



**Reflective Notes for  
Educator Wellbeing 101:  
Practical tips to help you S.O.A.R.**

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*Reflective Notes* are designed for you to follow along and actively participate with the PowerPoint slides and virtual training. You can make notes, write questions, expand your thinking on a topic, or doodle. These notes correspond directly to the content presented in the PowerPoint Slides.

**WellEducator Core Assumptions**

- **All educators** are doing the best they can and there's always room for growth and development.
- Nurturing others begins by nurturing oneself.
- Educators who model empathetic, compassionate, and nurturing behaviors can help students embrace these skills for themselves.
- Educator wellbeing is enhanced most effectively through professional development with skills training, coaching, and consultation firmly grounded in a scientific evidence base.

**Our Plan...**

- Understand stressors affecting educators' wellbeing.
- Learn simple, but not always easy ways to decrease stressors.
- Learn and experience 3 mindfulness/meditation exercises.
- Create a committed self-care action plan.

Just this moment, just this task...

**Educator Wellbeing**

“wellbeing is diverse and fluid respecting individual, family and community beliefs, values, experiences and culture, opportunities and contexts across time and change.

It is something we all aim for, underpinned by positive notions, yet is unique to each of us and provides us with a sense of who we are which needs to be respected.” (McCallum & Price, 2016)

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Video <https://youtu.be/90f5eEqrZG8>

*Teacher Stress and Health: Effects on Teachers, Students, and Schools*

## Causes of Teacher Stress

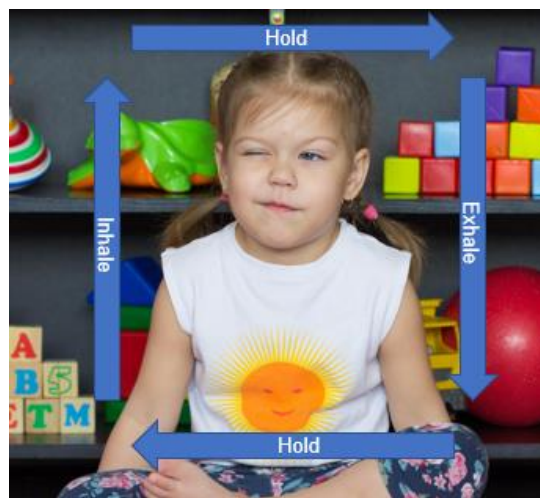
- Rise in student demands and expectations
- Increase in workload and administration
- Vulnerability due to accountability
- Can be involved in up to 1,000 interpersonal contacts a day
- Expectations of self-need for perfectionism
- Lack social emotional competence training
- Interpersonal relationships with parents
- Lack of time to meet admin requirements

## COVID-19 Changes & Challenges

- How we teach,
- How we plan,
- How we connect with students, families, colleagues and administration,
- How we monitor attendance and
- How we measure learning
- ...

(Faleki @ [www.teacher-wellbeing.com.au](http://www.teacher-wellbeing.com.au))

