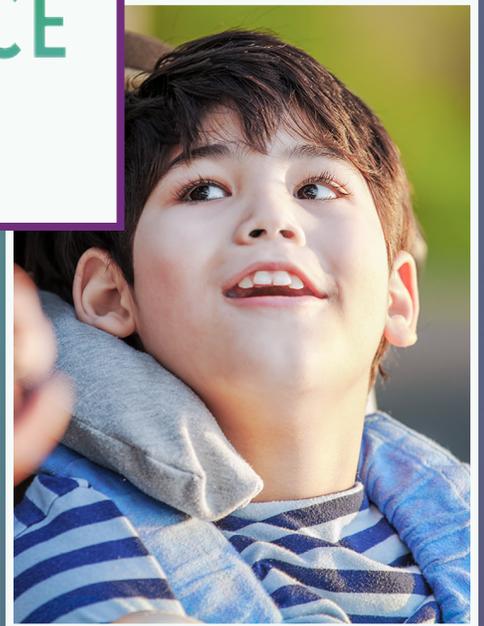


Creating  
**A TRUSTED SPACE**  
In Five Days



*SEL resource for schools to support students through emotional stressors and trauma recovery using:*

**NOTICE. CHOOSE. ACT.®**



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# First and Foremost, Thank You.

Thank you for what you do. As educators, we place the trust of our future in your hands, and we recognize the sacrifice you give every day by putting the needs of our nation's youth first.

We are coming back to another unprecedented school year. One where feelings and opinions are raging and on edge, social, emotional, and economic security in all realms of personal and professional life is threatened, all while the very real consideration of mortality looms in ways never before considered.

When we became educators, we knew we could **change the world**: one child, one class, or one school year at time. We trained and we became the best we could be for kids, knowing that besides parenting, there simply is no more urgent or critical profession. We have to get it right, or close to right, and the stakes are incredibly high. For many of us in a 'normal' school year, it takes every ounce of our creativity and commitment to support our students in reaching their full potential. Our youth come to us with an ever-increasing set of diverse hurdles, emotional traumas, social challenges, inequity realities, and academic variances. With all of this we rally, we forge forward, often knowing we are missing some of them, not quite sure how to reach them all in their beautifully unique individualisms. We are undaunted, even when uncertain, because that is our call, our mission, and our promise to the future.

Then a pandemic strikes across the world. We go home from work one day to realize that we are not going back and all that we **never** trained for, practiced for, or even considered, instantly became our reality. Everything that was going on with our students before is still there **and** now we have an entire new set of circumstances to navigate with them, and with ourselves.

Across the nation, we are grieving, afraid, traumatized, defeated, nervous, anxious, angry, resigned, disconnected, shut-down, and also for many, motivated, galvanized, and creative. As are our students, their parents, and our colleagues.

COVID-19 has impacted **all** communities, with many impacted **significantly harder** than others do to pre-existing vulnerabilities. We each have our own chapter within one novel: **none of us are left unaffected**. What we would rather have can't help us. Only in embracing this moment for what it is and moving forward together will we actualize solutions that work for **everyone**.



# We Are In This Together.

It is in this awareness that we can find a place to start our new school year, whether virtual, hybrid, or traditional. **We can do this** - for ourselves and for our students. All of us deserve to find our way through this moment in ways that help us feel safe and capable. We can do this without feeling overwhelmed if we allow ourselves to focus on what will work from an emotional development mindset ahead of an academic one. This in no way reduces the call for academic learning, in fact, it is the opposite. In all circumstances research indicates that **high quality learning** can take place once safe relationships are established, and it **can not** happen in the absence of such.

Creating Trusted Spaces will support us in thriving, personally and collectively. For most of us it will not be terribly complicated but somewhat challenging, for some of us it will be easy. Just like our students as they learn, some concepts come easy and others are more challenging. Persistence and commitment will carry us through to a thriving, joy-filled, hurdle-leaping school year, regardless of external circumstances.

As you create your Trusted Spaces remember, you are in this with your students, their parents, and your colleagues, and **you all need one another**. You each have something to teach and learn from one another. You will be facing individual stories and circumstances with varying skill sets to deal with them. **Everyone will make mistakes, including you. Trusted Spaces give us the opportunity to safely get up, dust off, and start again.**

We need each other. Masks might cover our nose and mouth, virtual classrooms might shield our physical connection, but in our eyes we can see and relate through our students reflections. We are not alone, someone else always feels what we're feeling. Let's do this, together.

## What you will find in this packet of materials:

- Understanding trauma and how it effects academics.
- Setting up Trusted Spaces, what and why.
- Building five essential teacher 'muscles' and creating trusting relationships while maintaining your authority and credibility.
- The Notice Choose Act Decision Making Framework
- Five days of SEL lessons and activities to kick off an extraordinary school year.
- Setting up a Take 5 Space: Virtual and In-Person

# Trauma and Learning

A significant and growing body of research: medical, educational, and social, from around the world, has established that expansive academic and scholarly learning can not take place when trauma, grief, and other mental health issues exist and are not addressed. In a study done by the CDC, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), were linked to chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse in adulthood. This in turn negatively impacts job and educational opportunities in a student's lifetime. Research also indicates that addressing these significant emotional concerns can be done, for a majority of students, starting with safe and nurturing relationships. Some youth will need extra levels of support, but for many they simply need you, their teacher and educational system, to provide the space for them to cope and heal. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html>

Prior to the pandemic and increased awareness around social justice, research indicated that 2/3's of our student population had experienced at least one traumatic childhood event by the age of 16.

<https://www.samhsa.gov/child-trauma/understanding-child-trauma>

## These events include:

- Psychological, physical, or sexual abuse
- Community or school violence
- Witnessing or experiencing domestic violence
- National disasters or terrorism
- Commercial sexual exploitation
- Sudden or violent loss of a loved one
- Refugee or war experiences
- Military family-related stressors (e.g., deployment, parental loss or injury)
- Physical or sexual assault
- Neglect
- Serious accidents or life-threatening illness

Now, in an era of unprecedented times, educators are coming back to school with 100% of their students experiencing the same, potentially traumatic, event - the COVID-19 Pandemic. Additionally, 100% of teachers have experienced it, and 100% of the population at large has been impacted. While everyone is experiencing the same event, we are experiencing it differently, therefore the immediate and long term mental health and traumatizing effects of it will vary by person.

Students suffering from trauma can present with behaviors that are often misunderstood or mis-categorized. The following are several ways that **trauma sufferers manifest their pain** in the classroom and at school, all of which is dependent on factors such as age and individual manifestation of pain.

