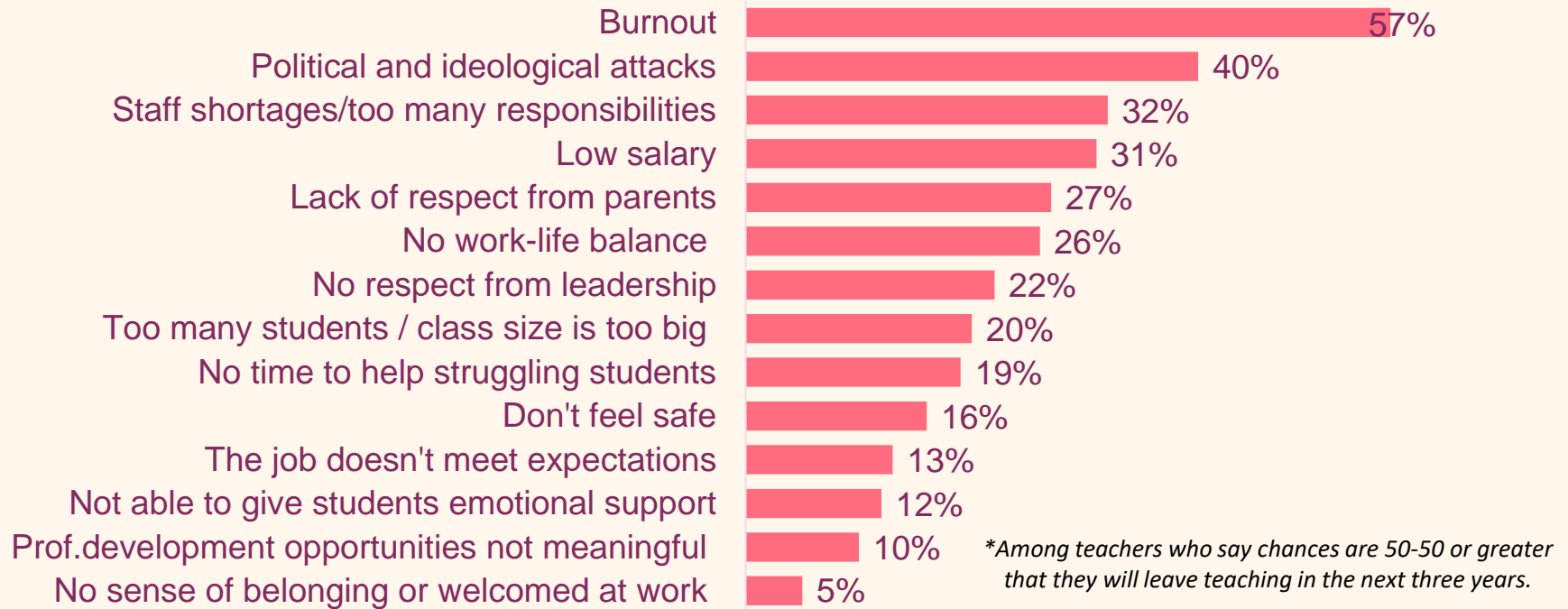
Teachers indicate that they are experiencing financial stress.

Is it easy or difficult for you to do each of the following?



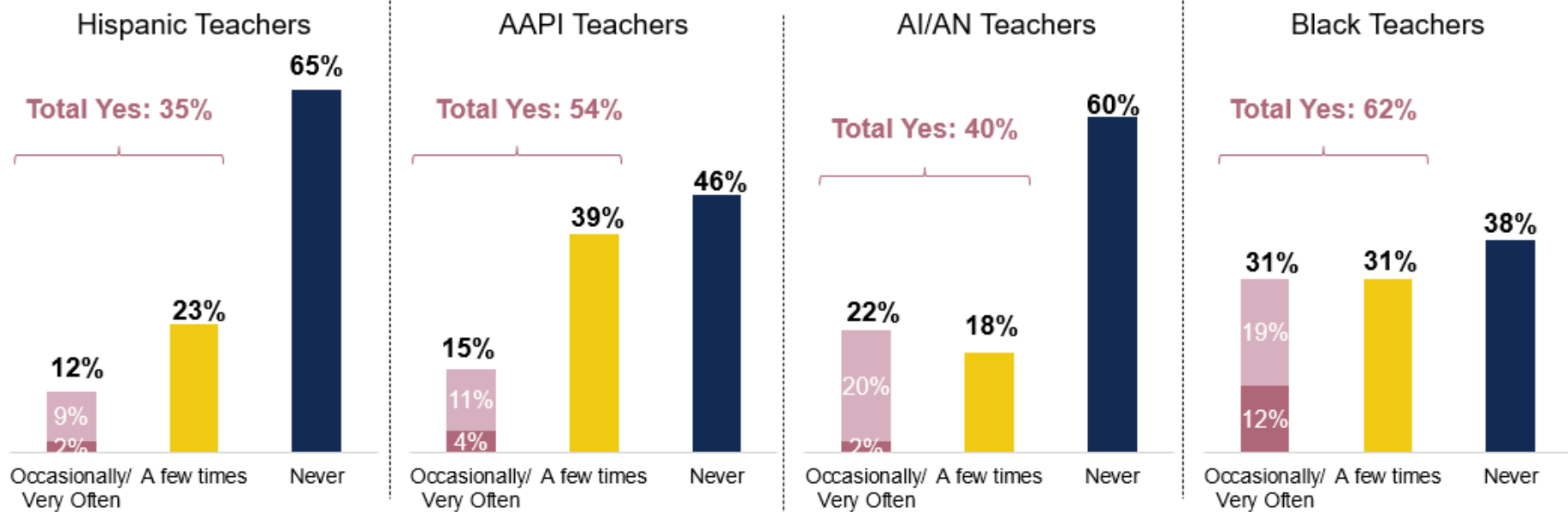
Burnout is the top reason teachers might leave; political/ ideological attacks are also a top factor for many.