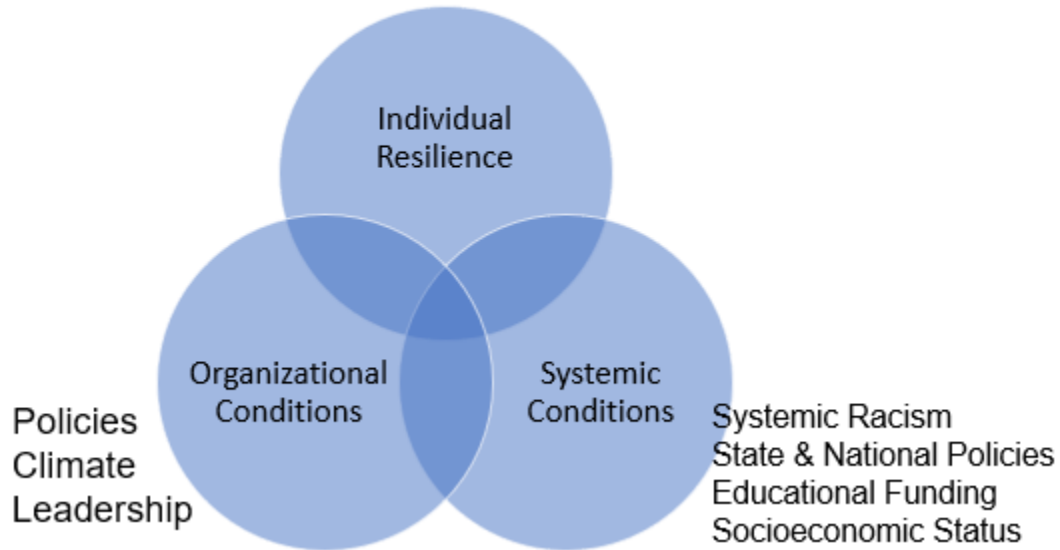
*What additional stressors are you currently experiencing? What impact are they having on you?  
What are you currently doing to take care of yourself?*



### 4- Square Breathing

Linda Ray <https://www.livestrong.com/article/74944-box-breathing-technique/>

How we interact with our thoughts, feelings, and body sensations and the actions we take to cultivate our resilience



# Today's focus: Individual Resilience

A message from WellEducator: Educators, You've Got This!

## Wellness Tips to Help You S.O.A.R.

(Connect to your) **S**enses

**O**pen to possibilities

**A**rrange your environment

**R**einforce

(Connect to your) **S**enses

### Mindfulness is...

"Paying attention with openness, curiosity, flexibility and kindness." -- Russ Harris

"Staying in the present in this moment as it is, moment after moment, rather than daydreaming, ruminating, or being distracted" -- Rick Hanson

Happify Mindfulness As a Superpower Video  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w6T02g5hnT4>

Notes:

**While many people think mindfulness means meditation, this is not the case. Mindfulness is a mental state of openness, awareness and focus, and meditation is just one way amongst hundreds of learning to cultivate this state.”**

**- Dr. Russ Harris**

### **Some Potential Benefits of Mindfulness & Meditation Practices**

What are some of the potential benefits of mindfulness and meditation practices?

## ***WONDER & CURIOSITY***

(Connect to your) **S**enses

### **Become an Observer** (Linehan, 2015)

- “Noticing body sensations coming through your senses
- Paying attention on purpose, to the present moment
- Control your attention, but not what you see.
- Push away nothing. Cling to nothing.
- Practice wordless watching.
- Observe both inside and outside yourself.”

***Just this moment, just this task...Five Senses Meditation***

1. Get yourself in a comfortable position whatever that means for you, either seated or lying down.
2. Take a few deep breaths. Maybe in through the nose initially, and then out through the mouth. With each exhalation allow your body to soften a bit more. Allow your body to settle into its natural rhythm of breathing.
3. First, using your sense of sight observe 5 things you can see, just observe as if observing for the very first time
4. Next, 4 things you can hear
5. 3 things you can touch
6. 2 things you can smell
7. Finally, 1 thing you can taste

What was that experience like for you? What did you notice?

(Connect to) **S**enses during Routine Activities

- Breaks
- Walking
- Eating
- Brushing Teeth
- Drinking Coffee/Tea
- Playing with a Pet

Other Ideas?

**WELLNESS**

**MIND BODY BEING**

<b>Self-Care for Educators and Caregivers</b>
Self-care at a time like this is key. We can't be available for our children if we don't have the energy or bandwidth ourselves.
1. Pay attention to how you are feeling.
2. Limit your news intake.
3. Be forgiving, embrace do-overs.
4. Be generous with yourself and others.
5. Remember to breathe.
6. Focus on gratitude.
7. Keep a journal.
8. Maintain a regular contemplative practice.
9. Move and exercise daily, if you are able.
10. Seek out nature, fresh air, and sunlight.
11. Nourish your body and soul.
12. Distance yes, but only physically
morningsidecenter.org

## STOP Meditation by Elisha Goldstein

### **S - Stop**

Stop what you're doing right now, get yourself in a comfortable position whatever that means for you, either seated or lying down.