- Trouble forming positive relationships even when others are being supportive
- Behaving in ways that are verbally or physically aggressive
- Disengagement from learning
- Withdrawing in social and academic environments

These behaviors are often called out as disrespectful, defiant, or dangerous. The ways they are dealt with are often the antithesis of what the child needs. **The antidote to these behaviors are Trusted Spaces where connection and capacity are cultivated.**

# Trauma Informed Education

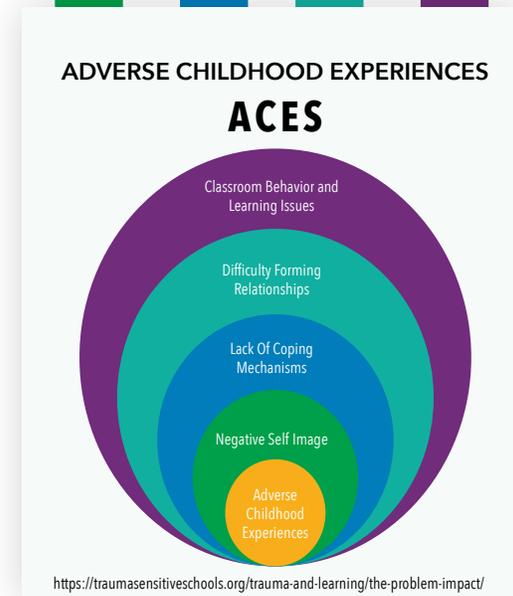
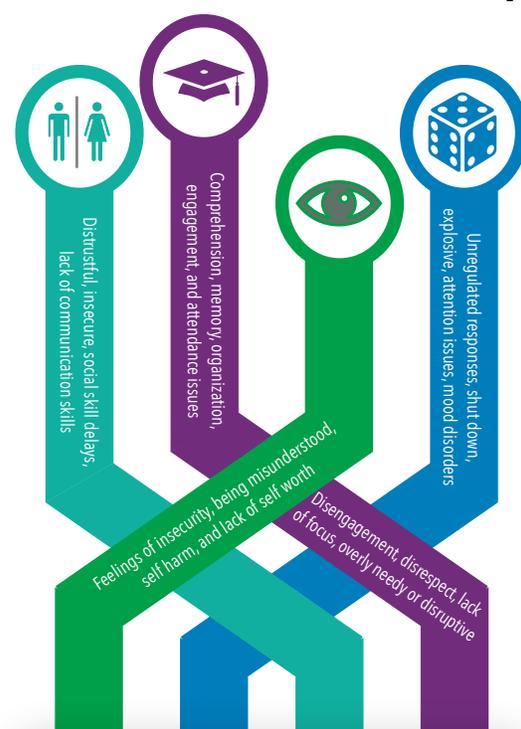
To help students experiencing trauma, we need to pay attention to both their non-conscious brain and body response to the trauma, as well as their conscious psychological interpretations of the trauma. During frustrating moments, when our previous responses may have been reactive, we can offer responses that come from an **understanding that we may not understand** what they are thinking, feeling, and experiencing in their bodies and minds. This helps us be more patient, compassionate, and curious. The drawing illustrates the behaviors that are often seen in the classroom, playground, and home that may result from adverse childhood experiences (ACES). What often is misunderstood as laziness, defiance, moodiness, and disrespect may have origins in unresolved trauma and the way that trauma has changed brain function.

<https://traumasensitiveschools.org/trauma-and-learning/the-problem-impact/>

Young people who have experienced trauma have different capacities for managing stress that arises in their school, home, or social life. In stressful moments, children who have experienced excessive trauma may reflexively react with fear, anxiety, or aggression, whereas children who have experienced less trauma or have received more support in making sense of their trauma may reflectively react by controlling their thoughts, feelings, and behavior, and changing the situation to reduce the source of stress. When we are calm we are able to rely more on parts of our brain that support complex cognition (e.g., frontal cortex) to process information and act accordingly. When in fear, we process information in evolutionarily more primitive brain regions (e.g., the limbic system). **Children who are living in dangerous or frightening situations experience a prolonged activation of their bodies' (sympathetic) stress response system.** This constantly aroused, vigilant state impacts kids' lives at school and home, and can adversely affect their long-term physical and psychological health, and even their brain development.

Maltreatment and the Developing Child: How Early Childhood Experience Shapes Child and Culture by Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D.

When we feel secure we get better at noticing and naming what is happening in our bodies, including and what automatic emotional reactions we have. In this awareness we can begin to make purposeful, positive, and productive choices. We can reframe challenges as opportunities. For most of us, we can learn this in an atmosphere where social-emotional competencies are taught, modeled, and practiced, and where we feel safe and secure.



# Knowing Your Resources

The widely taught and used, Multi Tiered System of Support (MTSS) model can offer educators direction as they explore ways to support students and their diverse needs as they return to school with continued uncertainty. The MTSS model considers **ALL** students and identifies need and levels of support in three tiers. Traditionally built to proactively assess and intervene with academics and behavior, A Trusted Space will identify the tiers from the perspective of students returning to school with grief, trauma, and other emotional distresses. These distresses impact both behavior and learning.

**TIER ONE:** Trusted Spaces that include and serve everyone. Build your SEL toolbox and skill set so you are able to provide these spaces and can nurture them all year. This is not a one time, one week, once a month, check the box assignment. It is genuine commitment to an atmosphere that lives and breathes social-emotional safety through all situations. Even when breakdowns happen and people mess up, (they, and you, will), there is safety when we know it is okay to get back up, brush off, accept our consequences, reset, and start over without recrimination.

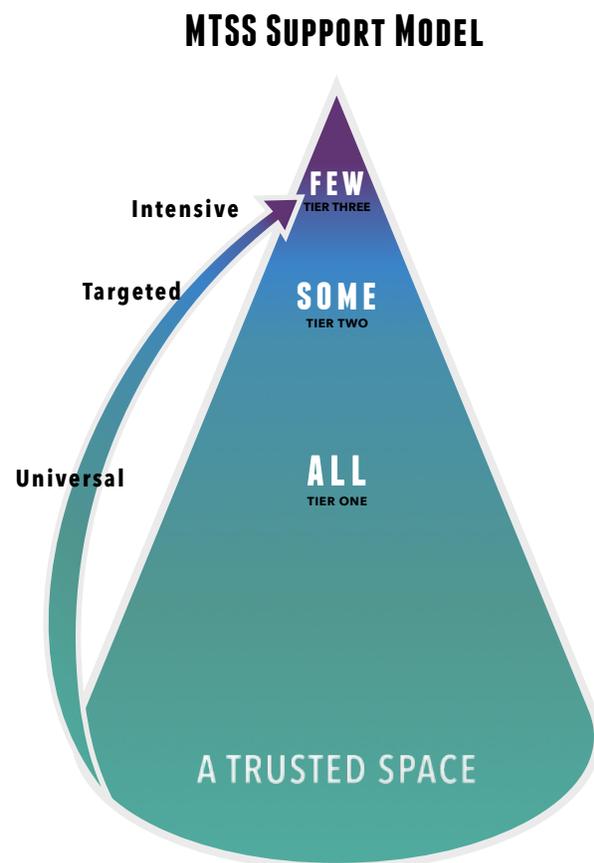
**TIER TWO:** Some students may not be able to thrive solely within the Trusted Space you have created. They may need more support, which for Tier 2, is often delivered in small group settings and typically with experts from your site. Know the Tier 2 resources available and the limitations your school may have. Build relationships with your school resources: counselors, psychologists, behavioral health school based team, and administration. Use your SEL muscles to advocate for Tier 2 resources if they are limited or non-existent. Be creative and vigilant.