*Top three reasons why teachers are considering leaving the profession.**



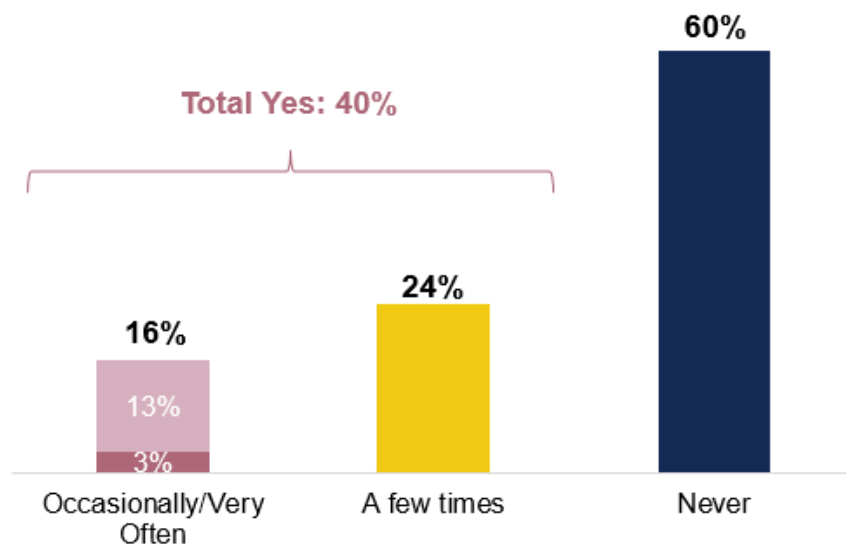
Majorities of Black and AAPI teachers have experienced racial discrimination in their current teaching position.

Do you ever experience racial discrimination at your current teaching position?



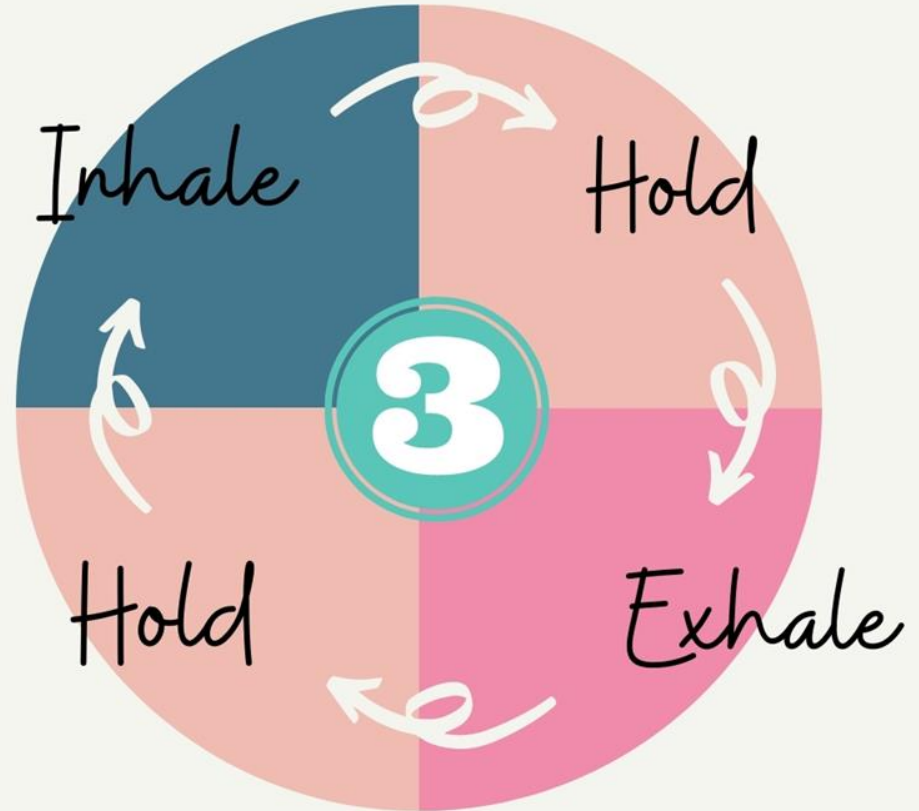
Four in 10 LGBTQ+ teachers have experienced discrimination based on their sexual orientation in their current teaching position.

Do you ever experience discrimination based on your sexual orientation at your current teaching position?



