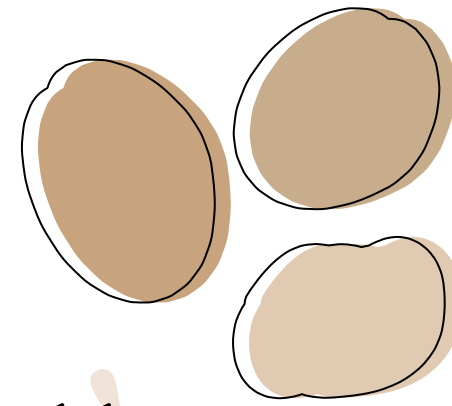# Walk Straight at Barking Dogs

Leading for Emotionally Healthy Schools

Hello!

Michelle Jensen, PhD

School Principal

Professor

Coordinator of Strategic Initiatives

School Counselor

"

What attracted you to attend this session?

"

What are features of an Emotionally Healthy School?

What would your success criteria be?

Your Well Being

Your Staff's Well Being

Reframe & Reflect

Introduction.

1. Barking Dogs.

2. Presence.

3. Self-Awareness.

4. Emotional Agility.

5. Coping/Stress Management.
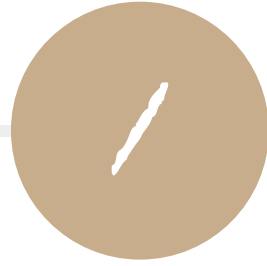
6. Teacher Well-Being.

7. Sense of Belonging.

8. Compassion for Self & Others.

9. Staff Regulation.

10. Reframe & Reflect.

Barking Dogs
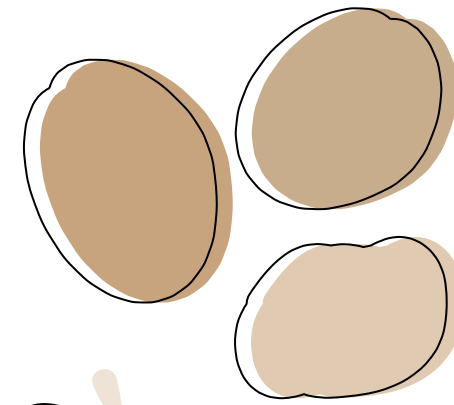
Walk Straight at Barking Dogs

Barking Dogs.

issues that cause a leader anxiety or a deep need to be courageous

Barking dogs seldom bite.

In the simplest terms a *barking dog* is something that you know, in your gut, needs to be addressed and yet it causes you angst or stress thinking about approaching it.

Action Step

What is one Barking Dog that comes to your mind quickly? Knowing and naming it is the first step of developing an emotionally healthy school environment.

Presence.

A quiet mind fully in touch with the present moment.

Behavioral freedom. Present in all you do.

" Fundamental to improving your emotional health is becoming aware of your automated responses and their impact on others; understanding what drives and motivates your behavior and why this is the case.... In short, this means taking ever greater personal responsibility and becoming more effective at 'whole body thinking'. These steps are all part of the emotional health journey."

— Global Leadership Foundation

Presence.

Increase your emotional health...

Take Personal Responsibility...

Personal Responsibility

Living "Above the Line" means **taking ownership, being accountable and responsible**.

Living "Below the Line" means you look elsewhere for blame, excuses and denial.
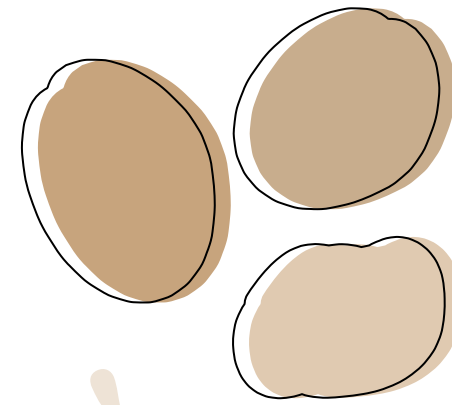
Mental Health Continuum