**TIER THREE:** A few students will need more support than Tier 1 and 2. Often these referrals are made by a team, the teacher, administration, Tier-2-support-personnel, and parents. Tier 3 support may extend beyond the school setting and needs to be managed in your organizations' referral protocols. Delivery of Tier 3 support is often in 1:1 settings and can be intensive. There may be a lot of steps and sometimes it might feel discouraging. Remember, students at this level *need you, your Trusted Space, and they need more than you.*

## Do you know your resources?

- Who do you have in your circle who can walk you through tough moments?
- Who helps calm you down and reset perspective when you are unsuccessful (again) with 'that' student?
- What school based resources do you have when Tier One is not working for your student?

**IDEA:** As a staff create a flow chart of '**where next.**' If this is already provided, do you know what it says? How to access the identified supports? **Check in with yourself**, how easy is it for you to seek support?



# The Call for Something New

Many educational systems and schools have provided their teachers with some type of trauma-informed information or training. Still, many teachers feel ill-equipped to deal with their students' emotional needs. Teachers are also often blindsided by the amount of emotion their kids are dealing with and may be nervous of it themselves. With all of this, it has been a challenge for some educators to embrace the need to shift old paradigms of classroom atmospheres that have traditionally been about rules first, academics second, and relationships third. Today we know that healthy, productive learning **atmospheres** must entwine relationships, social-emotional well being, and academics.

It may take concerted effort and purpose to wrap old approaches around new ones. It is important to understand that brains adapt to be well-suited to the environment they are in. Kids experiencing trauma undergo a pattern of brain development that is advantageous for surviving in a dangerous or scary world, but this pattern of brain development is not commensurate with a pattern or neural development that is best for the learning that we ask of kids in school.

The atmospheres you create directly impact the brain development of your students and the benefits of redirecting scary to safe will soon prove that psychology, sociology, and brain research have done a good job of identifying how to make our impact with the youth we serve more meaningful, our teaching more effective, and our personal success more rewarding.





### WATCH VIDEO

Click this symbol at the top of any relevant page to watch a recorded explanation of the topic, an example of the lesson or activity, or additional support tips.

# What Are Trusted Spaces?

Trusted Spaces allow recovery to begin, which is beautiful in and of itself. Additionally, there are **other positive outcomes** that can be expected, including:

- increased capacity for engaged learning
- increased resiliency
- improved behavior and attention span
- elevated capacity to care for others
- an embrace of self-worth
- a brighter, more hopeful future for all students

In short, educators will experience improved student learning and positive classroom environments which will fuel their purpose and joy, reminding them why they stepped into the most critical job in the world. In this success each unexpected hurdle will be easier to navigate with patience and ease.

**Trusted Spaces are opportunities for joy to live, healing to happen, and learning to occur.** They are spaces where individualism is celebrated and acceptance thrives. They are spaces where authority is maintained while relationships are cultivated.

When looking at recovery from trauma and grief, Trusted Spaces provide the opportunity for healing to happen. Educators often express a fear of facing the pain and trauma of their students, feeling unprepared and ill-equipped to deal with it.

It is not a teacher's job to be the healer. It is their job to **create** the Trusted Space where healing can naturally happen. A place where we are attuned to our students and we can determine what is working and when the next level of support is needed. It is a teacher's job not to *fix* or *save*, but to **empower** and **serve**.

Humans are, by nature, capable of amazing resilience. Think of the challenges, pain, and traumas you have been through, we all have them. Which ones did you recover from? Which ones still linger? What were the atmospheres that created the most healing? What were the people like in those atmospheres? Many of us have some kind of unresolved pain/trauma - what atmospheres did you need that you didn't have? What did you need that you didn't have from other people?

Trusted Spaces benefit everyone; they elevate opportunities for recovery while reinforcing emotional intelligence skills that help us navigate challenges. The pandemic hurt us all and for those already compromised the impact is more devastating. People of color, low income, and less skilled, are more at risk. Children from these families need us now more than ever. Let's use this moment for permission to talk about these things because now we have a relational place to start.

# The Learning Curve

The research is clear, compelling and widely demonstrated across the globe: Relationships and social emotional literacy are **critical** to the healthy development of all youth and are critical to their future adult workplace and relationship successes<sup>1</sup>. Youth who develop healthy SEL skills are more likely to embody and practice resilience, compassion, empathy, perseverance, self-efficacy, self-regulation, personal decision making, and accountability<sup>2</sup> - to name just a few. These traits cannot be **told**, they must be **experienced, taught, modeled, practiced, and repeated**.

<sup>1</sup> Social and Emotional Learning in Middle School Curricula: A Service Learning Model Based on Positive Youth Development by Saras Chung and Amanda Moore McBride

<sup>2</sup> Social and Emotional Learning as a Public Health Approach to Education by Mark T. Greenberg, Celene E. Domitrovich, Roger P. Weissberg, and Joseph A. Durlak

One of the first challenges many face when looking to authentically step into teaching these skills is that we must first become aware of ourselves and our relationship with the skills we are responsible for teaching. Our children today are keenly aware of what is authentic and what is not. It is likely that this has always been the case, the difference today is that our youth have permission to voice their thoughts, something many of us did not have as children. Whether we like this or not doesn't change the fact of it.

Our credibility and authority with youth lies in our ability to do what we expect them to do. We need to walk our talk. This is where creating Trusted Spaces supports **all of us**.

A Trusted Space is the atmosphere within a setting. A space where everyone, including you, who steps into it knows and feels that the following is authentically true:

**WE BELONG**

**WE ARE BELIEVED IN**

**WE EACH HAVE SOMETHING TO LEARN  
AND SOMETHING TO TEACH**

**WE ALL HAVE INDIVIDUAL STORIES**

**WE ARE PERFECTLY IMPERFECT**

**TRY THIS**

If you are in a staff inservice, or with colleagues at lunch, share what atmospheric conditions create Trusted Spaces for each individual in the group. What are some conditions that make others feel safe that differ from yours? How would this exercise and insight support your work with your students?

In considering the atmosphere you want to create that will produce a Trusted Space for all your students, it is helpful to first think about yourself and what the conditions are in spaces where you feel emotionally safe. **How do you know you are safe? How do you feel when you are safe?**

**Consider your words, actions, and attitudes when you feel safe and when you do not feel safe.** Think of this in the context of your students.