BOX BREATH

- Triggers the relaxation response
- Restores your body into "rest and digest"
- Practice any time you're stressed out or anxious



(Taylor, 2020)

02

STRESS MANAGEMENT

SEEKING TO UNDERSTAND
Taking care of yourself first
in order to help others



Putting Your Oxygen Mask First

- In case of an emergency, the airlines stress that passengers put on their masks first before they assist a child
- Likewise, educators need to put their oxygen masks on first in order to help support the mental well-being of its students, families, and colleagues

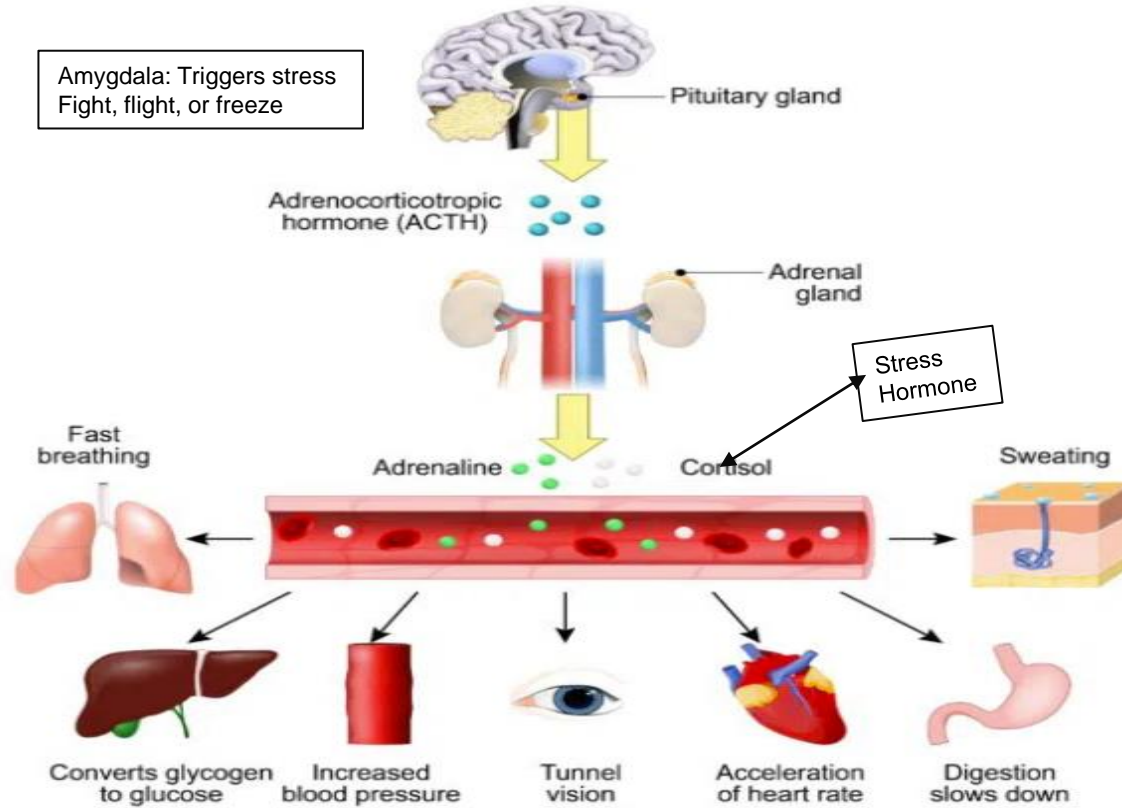
What is Stress?

- People have very different ideas with respect to their definition of stress. Probably the most common is, “physical, mental, or emotional strain or tension.”
- Another popular definition of stress is, “a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize.”

Source: The American Institute of Stress: www.stress.org

STRESS RESPONSE

Amygdala: Triggers stress
Fight, flight, or freeze



The Brain's Learning Centers

Limbic System:

Working together, these structures allow people to **regulate emotion, attention and behavior, to learn and remember**, and more – all key components of academic success.

Prefrontal Cortex

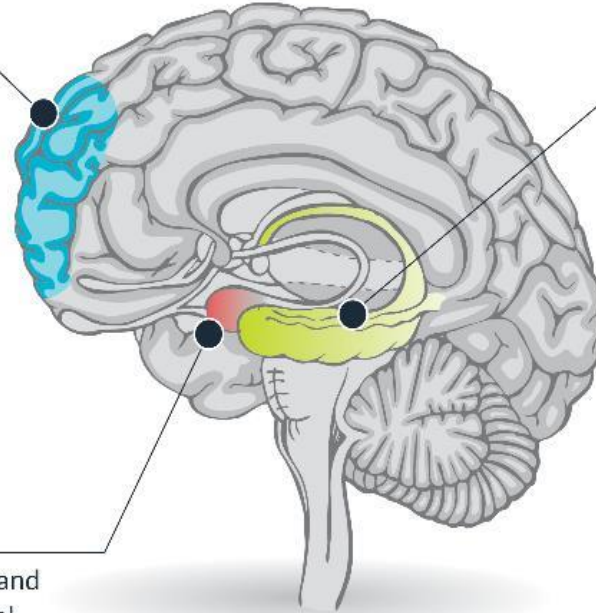
Regulates thoughts, emotions, behavior

Hippocampus

Stores learning and memory

Amygdala

Reacts to stress and emotional arousal



TYPES OF STRESS

Compassion fatigue

Secondary trauma is the emotional and psychological effects experienced through indirect exposure to the details of the traumatic experiences of others. Similarly, vicarious trauma is the cumulative transformative effect upon the professional who is working with survivors of traumatic life events

Burnout

Cumulative process marked by emotional exhaustion and withdrawal associated with increased workload and institutional stress, NOT trauma-related