### **T - Take**

Take a few deep breaths. Maybe in through the nose initially, and then out through the mouth. With each exhalation allow your body to soften a bit more. As long as you're here with the breath right now, allow your body to settle into its natural rhythm of breathing. Breathe in and sense the breath coming in. Breathe out and sense the breath going out. Allow your body to take the breath it needs in its natural rhythm of being alive.

### **O - Observe**

Begin to observe your body, noticing if there's any tension or tightness anywhere, including the face. If you do notice any of that just allow it to soften, or just mindfully adjust your body as it feels like it needs to. Be aware of how you're feeling emotionally right now. If there's a sense of calm or ease, maybe some restlessness or irritation, or maybe even sadness. Or you could be feeling neutral. Whatever's there see if you can be aware of it and notice how it feels physically in the body. Continue to observe yourself physically and emotionally in this moment, just letting things be. Be aware of and observe your mind right now, noticing if it seems distracted or cluttered or if it seems like it's settling into being here. Either way, it's OK—the "o" of observe is just to allow us to be aware of our experience in the moment; physically, emotionally, and mentally. The moment we notice that our mind is off is a moment we're present. Settle in, be aware of the fullness of your experience physically, emotionally, and mentally, and just let be.

### **P - Proceed**

Proceed is just dropping the question of: "What's most important for me to pay attention to right now?" or "What am I needing right now?" Allow whatever answer is there to simply percolate and arise. Proceed with that in this next moment. Always remember to acknowledge yourself for taking this time. This is a great act of self-care; take the final moment to acknowledge yourself for taking this time.

This is an excellent meditation to use when you begin to feel overwhelmed – when you connect to your senses and feel that tightening of the chest, perhaps some ringing in the ears, or shortness of breath. Just STOP, breathe, observe then proceed.

### **What gets in the way: What are the Barriers?**

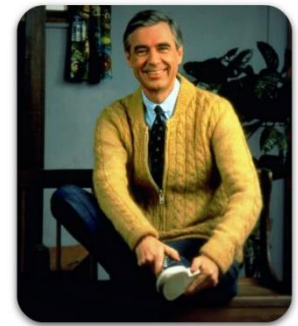
- Stress
- Wrestling with comparing & judging mind
  - "Shoulds"
- Big feelings mind
  - Shame
  - Sadness
  - Fear
- Unrealistic expectations from self and others

What else gets in the way?

“There are no “should” or “should not” when it comes to having feelings. They’re part of who we are, and their origins are beyond our control. When we can believe that, we may find it easier to make constructive choices about what to do with those feelings.”

---Mister Fred Rogers

The World According to Mister Rogers: Important Things to Remember



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‘FACE COVID’ <https://youtu.be/BmvNCdpHUYM> Video Dr. Russ Harris

You can find additional information about FACE COVID concepts at the end of these reflective notes

Video Notes:

### Open to possibilities

Is it possible that...

I can have the thought that I am feeling anxious AND set boundaries for myself.

Is it possible that...

I can squeeze in 5 minutes of mindful eating AND then work on my lesson for 30 minutes AND have the thought that I am overworked and underappreciated.

I am curious if...

I use the Sleepiest® app 3 x per week as I go to bed and see if it will have an impact on my ruminating thoughts.