The Mental Health Continuum

HEALTHY	REACTING	INJURED	ILL

SELF CARE & SOCIAL SUPPORT   **PROFESSIONAL CARE**

HEALTHY Normal Functioning	**REACTING** Common & Reversible Distress	**INJURED** Significant Functional Impairment	**ILL** Clinical Disorder. Severe & Persistent Functional Impairment.
Normal mood fluctuations. Takes things in stride. Consistent performance. Normal sleep patterns. Physically and socially active. Usual self-confidence Comfortable with others.	Irritable/Impatient. Nervousness, sadness, increased worrying. Procrastination, forgetfulness. Trouble sleeping (more often in falling asleep) Lowered energy. Difficulty in relaxing. Intrusive thoughts. Decreased social activity.	Anger, anxiety. Lingering sadness, tearfulness, hopelessness, worthlessness. Preoccupation. Decreased performance in academics or at work. Significantly disturbed sleep (falling asleep and staying asleep). Avoidance of social situations, withdrawal.	Significant difficulty with emotions, thinking High level of anxiety, Panic attacks. Depressed mood, feeling overwhelmed Constant fatigue. Disturbed contact with reality Significant disturbances in thinking Suicidal thoughts/ intent/behaviour.

The Mental Health Continuum

Action Step

1. At a **personal level**, where do you find yourself? Are you investing enough in the healthy skills which enable you to better manage the times when you may find yourself moving towards the right?

2. As a **leadership team**, how do you support each other to spend more time on the far left? Do you know what to do to support a colleague who may find themselves on the right?

3. At the **school level**, is there investment right along the continuum to create a mentally healthy workplace, or is it patchy or even non-existent in places?

3

Self-Awareness.

"Being self-aware is not the absence of mistakes, but the ability to learn and correct them." Daniel Chidiac