Chronic Stress

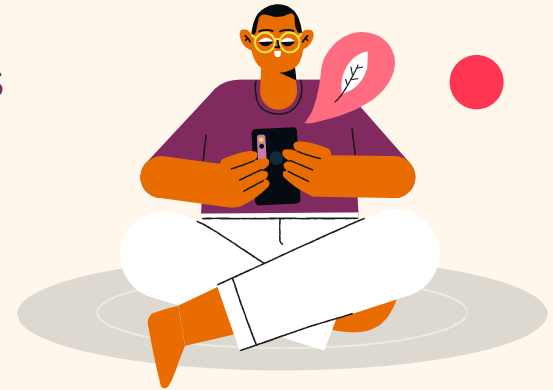
Chronic stress, however, is a consistent sense of feeling pressured and overwhelmed over a long period of time

Source: The American Institute of Stress, <https://www.stress.org/military/for-practitionersleaders/compassion-fatigue>, [Transitional Support](#), and [Yale Medicine](#)



RECOGNIZING THE SIGNS

- Emotional exhaustion
- Reduced sense of personal accomplishment or meaning in work
- Mental exhaustion
- Decreased interactions with others (isolation)
- Depersonalization (symptoms disconnected from real causes)
- Physical exhaustion



Source: The American Institute of Stress, <https://www.stress.org/military/for-practitionersleaders/compassion-fatigue>, [Transitional Support](#), and [Yale Medicine](#)



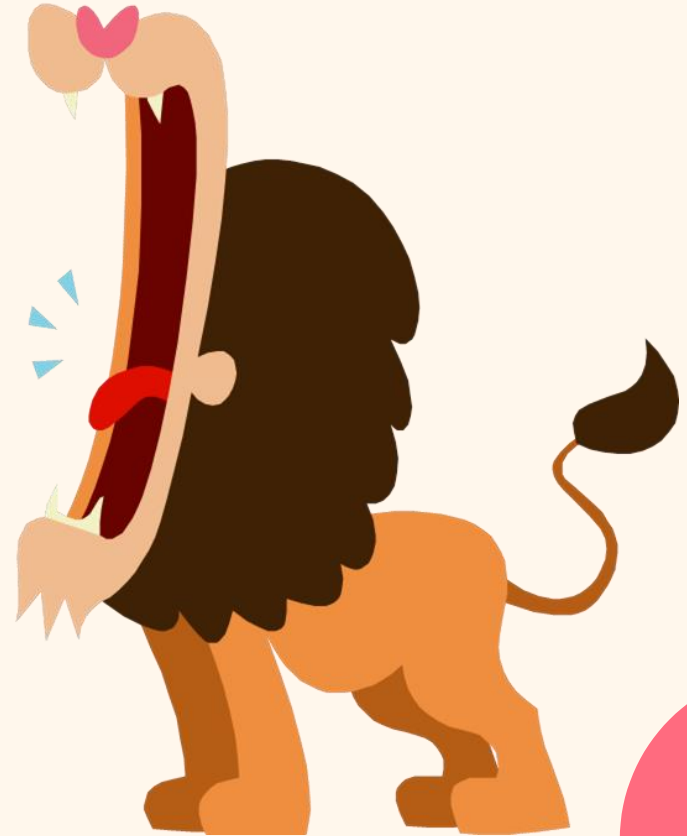
Impacts of Chronic Stress on Performance

- Attention
- Memory
- Emotional self-regulation
- Decision making
- Teamwork
- Relationships
- Social skills
- Learning & professional growth

Lion's Breath

Lion's Breath alleviates stress, eliminates toxins, and stimulates your throat and upper chest.

- Inhale through your nose.
- Open your mouth wide, stick out your tongue, and stretch it down toward your chin.
- Exhale forcefully, carrying the breath across the root of your tongue.
- While exhaling, make a "ha" sound that comes from deep within your abdomen.



What is Trauma?

1. Trauma is the emotional, psychological and physiological residue left over from heightened stress that accompanies experiences of treat, violence and life-changing events.
2. Trauma typically has a significant and lasting effect on cognitive development, social-emotional development, and overall learning.

Sources: AustrFoundation, Making Space for Learning: Trauma-Informed Practice in Schools, 2010; American Academy alian Childhood of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry.

How might trauma present in the classroom?

Fight	Flight	Freeze
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acting out• Behaving aggressively• Acting silly• Exhibiting defiance• Being hyperactive• Arguing• Screaming/yelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Withdrawing• Fleeing the classroom• Skipping class• Daydreaming• Seeming to sleep• Avoiding others• Hiding or wandering• Becoming disengaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exhibiting numbness• Refusing to participate• Refusing to get needs met• Giving a blank look• Feeling unable to move or act

Secondary Traumatic Stress

“It is not uncommon for school professionals who deal with students struggling from the effects of trauma to experience symptoms very much like those their students are exhibiting.”

The Heart of Learning and Teaching: Compassion, Resilience, and Academic Success

Signs of Secondary Traumatic Stress

1. **Emotional** – feeling numb or detached; feeling overwhelmed or maybe even hopeless.
2. **Physical** – having low energy or feeling fatigued.
3. **Behavioral** – changing your routine or engaging in self-destructive coping mechanisms.
4. **Professional** – experiencing low performance of job tasks and responsibilities; feeling low job morale.
5. **Cognitive** – experiencing confusion, diminished concentration, and difficulty with decision making; experiencing trauma imagery, which is seeing events over and over again.
6. **Spiritual** – questioning the meaning of life or lacking self-satisfaction.
7. **Interpersonal** – physically withdrawing or becoming emotionally unavailable to your co-workers or your family.