Finally, think of people in your life who 'think' you are safe with them but you do not necessarily feel emotionally safe. Do misunderstandings result? Do you feel seen? Heard?



**Behaviors are often reflective of the atmosphere we are in.** While some adults and youth can navigate through challenging atmospheres with calm behaviors, many are unable to. Safe environments create *feelings* that more often lead to self-regulation and positive social awareness.

A key here is the word *feelings* because how we feel is a clearer barometer of the atmosphere than what we *think*. We might think we have created a safe environment, however if that is not how others feel, then it isn't safe and welcoming, no matter what we think about it.

As we consider how we will set up Trusted Spaces in our virtual or in person classrooms there is one final thing to consider.

What works for us personally is not always what works best for others. This is a key concept to embrace as we commit and then step into **creating spaces that are inviting to all learning and personality styles, all emotional needs, whether we understand them or not. Not just the ones we can relate to or are familiar with.**





# Building Your SEL Muscles



5 Critical Muscles that will change your life both in and out of the classroom.  
Create trusting relationships while maintaining your authority and credibility!

1.

## Quit Taking It Personal (QTIP)

Offering the Benefit of the Doubt

2.

## Communicating With I-Statements

During Victories, Challenges, and Redirects

3.

## Ask vs Tell

Recognize and Ask for What You Need, Rather than Tell What's Wrong

4.

## Storytelling

Tell Stories to Relate Feelings, Rather than Make A Point

5.

## Walk The Talk

Model In Words, Actions, and Attitudes what You Expect From Them

**"YOU DON'T MAKE PROGRESS BY STANDING ON THE SIDELINES, WHIMPERING AND COMPLAINING. YOU MAKE PROGRESS BY IMPLEMENTING IDEAS."**

**-SHIRLEY CHISHOLM**



AIT



# MUSCLE #1

## Quit Taking It Personal (QTIP)

### Offering the Benefit of the Doubt

Many people have heard the acronym *QTIP*, which stands for, **Quit Taking It Personally**. The idea of not taking things personally is often embraced, whereas the reality of applying it in real time it is often more difficult. Adults who practice *QTIP* are aware of their triggers, have and use self management tools to calm themselves down when needed, and have an overall positive view of people. *QTIP* operators are fabulous models for students.

In the classroom, there are so many things that happen on a daily basis that can be triggering, irritating, or offensive. Students, regardless of age, have a keen ability to get right into our hearts and say and do things that hurt. When this happens, we often frame it in our mind that they are doing something **to** us and we **react** from that thought. Our little voice engages in internal talk that can include name calling, judgement, and shaming. Sometimes the internal little voice erupts in external vocalization of our thoughts and our hurt. In both cases, no one wins. Even when we keep it in our minds our actions and attitudes cannot help but reflect our feelings. As good as we think we are at hiding it from our students, they are reading us.

**To keep your joy, sanity, and balance, reframe every personalization that feels bad to this:**

*"This student (colleague, parent, friend, spouse), is going through something that I do not understand. What just happened, what was said, is a reflection of their process - not mine. This is not about me. What just happened felt bad and I can share calmly what I am feeling while listening openly and creatively for what they need."*

*"It is not about me, it is a statement about what they need rather than a personal attack against me." Repeat - and Repeat Again!*

QTIP and Benefit of the Doubt are key practices to offer yourself and others. They are key concepts to teach and practice with your students, everyday. It is a way of operating, a way of thinking, and a way of being that will cultivate trusting relationships in your classroom and beyond.

## Quit Taking It Personal (QTIP)

**An example of Benefit of the Doubt to model and practice responding to things that feel bad:**

A student refuses to engage in work and you instantly feel defied and disrespected.

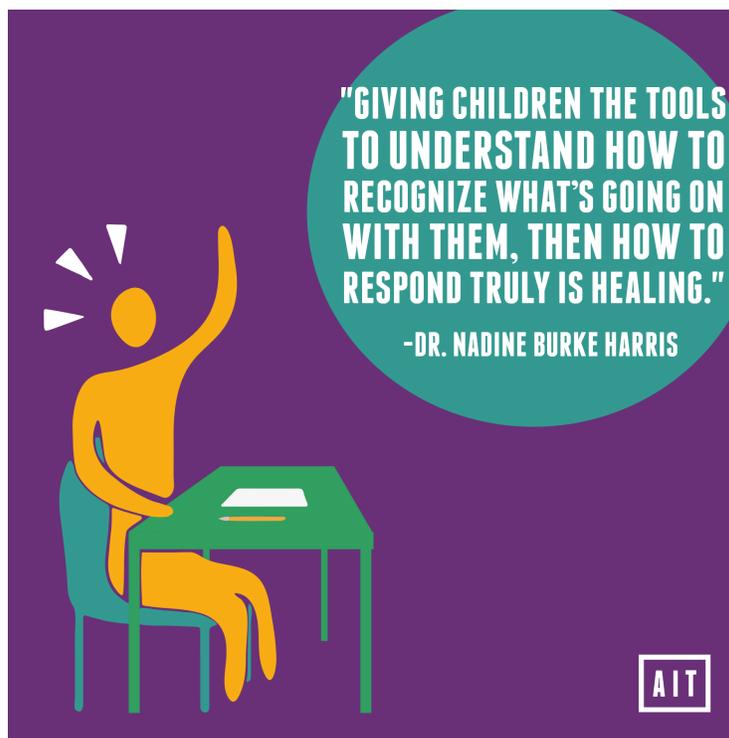
Try thinking beyond these assumptions of personal attack and lean into a new paradigm of, "it's not personal, I will be honest, I will give benefit of the doubt."

*"I see that you didn't complete your work. I am experiencing uncertainty on how to support you and I am concerned about you. What do you need from me? I am happy to work with you in exploring ways that you can experience success in learning."*

Student shrugs off your offer to support, saying, *"I don't care, it doesn't matter."*

Breathe - and consider saying, *"I do not know what you are experiencing right now and I want you to know that I'll support you enough for both of us until you're ready to join me."*

Release attachment to their response. Know that you just created a safe place for this student and right now, above all else, that is what was needed.





# MUSCLE #2



## Using I-Statements to Communicate During Victories, Challenges, and Redirects

When communicating with your students, notice how you approach them. Very often we speak to students, and others, from starters such as *you* or *they*. When we do this, we are often wagging a pointed finger at others - and as soon as that happens, they become instantly defensive.

Think of how you react to people when they start with, "YOU:"

- "You made me feel \_\_\_\_."
- "Because you are doing \_\_\_\_, you are making me do \_\_\_\_."
- "When you do this you make me \_\_\_\_."
- "If you didn't do \_\_\_\_, I wouldn't have done \_\_\_\_."

This is a common communication pattern for both youth and adults. The impact of it is that we relegate our power to others by blaming them for our words and actions. We also close down relationships because we instantly create defensiveness, which too often turns to a power struggle.