Two Types of Self-Awareness

Internal

Represents how clearly we know our own values, passions, aspirations, fit with our environment, reactions and impact on others.
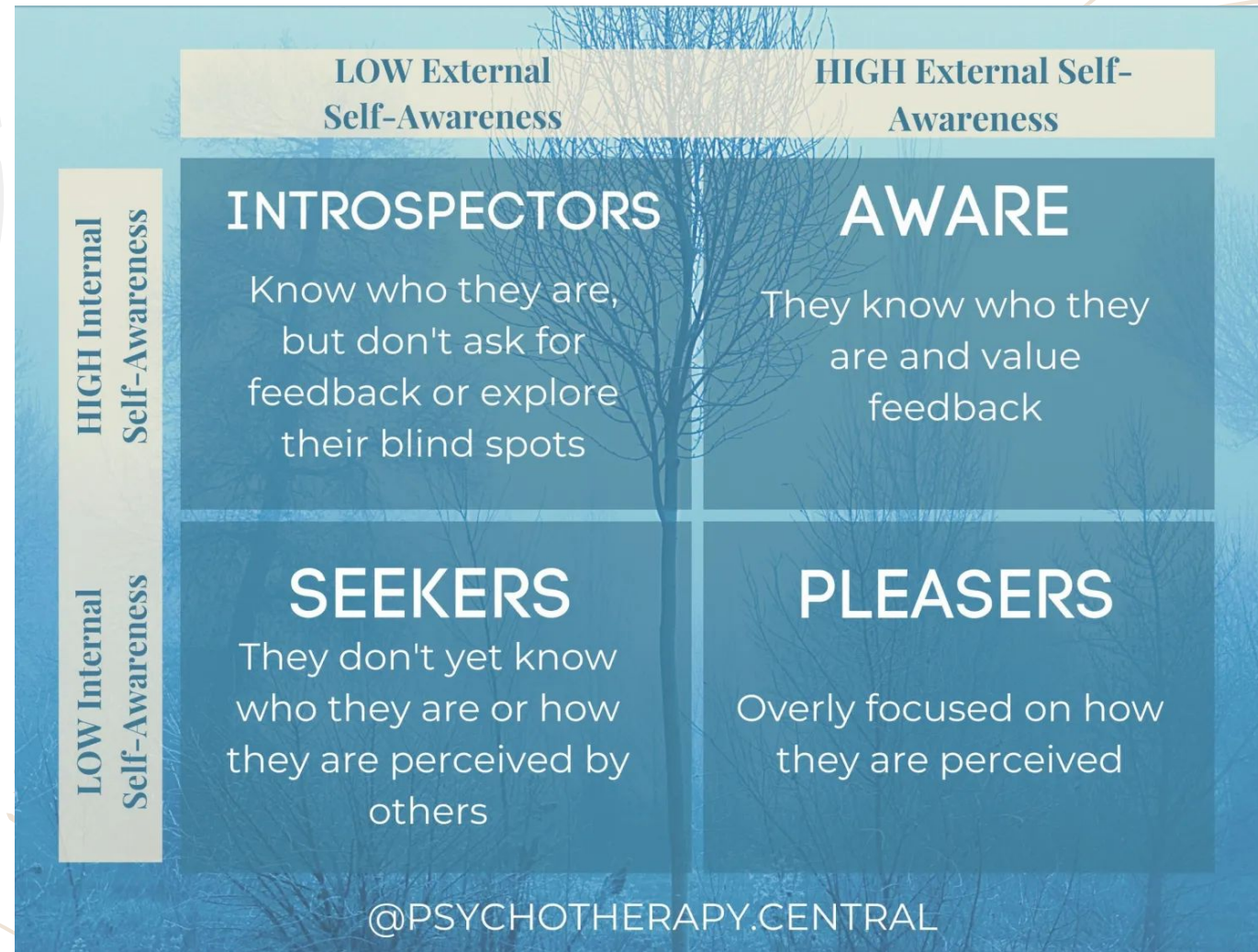
High levels of internal self-awareness is associated with job and relationship satisfaction, personal and social control and happiness.

External

Represents our understanding of how others view us and our values, passions, aspirations, fit with our environment, reactions and impact on others.

Those who understand how they are seen are more skilled at showing empathy and taking perspective. Employees tend to have better relationships with these leaders.

Reference: Eurich, T. (2019). What Self-Awareness Really Is (and How to Cultivate It). [online] Harvard Business Review.

Four Self-Awareness Archetypes

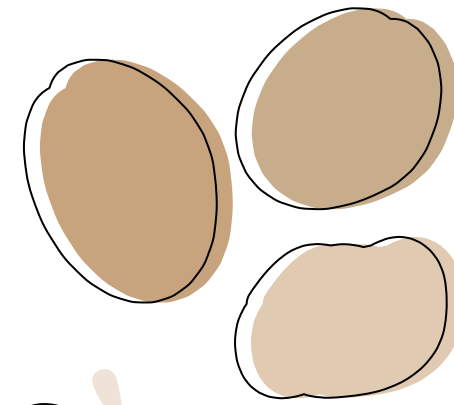|	LOW External Self-Awareness	HIGH External Self-Awareness
HIGH Internal Self-Awareness	**INTROSPECTORS** Know who they are, but don't ask for feedback or explore their blind spots	**AWARE** They know who they are and value feedback
LOW Internal Self-Awareness	**SEEKERS** They don't yet know who they are or how they are perceived by others	**PLEASERS** Overly focused on how they are perceived

@PSYCHOTHERAPY.CENTRAL

Reference: Eurich, T. (2019). What Self-Awareness Really Is (and How to Cultivate It). [online] Harvard Business Review.

