Six Critical Healing Factors & Building Belonging
Engaging Activity: Mindful Minute

• Start in Seated Mountain.

• Bring your attention to the present moment. We are going to start by taking a Mindful Minute.

• Start bringing your attention to the breath, noticing its qualities (fast, slow, warm, cool, shallow, deep...).

• Continue to focus your attention on the breath, and notice how you are feeling. Just notice.
Engaging Activity: Poll

What happens when your alarm goes off?
Learning Objectives

- Identify the Six Critical Healing Factors.
- Examine the impact of toxic stress on development.
- How can we Build Belonging?
Series Learning Objectives

- Illustrate the interconnectedness of SEL and self-care.
- Practice and implement Breathe, Move, and Rest strategies for Self-Awareness and Self-Management.
- Identify CASEL competencies.
- Acquire skills to train colleagues in SEL, evidence-based curricula.
Guiding Question

What are the six critical healing factors?
Six Critical Healing Factors

Sleep

Nutrition

Mental Health

Exercise

Mindfulness

Healthy Relationships

Sources: CDC YRBS 2015; https://www.kidsdata.org/; Cavanaugh et al., 2016

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Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)

**Abuse**
- Physical
- Emotional
- Sexual

**Neglect**
- Physical
- Emotional

**Household Dysfunction**
- Incarcerated relative
- Divorce
- Mother treated violently
- Substance abuse
- Mental illness

ACES and Outcome Risk

As the number of ACEs increases, so does the risk for negative health outcomes.
ACES and Health Outcomes

Possible Risk Outcomes:

**Behavior**
- Lack of Physical Activity
- Smoking
- Alcoholism
- Substance Abuse
- Missed Work

**Physical & Mental Health**
- Severe Obesity
- Diabetes
- Depression
- Suicide Threats
- STIs
- Heart Disease
- Cancer
- Stroke
- COPD
- Broken Bones

Image source: https://advokids.org/adverse-childhood-experience-study-aces/

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Are ACEs really that common?

The chart shows the ACE Score Prevalence for CDC-Kaiser ACE Study Participants, waves 1 & 2.

64% of participants reported having experienced one or more ACES.

Source: https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/aces/resources.html
Engaging Activity: Alternate Nostril Breathing

1. Let’s start with a few deep breaths through the nose.
2. Inhale, close the right nostril by pressing the side of the nose with the right thumb.
3. Exhale out the left nostril.
4. Inhale through the left nostril.
5. Close the left nostril by pressing the side of the nose with your right pinky and fourth finger. At the same time, take your thumb off of your right nostril.
6. Exhale out the right nostril.
7. Inhale through the right nostril.
8. Close the right nostril with your thumb again and exhale through the left (removing the pinky and fourth finger).
9. This is one round. Complete 2 or 3 rounds by repeating steps 2-8. End on a left exhalation.
10. Take a few regular breaths.
11. Notice how you feel.

The hand movements will take some practice to feel comfortable.
If thumb and pinky are too hard for learners to coordinate, you could use right thumb to close right nostril and left thumb to close left nostril.
Once your learners have mastered the hand movements, helpful verbal cues are: inhale right, close, exhale left. Inhale left, close, exhale right.
This exercise can take 1 to 3 minutes.

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Almost every cell in your body has a receptor for cortisol. When the stress response is triggered too frequently, or too severely, it can change the structure and function of children’s developing brains, their immune and hormonal systems—and even the way their DNA is read and transcribed. Those changes are what we now refer to as a toxic stress response.

Nadine Burke-Harris, MD
What’s the key?

When children overcome these burdens, they have typically been the beneficiaries of exceptional efforts on the part of supportive adults.

When relationships are reliably responsive and supportive, they can actually buffer young children from the adverse effects of other stressors.
Healing Interactions

Educators can deliver the daily doses of healing interactions that truly are the antidote to toxic stress. And just as the science shows that it’s the cumulative dose of early adversity that’s most harmful, it also shows that the cumulative dose of healing nurturing interactions is most healing.

Nadine Burke-Harris, MD
Mindful Movement: Tree or Forest
Engaging Activity: Think-Ink-Share

What does it feel like to belong?

2:00

Timer: By Lara Futch
The Brain Stem (oldest part)
• Directs bodily survival mechanisms, such as heart rate, circulation, respiration, digestion, and reproduction.
• When our survival is secure we feel safe.

The Limbic System (second oldest part)
• a relay station for hunger, thirst, memory, fear, and emotions.
• When the limbic system is balanced, we feel content.

The Prefrontal Cortex (most recent part)
• Responsible for thinking, memory, reason, cooperative planning, social responsibility, empathy, reflection, and language.
• When the prefrontal cortex is functioning well, we can connect with ourselves and others.
When we do not feel safe, we tend to feel fear or insecurity.

When we do not feel content, we tend to feel as though we are lacking.

When we do not feel connected, we might feel rejected or alone.
How do students belong?

1. School-based relationships and experiences.
2. Student-Teacher relationships
3. Students’ general feelings about school as a whole.