When we speak from "I" or "We", we create an opening for others to hear us, and to be willing to engage in conversation and problem solving. We offer opportunities for them to relate to us and grow empathy and compassion.

It is helpful to pay attention and purposefully consider how to use an I-Statement before simply reacting to something. Our old habits will always surface unless we specifically remember to do otherwise.

I-Statements also present an opportunity for ownership. For instance, if asked the question, "Why is SEL important in for students and teachers in school?", the response will usually come in the form of a You-statement. "When *you're* having a hard time at home, it can effect *your* behavior at school so *you* should be given the tools *you* need to get through emotionally hard times and focus on learning." Consider the ownership, honesty, and respect one could gain if they responded with "Well, when *I'm* having a hard time at home, I know it can effect *my* own behavior at school, so it would be great to acquire the tools *I* need to get through emotionally tough times and focus on teaching."

## Using I-Statements to Communicate

Examples of I-Statements to model and practice:

Student is disruptive for the 3rd time in a short period of time:

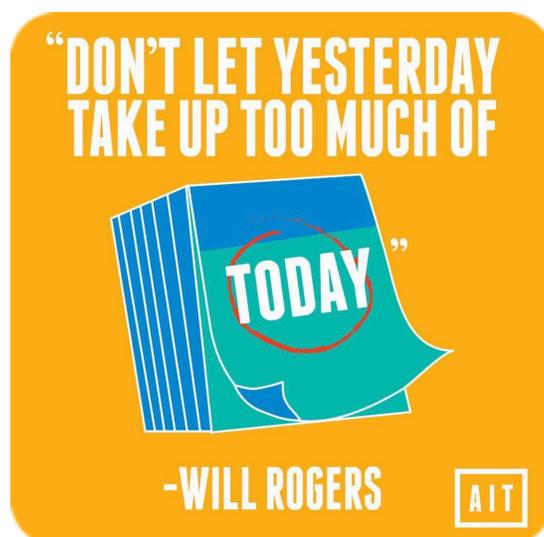
*"I am feeling frustrated that I can not meet your needs right now while also meeting the needs of the entire class. What do you need from me right now so I can also be attentive to teaching this lesson to the class?" Or, "I need you to sit quietly or Take 5 and allow me to finish this lesson for all 35 of you. I will come right over to check in with you when I am finished. You can count on me, can I count on you for this?"*

Being gracious, strong, assertive, purposeful, and understanding of them while expressing what you need also often goes a long way toward building trust. It is then important to do what we say and check in with the student.

Sharing how you are feeling, what you are doing about it, and inviting others to share to:

*"This morning I am feeling unsettled and anxious, it is interesting because there is really no new reason for this and yesterday I was feeling calm and optimistic. I am moving through these feelings and am happy to do so with you all. I am wondering who else finds themselves with feelings that change randomly?"*

Going back to Muscle 1 and giving the Benefit of the Doubt that something is going on below the disruptive actions/words, gives everyone a chance to embrace that they are safe, heard and cared for. Using the I-statement reduces combativeness and defensiveness. It is a win-win all around.



# MUSCLE #3

## Ask vs Tell

### Identify Needs and Ask for Support, Rather than Tell What's Wrong

*Asking* is a powerful tool, as it allows us to reflect on what is really going on and proactively problem solve to take care of ourselves and others. In contrast, *Telling* is making something wrong or blaming. It creates a sense of powerlessness and effectively hands our power to others.

When we learn to explore and **ask** for what we need vs **tell** what's wrong, we become powerful in expressing with genuineness and authenticity. We build trust and invite others to express openly without fear of judgement and dismissal.

**TELL:** When people 'tell' they often come across as, 1. Trying to get someone in trouble, (think tattle tales), 2. a victim, something is being done to them, or, 3. a gossip. Telling has a unique 'sound' to it and it is weak, whiney, and sometimes dramatic. Think passive-aggressive.

**ASK:** When people 'ask' they are powerfully stating a need, an opportunity to improve something for self or others. They are taking control and acknowledging a situation that they need support in. Asking has a solid, problem solving 'sound' and 'intention' to it. Think assertive.

In the classroom, this is significant when we are working with students who we feel frustrated by or who trigger us. When we consider what we need, **and** what they need, we can combine the QTIP, I-Statement, and **ask** muscles to develop meaningful and mutually respectful relationships. The key is asking based on needs, rather than telling based on reactions.

Learning to recognize and inquire about our (and others) needs is an important part of shifting our intentions and words from **what's wrong, blame, or accusation** to **what do I (they) emotionally need to make it right?** Notice what need(s) you have and how you react when they go unmet.

**Expecting others to know and meet our needs without voicing them ourselves is a set up for them to not do or say what we need at no fault of their own.** Remember Muscle 5, Walk the Talk? We want our students to let us know what is going on and ask for what they want and need. We get to do the same for them.

We may be upset with a student who regularly does not sign into the virtual classroom or complete their homework and we find ourselves writing that student off, feeling less inclined to support them, blaming them for our attitude. Sometimes we blame parents, administration, or others for things that are not going right. We need to be able to voice what we need. For educators some common deep needs are to feel successful, to feel relevant, to be appreciated, to be heard, to be noticed for our effort and heart.

**A couple of examples:**

For instance, we may be frustrated that a family member doesn't help out around the house and become cranky and unpleasant.

**TELL:** *"I work all day and come home to this mess, if you would just help out I would not be upset!"*

**ASK:** *"When I came home I was feeling exhausted and stressed. When the house was messy, I became cranky and snappy. I am not happy with that and realize that I felt unsupported and taken for granted. I need to feel valued. What can we do together to ensure both of us are taken care of?"*

Or, in the classroom a couple of students continue to disrupt the class by being goofy with each other, laughing, snickering. You become impatient.

**TELL:** *"You are being disruptive and ruining learning for the rest of the class. I can't teach because of you. If you don't stop I am going to send you out or call your parents."*

**ASK:** *"The three of you are laughing and creating a disruption that is interfering with my teaching and everyone's learning. It is important to me that I feel productive, successful and respected and that everyone else feels safe and respected. I need for you to choose to join us in learning. Can I count on you for that?"*

You are addressing a child who is disengaged, won't do homework, classwork, or take ownership for grades earned. There is always an excuse.

**TELL:** *"You are being lazy and just don't care. I can't make you care and I have done everything I know to do for you. I give up."*

**ASK:** *"I am experiencing concern for you. It seems like you don't care and I want you to know that I am not going to give up or stop caring. I can care enough for us both until you join me. What ideas do you have so we can both feel successful and proud of the work we accomplish together?"* Give the student time to answer, tell them that truly only they know the truth about themselves. Support and refrain from answering for them. It may take multiple check in's.

Which type of statement do you want to receive from others? Which one do you usually receive from others? Which one do you usually use when you are upset, when your needs are not met, not addressed, or not even recognized?