Four Areas of Emotional Intelligence

Self-awareness	Self-regulation	Empathy	Social Skills
Know your history and how it affects you.	Able to regulate when feeling strong emotions.	Ability to be compassionate.	Ability to have enduring relationships.
Aware of emotions as they happen.	Learn relaxation & breathing skills.	Being attuned to group dynamics.	Strong communication skills.
Know your strengths & weaknesses.	Learn to reframe negative events.	Ability to stand in another's shoes.	Work well in a team.
Have a strong sense of self-worth.	Know your inner child.		Strong conflict management skills.

@PSYCHOTHERAPY.CENTRAL

Reference: Eurich, T. (2019). What Self-Awareness Really Is (and How to Cultivate It). [online] Harvard Business Review.

SLIDESMANIA.COM

Action Step

Reflect on your internal self-awareness

Seek feedback from trusted leaders in your school
- check your external self-awareness

Be Curious- Not Judgemental

Fight to be Authentic

Emotional Agility.

"Discomfort is the price of admission to a meaningful life."

~Dr. Susan David

Emotional Agility.

Show Up!

Face your own emotions.

Resist the desire to hide or run.

Know yourself.

Sit in Discomfort.

Have the ability to sit in other's emotional pain with stability.

Expectations

Have Boundaries/Set Limits

Have Realistic Expectations

Communicate Expectations

Coping/Stress Management.

"It's not stress that kills us, it's our reaction to it."

—Hans Selye

Coping/Stress Management.

Self-Soothing

Use your 5 senses

Emotional Awareness & Regulation

Develop your toolkit for identifying and expressing emotions. Practice Mindfulness. Understand how you regulate (4 quadrants)

Opposition

Move in opposition to negative emotions. Lean into joy, affirmations, inspiration, laughter. Know yourself.

Manage Health

Exercise, Eat Well, Attend to your Medical Needs.

Organizational Skills

Routines & Rituals of Work. Roles & Responsibilities of Team Members.

Work & Recover Cycle

Work REALLY Hard. Stop. Recover. Repeat.
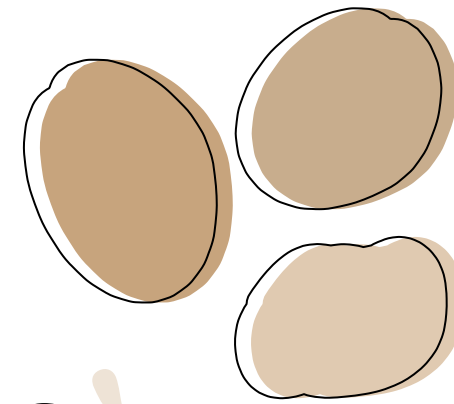
Action Step

Time to check in with yourself.

Work Really Hard. Stop. Recover. Repeat.

Where are you doing well with coping this year? Where do you need to set some goals to improve?

How are you supporting your staff to do this as well?

6

Teacher Well-Being

Educator wellness impacts student wellness.

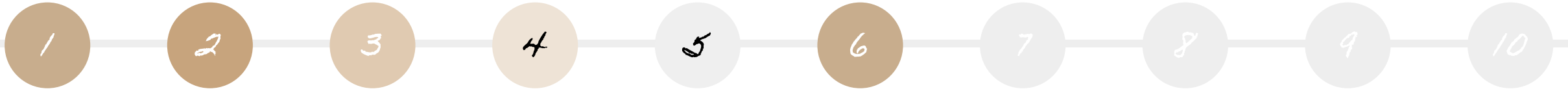*Teacher well being is reflected through a positive outlook on their work and students.*

Teacher Well-Being.

You can't pour from an empty cup.

We must address address burnout by prioritizing adult SEL and wellbeing.

This begins with our leadership and our teacher's capacity around social emotional learning.

Influences on Teacher Well-Being

Climate & Culture

As a part of a schoolwide SEL implementation, it is important to nurture a work environment where staff feel supported and have opportunity to build relational trust, collaborate effectively and sharpen their own skills.

