 PERMISSION TO FEEL
Unlocking the Power of Emotions to Help our Kids, Ourselves, and our Society Thrive

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(Info, Book, Blog)

#PermissionToFeel

THANK YOU!

How are you feeling?

ENERGY

PLEASANTNESS

How Educators Felt in 2018

N = 6000
Educators from around the USA

Causes of Teachers’ Anxiety

• Fear of getting sick (either themselves or loved ones/family members)
• Having to work from home/child care
• ‘Online school started today. My vision of finally having someone else take care of kids (even virtually) was smashed to smithereens. This requires 100% parent involvement, actually 200% because the girls are in different grades!!!’
• A quality education for all students
• Being home and cooped up
• Feeling isolated and lonely
• Economy and finances
• Access to food and resources

RESOURCES

Emotion Scientist Blog,
Book info, Free articles
www.marcbrackett.com

RULER training & Information on SEL
www.rulerapproach.org

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Between stimulus and response there is space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.

- Viktor Frankl

How Educators Feel Right Now

N = 5000
Webinar Participants
March 23-24

PERMISSION TO FEEL

ENERGY

PLEASANTNESS

Stressed

Anxiety

Grateful
Hopeful

Worried
Exposed

Fear
Lost

Uncertainty

Lonely

Confused

Scared

Overwhelmed
Educators (most of us) are spending upwards of 90% of the day in the RED & BLUE.

While the goal CANNOT be to be in the YELLOW or GREEN all of the time, especially now, we need greater balance!

Out of Balance

How we feel is:
- stressed
- frustrated
- anxious
- overwhelmed
- bored
- tired
- exhausted
- lonely
- depressed
- excited
- happy
- joyful
- calm
- satisfied

We’re Not Regulating Very Well!

Avoidance
- Overeating
- Wine, wine, wine!
- Watching trash TV
- Losing my temper
- Overthinking; ruminating
- Obsessive Cleaning

Overeating
- Screaming
- Consuming too much social media
- Oversleeping

Ideas for what can make a difference

- Learn the science of emotion and emotional intelligence
- Understand that SEL skills are hard, not “soft” skills
- Move beyond the goal that “happiness” is the “answer”
- Focus more on prevention so there is less need for intervention
- Have greater balance in the “core” curriculum
- Educate families in SEL
- Eliminate “quick fix” mentality and focus on systemic change
- Overhaul outdated and often harmful policies and educate policymakers

Our Vision

To use the power of emotions to create a healthier and more equitable, innovative, and compassionate society

Social and Emotional Learning

Moving from a piecemeal approach...

...to a systemic approach

The RULER Approach

STRAtegy

- Adult and professional learning
- Schoolwide tools, like SEL syllabus, resources, and OSS resources
- Online platform and coaching support
- Assessing and evaluation tools

Stakeholders

- Administration and school board
- Educators and staff
- Families
- Students

Aims

- Individual level
- Enhanced mindset (emotions matter)
- Deepened social and emotional skills

Impact

- Increased engagement and performance
- Better quality relationships and less bullying
- More responsible decisions and behavior
- Better stress management and greater well-being
Emotions Matter

- Attention, memory, and learning
- Decision making
- Relationship quality
- Physical and mental health
- Performance and creativity

Emotion Scientist vs. Emotion Judge

An Emotion Scientist...
- Accepts all emotions as information
- Sees emotions as ephemeral
- Is open, curious, and reflective
- Is in learner mode (investigates)
- Wants to get "granular"
- Has a "growth mindset"

An Emotion Judge...
- Views emotions as "error" and weak
- Sees emotions as "permanent"
- Is critical, closed, and ignorance emotion
- Is in knower mode (makes attributions)
- Clumps emotions as good or bad
- Has a "fixed mindset"

The RULER Skills

| R | Recognizing emotions in self and others |
|   |   |
| U | Understanding causes and consequences of emotions |
| L | Labeling emotions accurately |
| E | Expressing emotions |
| R | Regulating emotions effectively |

Healthy Emotion Regulation

The "thoughts" and "actions" we use to prevent, reduce, initiate, maintain, or enhance emotions in order to promote well-being, build positive relationships, make sound decisions, and attain goals

Managing Anxiety & Stress

- Stress
  - Unpredictable, Uncontrollable, Sustained (like how we feel right now)
  - Currently, our educators and many of us feel chronic stress.
- Chronic stress makes us sense danger around the clock. Coupled with "resource depletion"- poor nutrition, sleep, and exercise, our worst selves come out and we behave irrationally.
  - Spraying people, gargling with Clorox, panic buying of toilet paper
  - Saying mean or hurtful things to our partners
  - Catastrophic thinking. Our brains lie to us. When we don’t have accurate information, we make things up (e.g., Turbulence & plane crashes)

The Big 7: Healthy Emotion Regulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHYSIOLOGICAL REGULATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mindful breathing</td>
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<tr>
<td>SELF-CARE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sleep, nutrition, exercise (build a strong immune system)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feeling safe, heard, &amp; connected</td>
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<tr>
<td>MANAGING YOUR THOUGHTS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Positive self-talk, gratitude, compassion, reappraisal, &amp; problem-solving</td>
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<tr>
<td>MANAGING YOUR LIFE SMARTLY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modifying &amp; selecting situations to prevent stress; having routines and setting daily goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>DOING MEANINGFUL THINGS YOU ENJOY</td>
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<tr>
<td>Spirituality, hobbies, entertainment, &amp; taking a walk in nature</td>
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<tr>
<td>FORGIVENESS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giving ourselves permission to fail &amp; forgive</td>
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**Emotion Regulation Strategies are:**

- **Specific to the emotion:** Not all emotions are created equal.
- **Specific to the person:** Strategies are rooted in personality, family background, culture.
- **Specific to the situation or relationship:** Do you regulate better at work than at home? Is it easier with some friends than others? For educators: Are all strategies allowed/permitted?
- **And, importantly, there is no criterion of correctness**

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**Let’s Put It All Together!**

- Give yourself & others the permission to feel all emotions.
- Emotion regulation isn’t about not feeling, it’s about accepting all feelings & using them wisely.
- Strive to become an emotion scientist, not an emotion judge.
- Remember: Physical distance does not mean psychological distance.
- Appreciate that developing emotion regulation skills can be harder than learning traditional “hard” skills. It’s life’s work. Embrace the complexity!
- Be the role model. If you fail, be open to apologizing, forgiving, and repairing—and seeking professional help if necessary.
- Don’t give up! Your health and your children’s health depend on it.

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