# MUSCLE #4

## Storytelling

### Tell Stories to Relate, Rather than to Teach



How do you tell stories? Do you tell them to *relate* or to *teach*? When adults tell stories, we are often trying to *teach* something, and even though we think we are helping, it can be counter productive and we push youth away from us. Storytelling to *relate* is one of the strongest bridge builders in all relationships.

**Think about those in your life who share stories of experience with you.** Are you relating to how they were feeling or are you feeling like they are telling you how you *should* or *ought* to feel? Are the stories meant to *change your mind* about something? Or reinforce that it's really *not that bad*?

**How do these stories make you feel?** What stories were you told by your parents, grandparents, or teachers that you simply could not relate to? They were telling you about their hardships; *walking backwards in the snow*, or how they *never were allowed to talk to their parents/teachers that way*, or how *you should be grateful for all I give you, I had to work for everything!*

**As the stories come to mind, what do you feel?** Could you hear, embrace, relate to those teaching/ought to stories? Or did you tune out, wish you could cross your eyes, and hope the conversation would end soon?

For the most part, storytelling to land a life lesson can not be heard by youth because as impassioned and truth-filled it might be for you, it is not their reality. They can not relate to our circumstances. What they *can* relate to is *how we felt* about those circumstances, not whether they were good or bad, right or wrong.

A student (or your child) can not relate to doing homework by themselves if they have always had someone helping them, or sitting with them. Our kids who complain about having to walk to school, or carry their own backpack, or do chores, can not hear us when we talk about how hard it was for us (so they should be grateful they have it easier) because it is not hard for them in the same way.

They cannot care about our stories because they can not relate to them, thus pushing both sides further apart. **When building Trusted Spaces, tell stories that capture the essence of what they are feeling rather than what they should be feeling.** Otherwise, what they will likely feel is misunderstood, isolated, alone, and unseen.

## Storytelling

Build meaningful relationships by telling stories that *relate*.

Our circumstances are largely irrelevant to youth, compared to our feelings. What is happening for them is their truth, and what matters is that you find a way to relate to them. Be careful that the story does not become about you, it is to convey understanding of them!

### Example Dialogue:

*"I remember when I was a kid being so frustrated and defeated when everyone seemed to understand the math problems but I couldn't. I really dreaded math, I wonder if you feel that way with writing? How can I help you get through writing time each day?"*

*"I never felt restless in class, but I remember my brother was always restless and getting yelled at for it, sometimes he would cry at home because he felt so bad that he just couldn't control himself. I recognize that you are trying, let's work together to find ways for you to manage being restless so you can learn and others can do the same. How does that sound?"*

*"When I was a student, my teachers never seemed to want to hear what we had to say. I felt invisible and ignored. I am experiencing a lot of student need for chatting and sharing, and personal frustration that I am not able to teach effectively with the disruptions. I understand that what I need and you need are different in this moment, how might we work together to make sure I can teach and you can learn?"*

**Disarm them by speaking to them with honesty, compassion, and shared feelings.**



**“LET US REMEMBER: ONE BOOK,  
ONE PEN, ONE CHILD, AND ONE TEACHER  
CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.”**

**-MALALA YOUSAFZAI**



# MUSCLE #5

## "Walk The Talk"

### Model, in Words, Actions, and Attitudes, What You Expect of Your Students.

**They are watching us!** Every minute of every day. They are noticing our actions, our words, and our attitudes. They are masters of discerning authenticity and hypocrisy in others. Noticing it in themselves can be more challenging, a lot like it is for adults.

Our credibility with others can be compromised easily when we have standards that we expect from them which we are not demonstrating ourselves. The most beautiful aspect is that we do not have to be perfect at it. Students want us to try, rebound, and try again, just like we want them to.

Who do you prefer to be around? People who ask of you what they themselves do? Or, those who ask (require) things of you that they are not willing to do? The double standard is real and our kids are watching for it.

Students are noting how we manage challenges. Respect is earned when they see us working hard to be our best human, just like we ask of them. Further respect and trust is built through ownership, understanding, and forgiveness after moments we are not so proud of.

**Modeling the following concepts/behaviors is key to building  
a Trusted Space in your classrooms.**

**Authentic Listening:** Model listening that is present and genuine. Listen to learn from them, to understand them, to relate to them. Listen for their individual insights rather than the answer you expect. Be cautious of pre-thinking your response, listen fully first - frame your response second. Use engaged non-verbal interaction, you do not have to say anything for them to know you are listening. Be focused only on them (put the phone down, look up from the monitor, etc.).

**Self-Regulation and Proactive Responding:** Model resilience, compassion, and strength. Let them experience positive recovery in challenging moments through you. Model sharing what you are feeling without shaming or blaming. Let them witness upsetting moments followed by responsible, kind, generous, honest, and controlled responses.

**Reasons vs Excuses:** Model and embrace responsibility using the concept that there is always a *reason* for our unpleasant moods, actions, and words - however, there is never an *excuse* for us to react to them in ways that are socially, emotionally, or physically harmful to ourselves or others.

## Walk The Talk

**Own Mistakes:** The perception that we are *more respected* the *less we mess up* is the opposite of what our kids want and need from us. They need us to be human with them. To show them that messing up is normal and there are responsible ways to acknowledge mistakes and move on.

**Be Vulnerable:** Just reading the word vulnerable can leave many adult leaders (yes, teachers are leaders!) shuddering. The word often has a connotation of weakness when, in fact, it is a sign of strength and humanness. It gives permission to others to be human, to experience victories, joy, pain, sadness, anger, in ways that help us move through without taking out.

Practicing each of these, along with the first four muscles, will create an atmosphere of trust, respect, understanding, patience, acceptance, resiliency, empathy, and self-efficacy. From this place, learning can begin and you, along with your students, will thrive together through the best and most challenging of times.



## Take A Moment To Reflect

What am I feeling as I get ready to greet my students, in whatever setting that is? What is my little voice saying about what the first moments will be? What is my body saying to me? Give names to feelings, share with someone at home or a colleague. All that we feel is perfect, it is simply where we are in a moment and it may or may not be where we are in the next moment. Giving ourselves this permission gives us greater empathy and freedom to give the same space to our students.

Noticing where we are, giving it voice, and reflecting on it all gives us an advantage with our students because we can be strong models for them as we invite them into sharing and connection with us and with one another.

What am I feeling, as I literally sign into a virtual classroom, or greet my masked students for the first time, in this new and uncertain school year? Noticing where our thoughts are can help us define our feelings and purposely navigate our way to a first impression that feels safe for them and successful for us. While it is ideal to do this on Day 1 of the year, there is never a bad day to start!

**“THE NEW YEAR STANDS BEFORE US,  
LIKE A CHAPTER IN A BOOK,  
WAITING TO BE WRITTEN.  
WE CAN HELP WRITE THAT  
STORY BY SETTING GOALS.”**

**-MELODY BEATTIE**



### *Reminder to Self:*

My students are truly in awe of me, they are looking to me to be my best and also be human. They are forgiving and they are watching. My greatest asset with them is my authentic self. Modeling my truth in honest, professional, and age appropriate ways earns their respect and models for them how we can be strong, resilient, and vulnerable at the same time.