Structures & Routines

Work Really Hard. Stop. Recover. Repeat.

Regular Staff Collaboration & Community Building

Staff Modeling of Prosocial Behavior

Supportive Discipline (Restorative Practice)

Walk Straight at Barking Dogs

Adult SEL Competencies

Schools are more effective at teaching and reinforcing SEL for students when they also cultivate SEL competencies in adults.

https://casel.org/

Strengthen Capacity and Competence for Adult SEL

Fostering skills for promoting and modeling SEL and developing structures to increase community.

LEARN

Support staff in reflecting on personal social and emotional competencies and developing capacity for supporting SEL in their peers and students.

COLLABORATE

Set up structures such as professional learning communities (PLCs) or peer mentoring for staff to collaborate on how to hone their strategies for promoting schoolwide SEL.

MODEL

Support staff in modeling SEL competencies, mindsets, and skills throughout the school community with students, students' families, community partners, and one another.

https://casel.org/
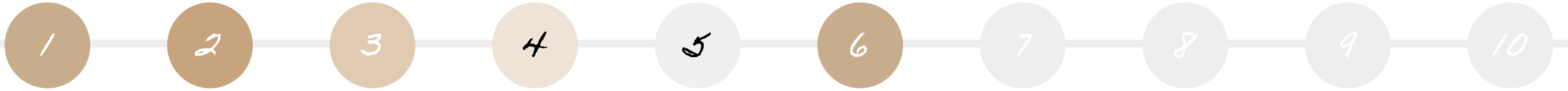
Strengthen Capacity and Competence for Adult SEL
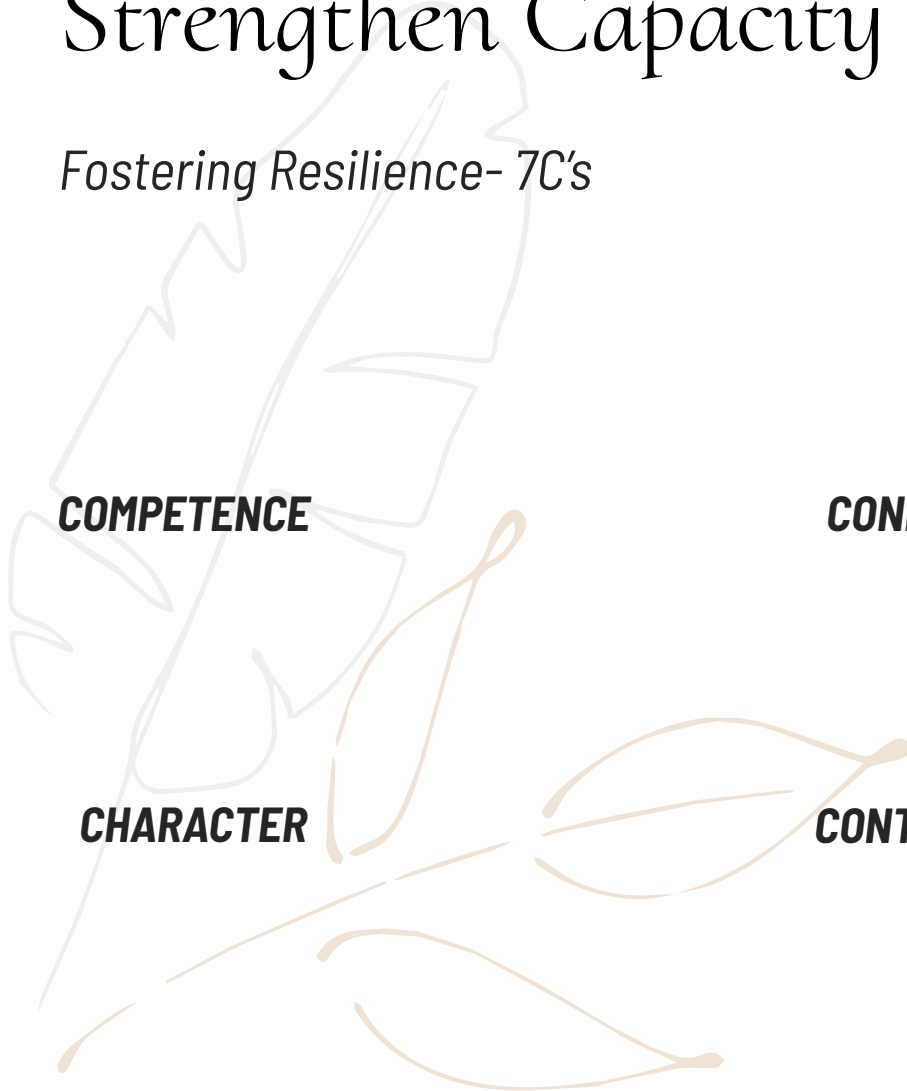
Fostering Resilience- 7C's