Educators of color face additional trauma

(See data from the Hart Report)





UNDERSTANDING RACIAL BATTLE FATIGUE

Definition of racial battle fatigue: Coined by Dr. William A. Smith

“cumulative result of a natural race-related stress response to distressing mental and emotional conditions. These conditions emerged from constantly facing racially dismissive, demeaning, insensitive and/or hostile racial environments and individuals.”

Racial battle fatigue stems from microaggressions and racism



Goodwin, Morgan Taylor (2018)



SYMPTOMS MAY INCLUDE:

- Heart racing
- Increased stress response (adrenaline and cortisol)
- Lowered immune system
- Increased susceptibility to disease
- Anxiety
- Insomnia
- Rapid mood swings
- Difficulty speaking clearly

Goodwin, Morgan Taylor (2018)



INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES

1. SET BOUNDARIES
2. USE INTENTIONAL BREATHING TO REGULATE YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM
3. EXERCISE- YOGA, WALKING, WEIGHTS, DANCE
4. SPEND TIME ON A HOBBY YOU ENJOY
5. TAKE UP GARDENING
6. CONNECT WITH A FRIEND
7. "HACK" YOUR OXYTOCIN LEVELS
8. PRACTICE SELF-COMPASSION
9. TAKE A MENTAL HEALTH DAY TO PROCESS TRAUMA
10. LOVE AND KINDNESS MEDITATION



If Your Body Could Talk

What would your body say to you if it could talk?

What would you say to your body?

(Adapted from Aguilar, 2018)



Body Scans

- Body scans can help us learn to re-attach to our physical bodies and counteract dissociation
- The body can be our first clue into how stressed we might be
- How you feel physically is often an indicator of how you feel emotionally
- Your body provides many clues to your emotions

Resource for mapping emotions in your body:

<https://www.onwardthebook.com/mapping-emotions-in-your-body/>

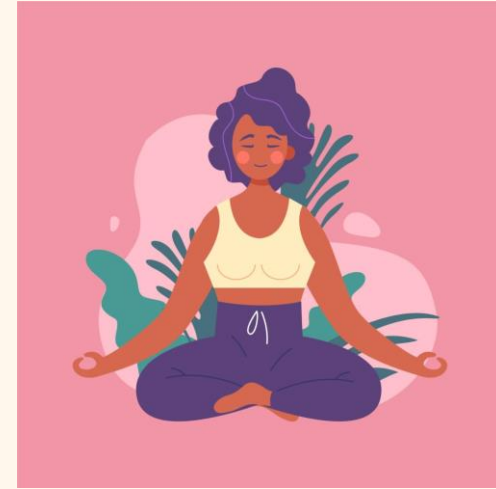
Remember to take
care of yourself.
Sometimes you get
so busy taking care
of others that
you forget
that you are
important
too.



TNUTEE

Self Care is...

- Any activity that we do to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health
- Is not something that we force ourselves to do or don't enjoy doing
- Something that refuels us, rather than take from us
- Means being patient with and kind to yourself





You have permission to take care of yourself...FIRST!

- **Self-care** is: “the daily process of being aware of and attending to one’s basic physiological and emotional needs including the shaping on one’s daily routine, relationships and environment.”

(Psychologist Dr. Catherine Cook-Cottone, 2015)