# NOTICE. CHOOSE. ACT.®

Following the simple and powerful framework, **Notice Choose Act**®, the following section will guide you in creating, implementing, building, and reinforcing Trusted Spaces in your *virtual*, *hybrid*, or *in-person* classrooms.

These concepts support key Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) concepts that are widely researched and practiced. While creating Trusted Spaces, you will also be teaching, modeling, and practicing critical SEL concepts without needing a separate curriculum.

## Five Days/Lessons to Create Trusted Spaces:

For the first one or two weeks of the school year, or at any time if those weeks have passed, create Trusted Spaces by engaging in these five lessons while flexing the Five Muscles you've just learned.

One very important note here is that **Trusted Spaces need to be established and then cultivated**, the things we do to create this atmosphere need to be practiced every day and all year. Committing to the social-emotional well-being of yourself and your students is critical, so when it becomes challenging, make sure you understand your *reason* and *motivation* for getting back on track.

Trusted Spaces are built through the development of key SEL concepts, and like every other educational concept, mastery develops with practice. Think of math from  $1+1=2$ , to calculus. We do not start at calculus, and we do not leave behind  $1+1$ .

**NOTICE.** Days 1 & 2    Self Awareness & Social Awareness

**CHOOSE.** Day 3    Self Management & Purposeful Intention

**ACT.** Days 4 & 5    Positive Decision Making & Relationship Development

CASEL SEL Competencies (2020), <https://casel.org/core-competencies/>

# NOTICE . CHOOSE . ACT.

<p><b>NOTICE</b></p> <p>Areas for improvement, how we feel and the behaviors we engage in because of what we Notice.</p> <p><b>AWARENESS</b></p>	<p><b>CHOOSE</b></p> <p>What we want instead, how we want to feel, and what behaviors we would engage in.</p> <p><b>INTENTION</b></p>	<p><b>ACT</b></p> <p>Purposeful and specific actions to create positive outcomes that feel good and we are proud of.</p> <p><b>RESULTS</b></p>
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## The Foundation of AIT SEL Development

At the core of all All It Takes language and delivery is the Notice Choose Act® (NCA) process; a process of decision-making that starts with awareness and ends in action. The process itself builds ownership for the outcomes each of us create, both ones we are happy about and those that don't feel so good. It uniformly takes away the opportunity to blame others or feel victimized by circumstances. This, in itself, is empowering. However, initially it can be challenging.

By practicing the NCA framework, students will become more conscientious and better able to access their inherent strengths and recognize their areas for growth. Once individuals become aware of their impact on others and how they allow others to impact them, empathy grows and the outcomes are deeper connections and kinder, more confident words and actions. The resulting environment is safer and inclusionary where all students embrace their individual significance within the greater collective.

The Notice Choose Act® process is simple to teach, model, and reinforce. It is also a powerful language to use when re-directing student behavior. Coaching students towards self-awareness that leads to purposeful decisions that are meaningful and constructive for self and others is a shift from the top-down decision making youth often expect. In being accountable for decisions and outcomes, resiliency, accountability, acceptance, self-efficacy and self-esteem develop, and the outcomes are increasingly positive.

Teachers and administrators are key to student's use and value received from the NCA process. Taking the time to assist students in developing NCA use will result in improved classroom management and overall instructional effectiveness. Use NCA to elevate your connection to youth, develop their independence and embrace their expansive potential.

# NOTICE.

## Noticing Ourselves and Others

Days One and Two

### TEACH    MODEL    PRACTICE    REPEAT

**Notice:** An action word to use for being self and socially aware.

Paying attention to both the:

**Internal:** our little voices, our feelings, the mechanics of our physical body. What is our little voice saying about ourselves and others? Does it speak kindly, without judgment or criticism? Is our little voice lifting us up as we look in the mirror and think about ourselves? Is it honest and friendly towards ourself and others? Is our little voice instantly cynical of others, accepting of some and not others? When we notice what our inner narrative is saying to us, we can determine if it makes sense; if it is kind or fair, if it lifts us and others up or drags us down. We can learn to acknowledge it but not need to listen to it if it feels bad.

*"Little voice, thank you for sharing, you can be quiet now."*

**External:** What am I saying, and how is it being received by others? What are others doing, saying, or demonstrating? Do I thoughtfully respond or impulsively react? What am I doing and how is that being received by others? How am I showing up in my environment, am I supportive? Do I help care for the spaces I am a part of? My classroom, my home, the places I visit or walk? What are the consequences of my decisions/impulses? Do I lift up others and my environment?

# NOTICE.

In order to be a leader of our own life, we first must learn to Notice. Noticing our surroundings, our feelings, and our desires; along with the others around us and their feelings, is key. We must learn to recognize the impact we are having on others, what we are creating for them, and whether the outcomes are what we desire. We must challenge ourselves to question who we want to be in the world.

Noticing can be a challenge to start. It seems easier to not notice because once we notice we have to take ownership for the impact we create. It can seem easier to point fingers and place blame. As trainers and educators, it is our responsibility to coach students to Notice their circumstances, as well as the circumstances of others and then make decisions based on what they Notice.

## NOTICE includes the following:

PERSONAL: Notice what is working in our individual world, what can be improved?

- Do I treat myself as important?
- Do I believe I'm a valuable part of groups?
- Do I speak soft and kindly about myself?
- What are my relationships like with my family, my friends, my teachers, my coaches...  
Do they feel good?
- Do I feel proud of my grades, my effort?
- Do I feel proud of my effort and progress in areas of sports, hobbies, and other interests?

OTHERS: What do we Notice about others, their feelings, their needs, their desires?

- Who is alone, who is included?
- How are people feeling around me?
- Do I lift others up or drag them down?
- Do I make others pay for my dissatisfactions?
- Do I ignore those not in my circle?
- Am I blind to others, to their needs and feelings?

ENVIRONMENT: What do we Notice about our footprint?

- Do I improve or damage the environments I occupy?
- Do I care only for my space or for the collective space?
  - My home
  - My school campus, classrooms, lunch tables?
  - My stuff, others' stuff?
  - Do I pay attention to our planet and the footprint I leave?
  - Do I think more about 'things' or 'people;' 'having' or 'contributing?'
- Is there a balance or is it, 'all about me?' or, 'all about others?'





# Day One: Noticing Ourselves

## Self Awareness, Identifying & Voicing Feelings

<b>TOPIC:</b>	Setting the Tone and Becoming Self Aware
<b>FOCUS:</b>	Sharing, listening, recognizing, naming and accepting feelings
<b>SEL:</b>	Self awareness, identifying feelings, empathy, understanding, acceptance
<b>LESSON:</b>	Notice
<b>ACTIVITY:</b>	Checking In!