CONTROL

COMPETENCE

CONFIDENCE

CONNECTION

CHARACTER

CONTRIBUTION

COPING

American Academy of Pediatrics- Dr. Kenneth Ginsberg
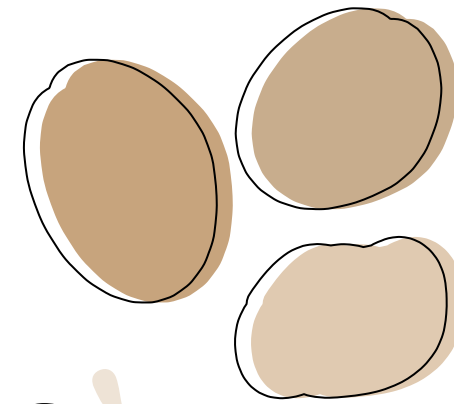
Action Step

Think of a staff member, team or group that you can support through the lens of the 7C's of Resilience
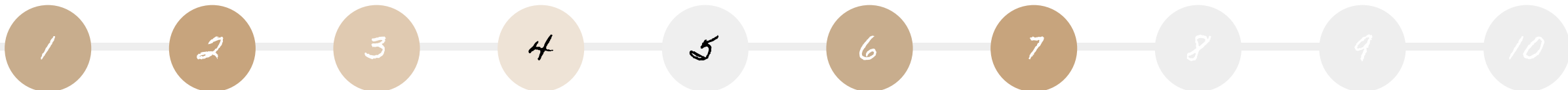
OR

Consider how to implement SEL structures into your school routines (such as staff meetings or PD)

Sense of Belonging

"Those who have a strong sense of love and belonging have the courage to be imperfect."

~Dr. Brene Brown

Sense of Belonging.

More than School Spirit...

A sense of belonging involves more than simply being acquainted with other people. It is **centered on gaining acceptance, attention, and support from members of the group as well as providing the same attention to other members**.

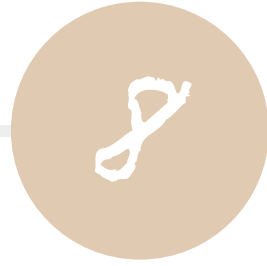**FITTING IN vs. BELONGING**

- Acceptance
- Inclusion
- Identity

Reflection

Are you able to bring your whole self to work and be accepted? Have you developed an environment that your faculty knows one another? Are they able to bring their full self to work?

Compassion for Self & Others

Self-compassion is simply giving the same kindness to ourselves that we would give to others.

Compassion for Self & Others.

Self-compassion is necessary in order to lead a school well and remain healthy.

1. **Self-Kindness** (as opposed to self-judgement)
2. **Common Humanity** (as opposed to isolation)
3. **Mindfulness** (as opposed to over-identifying with feelings)

# Self-Compassion & School Culture

SELF-COMPASSION & SCHOOL CULTURE

School culture is impacted by self-compassion.
There is a positive correlation between job satisfaction and self-compassion.