Areas of Self Care

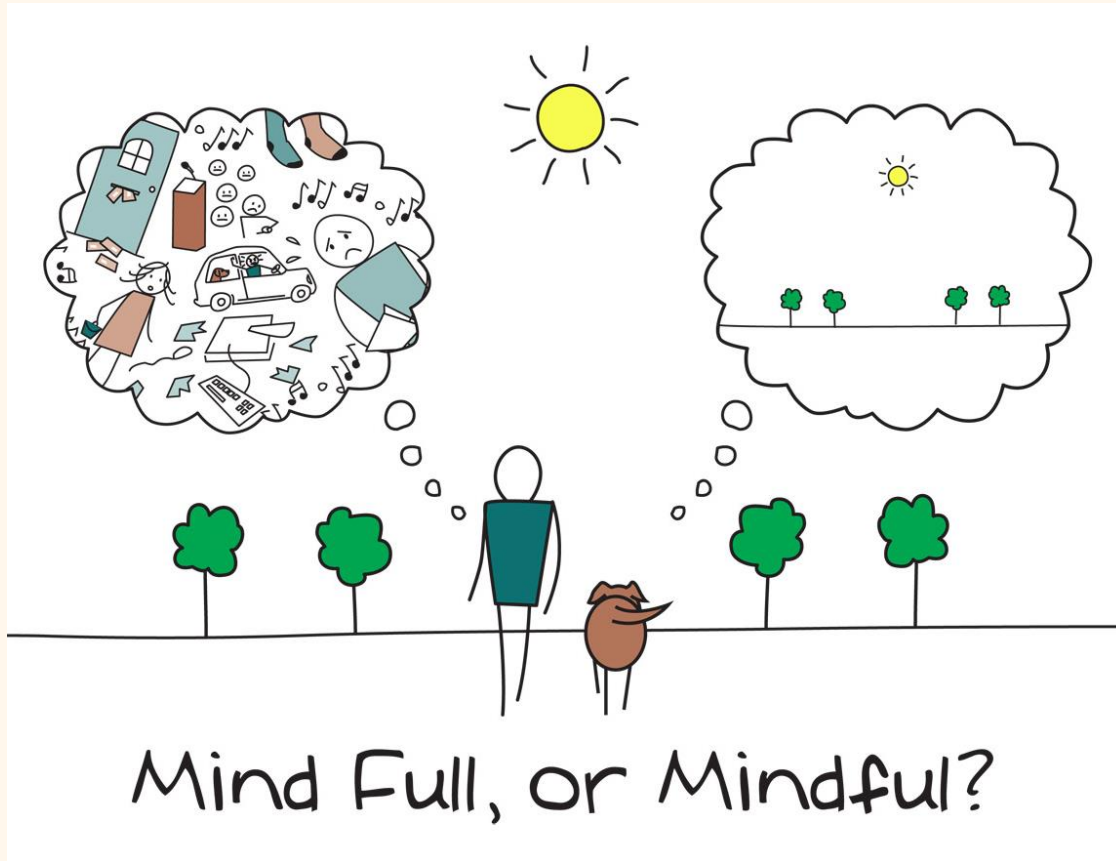


- Mental (Intellectual)
 - Physical
 - Emotional
 - Social
 - Spiritual
 - Professional
 - Financial
 - Environmental
- 

What are You Doing to Take Care of Yourself?

Share with a neighbor



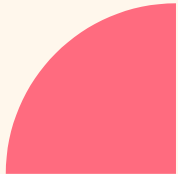



Being in the present moment with awareness and curiosity, non-judgmentally; being fully self-aware



Mindfulness Research

1. Reductions in burnout and anxiety
2. Improved organization
3. Improved self-compassion
4. Improved performance at work



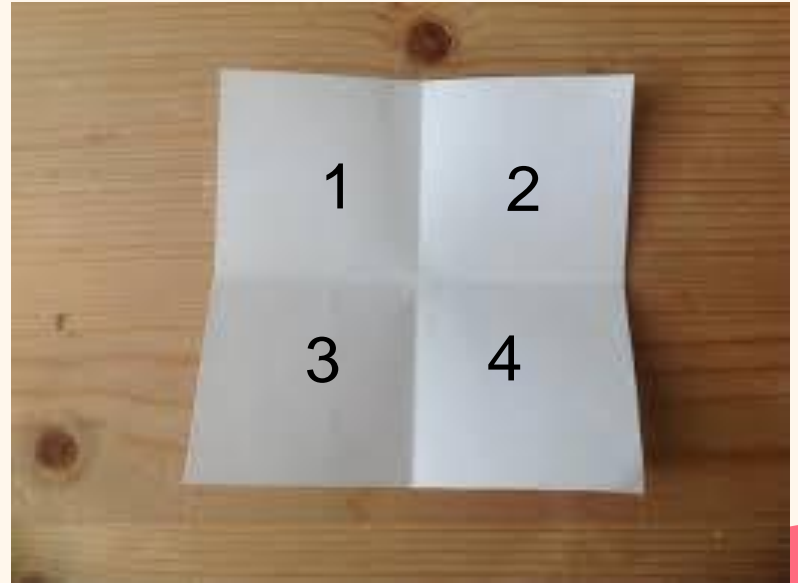
Sources: Flook et al., 2013; Roeser et al., 2012; Jennings et al., 2009; Jennings et al., 2011A; Jennings et al., 2011B; Solaway, 2011A; Sollaway, 2011B; Gold et al., 2010; Poulin, 2009; Benn et al., 2012