## Getting Unstuck

- Mindfulness & Meditation
  - Connecting to your Senses
- Getting to a place of AND & changing perspective
  - What is and out of your control
  - Acceptance
- Physical activity
- Coping Ahead
- Pro/Con
- Writing mini goals

### **A**rrange your environment

- Clear clutter
- Put up reminders
- Ask for help
- Set up materials ahead of time
- Put up motivators/inspirational signs

### Arrange your environment

I will put reminders in my workspace to remind me I have conquered these tasks before when I am having the thought that I am overwhelmed.

I'll use the alarm on my watch to remind me to do 4-square breathing and then 30-min of email – I'll repeat every 30-min.

I'll download a free app like Relax & Sleep & listen to the sounds as I go to sleep 2x per week and see if I fall asleep any better.

### **R**einforce & Accumulate Positives

- Celebrate the small successes
- Remember your passions
- Connect with others & share your successes
- Write out gratitude lists & share them
- Spread kindness
- Practice self-compassion

What other ideas do you have?



# Committed Action Plan



Value (What I care about):
<b>S.O.A.R.</b>
<b>Connect to your Senses    Open to Possibilities    Arrange the Environment    Reinforce</b>
What do you want? (Goal)
What action will get you there?
What gets in the way?
What strategy will get you unstuck?
Level of Commitment to your Goal 0 to 5
5 = Totally Committed, Going to Start Today!    1 = I'll get around to it, eventually    0 = Not going to do it
If less than 4, what would have to happen to get to a 4 or 5? Is that a goal?

## Committed Action Plan



Value (What I care about):

*Creating balance and harmony in my life*

S.O.A.R.

Connect to your Senses

Open to Possibilities

Arrange the Environment

Reinforce

What do you want? (Goal)

*40-hour work week*

What action will get you there?

*Setting a predictable work schedule; setting boundaries*

What gets in the way?

*Negative thinking, perfectionism, fear*

What strategy will get you unstuck?

*Arrange the environment (declutter); reinforce time management; let go of perfection and comparisons; accumulate positives; ask for help*

Level of Commitment to your Goal 0 to 5

5 = Totally Committed, Going to Start Today!    1 = I'll get around to it, eventually    0 = Not going to do it    4

If less than 4, what would have to happen to get to a 4 or 5? Is that a goal?

## Resource Practices

[Three Minute De-Stressor for Teachers](#)

[Self-Compassion Break for Adults](#)

[Taking Care of Your Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#) <https://youtu.be/IsJus1R15Ds>

Progressive Muscle Relaxation & Relaxation Exercises (PDF Scripts Provided)

## Apps

[Insight Timer](#)

[headspace app Covid-19 \(free for educators plus special meditations and activities for now!\)](#)

<https://www.sleepiest.com/>

<http://www.relaxandsleepwell.com/>

## Articles & Other Resources

[Supporting Learning and Well-Being During the Coronavirus](#) (Greater Good Science Center)

[How Teachers can Navigate Difficult Emotions During School Closures](#) (Greater Good Science Center)

[Maintaining Relationships During School Closures](#) (Edutopia)

["The CALM Reminder" Semple Willard – Google Access Book](#) (Semple Willard)

[Free Mindfulness Resources for Calm during Covid Outbreak from Mindful Magazine](#)

COVID-19\_for\_families\_Harvard Center on the Developing Child (PDF)

## Citations (Books)

Coleman M. (2019). *From Suffering to Peace: The true promise of mindfulness*. New World Library.

Forsyth, J. P. & Eifert, G. H., (2007). *The Mindfulness & Acceptance Workbook for Anxiety: A guide to breaking free from anxiety, phobias, worry using Acceptance and Commitment Therapy*. New Harbinger Publications, Inc.

Hanson, R. & Hanson, F. (2018). *Resilient: How to grow an unshakable core of calm, strength and happiness*. Harmony Books.

Harris, R. (2009). *ACT Made Simple: A quick start guide to ACT basics and beyond*. New Harbinger Publications, Inc

Rogers, F. (2003). *The World According to Mister Rogers: Important things to remember*. Hyperion.

## Citations (Other)

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