BURNOUT:
Burnout, or emotional exhaustion, has negative outcomes on an organization. The ongoing stress and fatigue gone unchecked lead to emotional responses that ultimately impact the culture of your school.

Fostering Self-Compassion at Your School
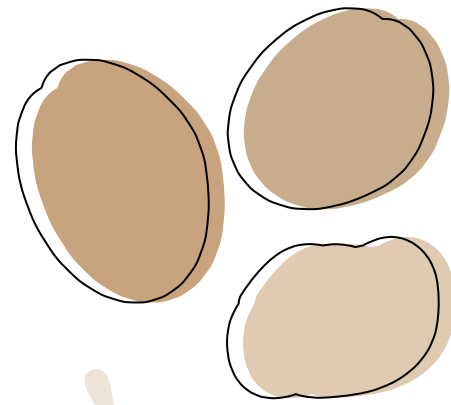
Formal Strategies:

- Guided meditation on kindness to begin a staff meeting
- Reflective writing exercises during professional development
- Resourcing teachers with articles or videos to your regular communication
- Invite someone to teach yoga for your staff once a month
- Invest in books and hold a book study about self-compassion or overall wellness.

Informal Strategies:

- Practice & model self-compassion
- Listen to podcasts about self-compassion and share the ones that resonate with you
- Regularly seek out staff members to check on them personally—extended care and concern
- Continue to grow in your own personal understanding and use of self-compassion and mindfulness in your schools

9

Staff Regulation

Don't puff up, don't shrink back, just stand your sacred ground. ~ Brene Brown

Staff Regulation.

Dr. Bruce Perry

A dysregulated adult cannot regulate a dysregulated child.
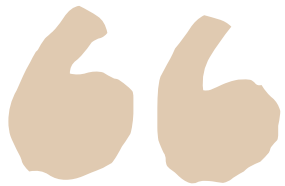
Resilience- Worth Repeating

"People do well if they can"

Viewing adult (mis)behavior through this lens.

What skills are lacking?

- Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character, Contribution, Coping, Control

"*Here is my theory of action: If we boost our individual resilience, then we will have more energy to address organizational and systemic conditions -- to elect officials who will fund public education, organize against policies that dehumanize educators, and push back on punitive assessment policies and scripted curriculum that turn teachers into robots and students into depositories to be filled. With more energy and more resilience, we can build and strengthen the kinds of communities in which we can thrive, where we can engage in professional development that allows us to reflect on our own biases, and where we can observe and learn from each other.*"

Onward: Cultivating Emotional Resilience in Educators by Elena Aguilar
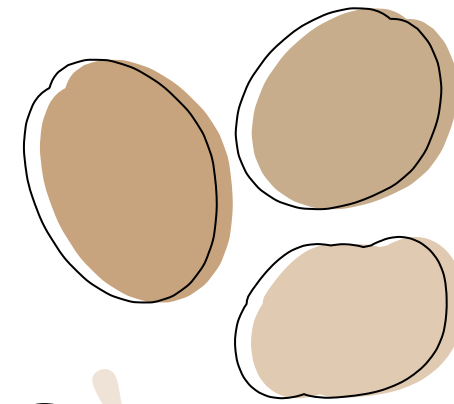
Action Step

Think of a recent time that an adult was not regulated at school. Thinking through the lens of *"People do well if they can"*, what may possibly be the root cause of their regulation?

Reframe & Reflect

Self-reflection is scary, yet necessary for growth.

Reframe & Reflect.

Cognitive reframing is **a technique used to shift your mindset so you're able to look at a situation, person, or relationship from a slightly different perspective**

Reflect & Act

What barking dog is deteriorating your school culture?

What can you do to further develop your emotional health?

What can you do to further develop your own self-compassion & model it as a cultural norm?

Thank you

Do you have any questions?

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