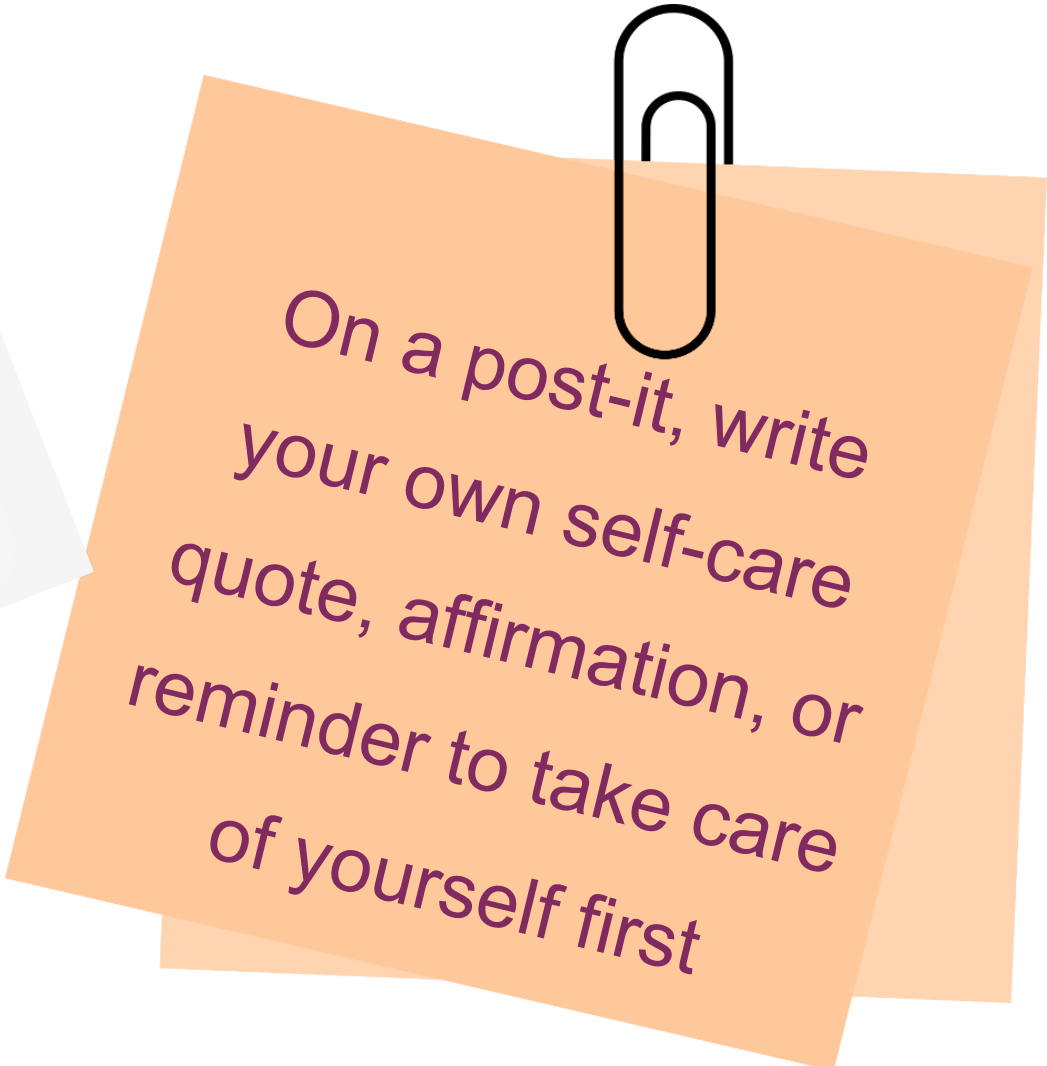
Mindfulness Strategies to Try

1. Deep breathing
2. Coloring
3. Connect with nature
4. **Mindfulness 5-4-3-2-1** (5 things you can see, 4 things you can touch, 3 things you can hear, 2 things you can smell, and 1 thing you can taste.)
5. Recite positive affirmations
6. Guided meditations
7. Listen to music
8. Sit and do nothing
9. Practice self-compassion (speak kind words out loud to yourself)

Self-care and Resilience Plan

1. My **stress triggers** are...
2. How do I **feel**... how I **think**... when highly stressed
3. To keep my mind and body **healthy** I will...
4. What will I do to **prevent stress**...





On a post-it, write
your own self-care
quote, affirmation, or
reminder to take care
of yourself first



Share one thing that you
found new, interesting
or affirming today.



Should you seek professional help?

Don't hesitate to seek professional help

We care about our hearts, so why can't we care for our minds?

- Use your health plan
- Some districts have Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)
- Consult with your clergy to find spiritual relief
- Check community agencies for a free or reduced cost referral



Get help/Resources

Crisis Text Line- Text HOME to 741741

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Receive help with problems and issues related to:

Counseling Financial

Child/Eldercare

Substance abuse

Grief and loss

Your Job

Legal

Parenting

Legal assistance

Parenting

Stress

And more!

CTA Resources

- [Financial Wellness Center](#)
- [Financial Self-Care](#)
- <https://www.cta.org/for-educators/wellness-center>
- <https://www.cta.org/wellness-center-recorded-webinars>

NEA Resources

[Articles & Resources](#)

Apps

[Headspace](#)

[GoodReads](#)

[Calm](#)

[myStrength](#)

[UCLA Mindful](#)

Websites

[Self Care Day](#)

[Mindful.org](#)

Podcasts

Heavyweight- heartwarming stories

The Sporkful- all about food

Better Life Lab - holistic approach to our careers

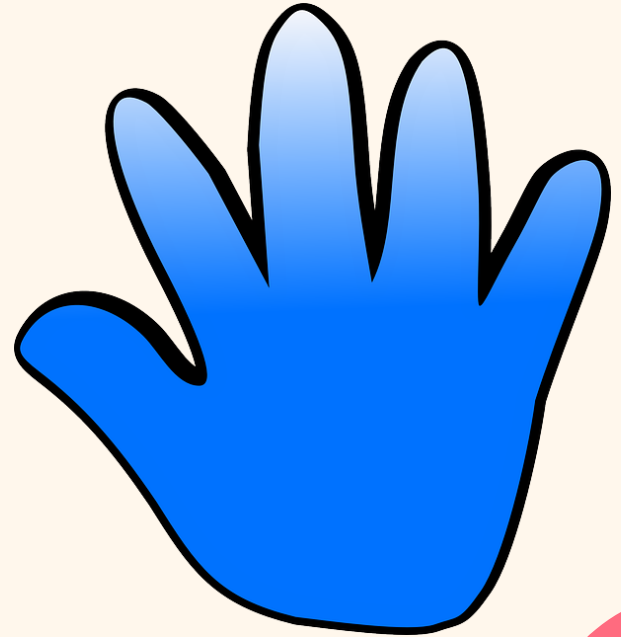
10% Happier with Dan Harris -mindfulness