Teacher support and positive personal characteristics were the strongest predictors of school belonging.

Belongingness

Academic Outcomes
• Less absenteeism
• Better school completion
• Less truancy
• Positive attitudes toward learning
• Academic self-efficacy

Psychosocial Outcomes
Higher levels of:
• Happiness
• Psychological functioning
• Adjustment
• Self-esteem
• Self-identity

Engaging Activity: Recharge Sequence

1. Begin standing in Mountain with feet slightly apart, hands at your sides.

2. Inhale, take your arms overhead and look up.

3. Exhale and fold over your legs, bending the knees slightly to allow the hands to rest on the shins, the feet or the floor.

4. Inhale, place hands on shins, straighten legs and look up.

5. Exhale and fold over the legs once more.

6. Inhale, come all the way up to standing, arms overhead and look up.

7. Exhale, return to Mountain.

*This sequence can be done behind or in front of desks/chairs. It's useful to re-energize learners when they get tired.
Belonging & Cognitive Load Theory

When students feel valued and respected at school by:

- educators
- peers
- curriculum
- policies and norms of the institution

they can put the full weight of their cognitive resources behind what they are learning.

When students' needs are not met in terms of:

- physical, emotional, and identity safety
- human development
- strong and supportive relationships

they are more likely to disengage from key behaviors that are important for learning.
Belonging and Performance

**Stereotype Threat** *(Steele)*
When students have questions about their belonging, they search for cues to signal whether or not they fit in and are valued by others.

**Role in Achievement Gaps**
Because such questions undermine performance and are more common among underrepresented groups, they contribute to gaps.

**Resource Allocation**
Resources otherwise used to focus on learning are instead used to figure out if they belong.

https://www.chbob.org/blog/understanding-the-educational-achievement-gap
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How to Build Belonging

1. **Normalize** - Teach students questions of belonging and difference are normal and lessen over time

2. **Express Confidence** - Communicate confidence in students' capability to meet high standards along with critical feedback, “this draft can be improved, I believe you can do it.”

Culture of Care practices foster social and personal conditions to increase belonging.
Engaging Activity: Standing Kite Sequence

1. Inhale, take both arms overhead.
2. Exhale, lean to the right side.
3. Inhale, come back to center, arms overhead.
4. Exhale, lean to the left side.
5. Repeat a few times.
Potential Concerns

- Students from diverse racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds are often placed at risk by the dominant culture of schools. This can lead to stress, alienation, and disengagement, which undermine school success.

- Additionally, U.S. and global diversity is growing, leading to greater interaction among people from various racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds.

- There tends to be an emphasis on differences rather than commonalities, which limits the possibilities for devising mutually satisfactory and constructive social arrangements.

Potential Opportunities

- A critical social awareness would help young people recognize and distinguish among the potentially competing cultural and race-related messages and expectations.

- Students would benefit from noticing the importance placed on various types of diversity—both for members of their group and for other distinct groups—in specific classroom, school, and community settings.

- This includes discerning issues of race and class in each context and the cultural demands and affordances of these settings.
Potential Concerns

• Issues surrounding relationship skills can result from mismatches in self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness.

• Because of differences in the understanding of norms, social roles (e.g., age, gender), and related rules about emotional displays, students and adults can misinterpret each other’s attempts to cooperate, share, and engage in collaborative problem-solving.

• This can cause student-student and student-teacher disagreements to escalate into entrenched conflicts and lead to an overemphasis on compliance rather than growth and fairness as guiding principles in resolving conflicts.

Potential Opportunities

• Cultural competence and cultural fluency represent important equity-focused competencies.

• Through cultural competence skills, adults can develop a historically grounded, strengths-focused facility with the relational skills that are valued in the students’ culture of origin.

• Adults can also cultivate cultural fluency, which refers to the capacity to effectively learn about and negotiate cultural differences (e.g., “code-switching”).

• The development of such fluency requires a sense of cultural humility, in which one recognizes the limitations of one’s own culture and sees diversity as a potential asset.
Human relationships are the essential ingredient that catalyze healthy development and learning.

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Engaging Activity: Guided Rest
Welcoming Activity: Synectics

“Sleep” is like...

Because...

1. Valor

2. Garfield

3. Pineapples

4. Sunset
Today’s Reflection

Self-Care:
1. Choose 2 Breathe, Move, and/or Rest Brain Breaks to practice independently. Note how you feel before (pre) and after (post) your practice.

2. Review the 5 SEL competencies and objectives. List which competencies/objectives are strengths for you. List the competencies/objectives where you feel you need additional support.

Classroom Planning:
Identify and list 3 SEL signature practices in each category that you can implement in an online or in-person classroom setting. You should have a total of 9 strategies upon completion. (3 Welcoming, 3 Engaging, and 3 Optimistic Closure)

Pro-tip: Differentiate between virtual and in-person settings
Consult www.schoolguide.casel.org for the SEL 3 Signature Practices Playbook