So Money- financial podcast

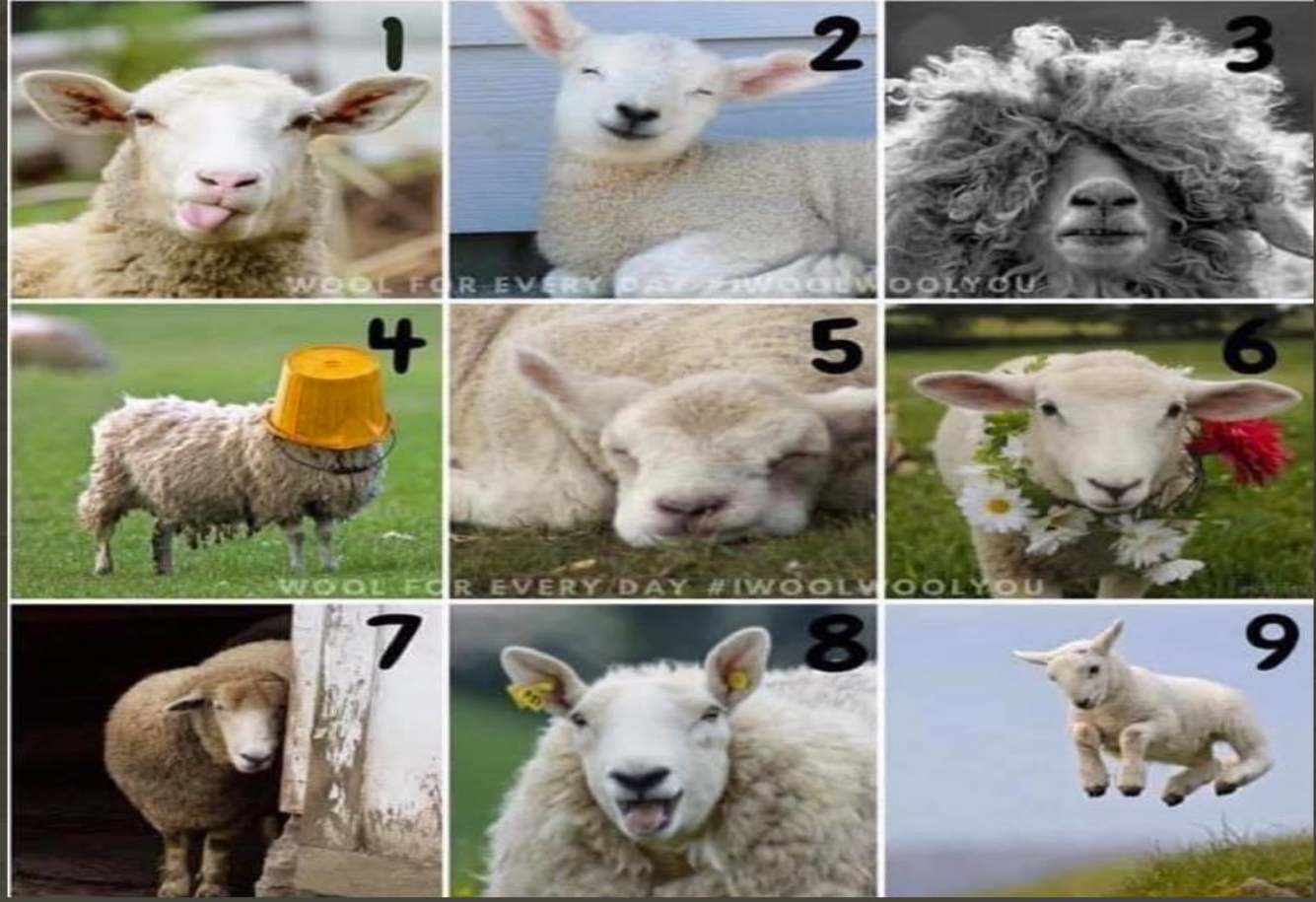
Five Finger Breathing

The Five Finger Breathing technique is a stress reducer. Try it with your students. Have fun with it!

- Have them raise their hands like they are going to high 5.
- Then ask them to spread their fingers like a starfish.
- Starting with the palm of the hand near the thumb, slowly inhale to the top of the fingertip. Then exhale down the inside of the finger.
- Repeat on each finger until they have gone through all the fingers.

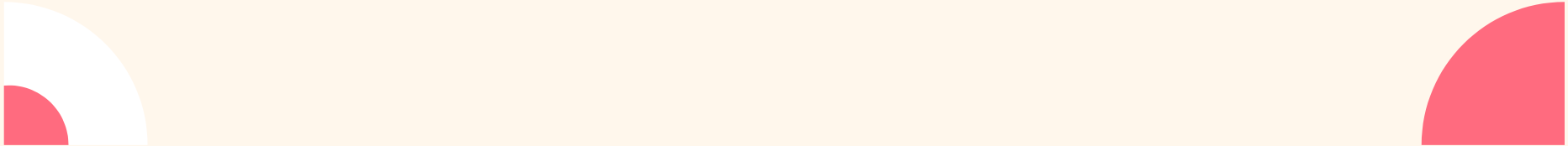


How are You Feeling Now?





Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)

- Website: www.casel.org
 - School guide for SEL:
https://schoolguide.casel.org/uploads/sites/2/2019/09/2021.6.15_School-Guide-Essentials.pdf
- 

Organizations

Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute

- Has a free assessment for employees
- Has a free resource, Little Book About Trauma Informed Workplaces

Kaiser RISE Index (Resilience in School Environments)

Kaiser Permanente's Resilience in School Environments, or RISE, empowers schools to create safe and supportive learning environments by cultivating practices that strengthen the social and emotional health of all school employees and students. Developed as part of Thriving Schools, RISE works with schools and districts to prepare school employees to better understand and integrate social and emotional well-being into all aspects of school life, both theirs and their students.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach





With
Gratitude

Thank
You