### The First Moment Matters

The moment when we first see each other, virtually or in person, sets the tone and determines the atmosphere. As you know, first impressions are the strongest ones. It does not mean we cannot rebound or reset (there will be a lot of this throughout the year), it is simply easier when we leap full into A Trusted Space when we meet for the first time. When that is not possible, start as soon as you can, every day is a new day to begin something new and great!

#### Use these tips:

- ◆ Be inviting
- ◆ Be gracious
- ◆ Be genuinely excited to see them
- ◆ Be honest
- ◆ Be generous with yourself and with them, this is not easy
- ◆ Call each student by name while making eye contact

**NOTICE** your students as they are coming in! Be prepared to make an empathic connection and inquire about them, especially if they seem off. *"I notice that you seem unhappy, uncomfortable, sad, restless,... I wonder if there is anything I can do to support you right now?"* Or, for younger kids, offer a couple ideas without actually telling them or even guiding them in which one to embrace. *I wonder if a walk or some quiet space would be helpful to you right now. What do you think would be helpful?* Let them mull on it, they will answer if you give them space. Approaching a student in this way can be the only thing they need to then become focused in your class. Often, we simply need to be *heard* and *seen*, nothing more.

### Activity for Day One: *Checking In!*

*On Day One, nothing matters more than connecting with each student and them with each other. Period.*



# Noticing Ourselves: **Checking In!**

## Day One Virtual Activities

Be the invitation to your students' new year, or if school has already started, their new day. Be resilient and optimistic, even if sharing that you are unsettled. Engage in conversations, giving each student time to share their current state of mind. Be sure to go first, model it with sincerity and as much creative expansiveness as you can.

### ***First, Ask Everyone To Turn Their Cameras On For Class.***

As you have likely experienced, distance learning comes with many uncontrollable variables. Every students' home learning environment is different. Be compassionate and reasonable on camera expectations, keep in mind that not every home has a safe or comfortable setting. Get to know your students and be understanding and flexible. Offer opportunities for your students to safely contact you outside of class time to explain any reasons this may not be possible (shared devices, chaotic home environment, lack of technology, etc.). Work with your students to find creative solutions that will allow their education to flourish because of remote learning rather than in spite of it.

*Sample Check Ins: use what is best for the age of your students, change it up daily.*

#### **Weather Check:**

Start by stating your internal weather report, and then ask each student to share theirs. Reporting from inside my mind, the weather is.... sunny with scattered clouds, storm is brewing, gloomy, chilly day.

#### **Atmosphere Check:**

Start by sharing your internal atmosphere, and then ask each student to notice and share theirs. My atmosphere today feels.... calm or anxious or excited.

#### **Temperature Check:**

Using the concept of thermometers to gage our *feeling temperature* throughout the day. 98.7 is centered, calm, and ready. What would it be if we were feeling anxious? Irritated? Restless? Impatient? Bored?

#### **Color Check:**

See the color palette on [Page 37/38](#) for younger kids, use creative thinking for older kids. Make it where no one can repeat a color' there are many shades of colors, like many shades of feelings.

For example, reds could be, red, crimson, scarlet, ruby, or maroon.





# Noticing Ourselves: **Checking In!**

## Day One Virtual Activities

Sample Check Ins:

### Feeling Check:

Use the included AIT NOTICE poster on [Page 35/36](#) to find a look that identifies how you are feeling. Have students share, or if too young, have them point to the picture that they relate to in the moment.



### Charade Check:

Have students pick a *mood* or *feeling*, write it down on a small piece of paper, and then non-verbally act it out. Have other students guess how they are feeling, (write it down or say verbally) this is a good way to start to define the varying degrees of feeling categories.

<i>Serene</i>	>>>	<i>Peaceful</i>	>>>	<i>Calm</i>
<i>Annoyed</i>	>>>	<i>Irritated</i>	>>>	<i>Frustrated</i>
<i>Happy</i>	>>>	<i>Joyful</i>	>>>	<i>Ecstatic</i>
<i>Mad</i>	>>>	<i>Angry</i>	>>>	<i>Rage</i>

After guessing is complete, have the student show what they were striving for.

Some kids may be hesitant to share. Offer the opportunity to pass but encourage them to try. Silence and patience can be a very powerful tool when used with compassion. When students pass give them a chance at the end, be careful not to forget. They are paying attention to how you pay attention.

**After the initial check in, engage in broader sharing using starters such as:**

- Share questions, insights, and about larger implications of the pandemic. (teens)
- What are you thinking about this current school year starting virtually? What do you see as benefits and what do you have concerns about?
- What did you enjoy about being at home and what did you not enjoy?
- What surprised you during stay-at-home time?

Over time, it is a good idea to use pre-numbered or named sticks to create equal opportunities for students to share and to manage time. Taking time for this in the first week or two will gain you significant instructional time in the long run.



# Noticing Ourselves: **Checking In!**

## Day One In-Person Activities

When you have this opportunity, either in the Fall or sometime later in the year, take the time to do things creatively and for many, differently. Depending on the age of the students, either gather them from where they wait for you or meet them at your classroom door.

### Picking your students up outside the classroom:

As you approach them, spend time walking around and making eye contact while offering a warm verbal welcome to each child. If you are all masked, be neutral on the mask, model how easy it is to be kind and welcoming, the mask is not a deterrent for this. As they watch you do this for others and experience you doing this for them, you will immediately begin building your Trusted Space. This welcome will create instant affinity and it will create trust from all the kids when they see you being welcoming to everyone. You will eliminate significant stress with this simple feel good greeting.

After greeting them, take them to a space, outdoors if possible, and circle them up. Have it in your plans that desks and chairs are not any part of the first hour or more of the new year. Always paying attention to safety protocols, circle up, supporting safe distances.

At this point you can all sit down or stay standing as you move into the following sharing activities:

First do a check in or two, pick one below and model it by sharing first. Learn more about check ins on [Page 30](#).

Weather Check  
Atmosphere Check  
Temperature Check

Poster Check  
Color Check  
Charade Check

After the initial check in, try to engage in broader sharing using starters such as:

- What are you thinking about being back at school? What do you see as benefits and what do you have concerns about?
- What was the best thing that happened during the pandemic?
- What did you enjoy about being at home and what did you not enjoy?
- What surprised you during stay-at-home time?

Over time, it is good to use pre-numbered or named sticks or decks of cards to create equal opportunities for students to share and to manage time. For the first days of school, taking time for this will gain you significant instructional time in the long run.



# Noticing Ourselves: **Checking In!**

## Day One In-Person Activities

### Greeting your students at the door:

If you still have instructional things to prep, leave them until later, and go meet your students at the door. Greet each individual person, get their name, and as you do be sure to make eye contact. Be silly and chase their eyes if you have to. If this is uncomfortable, notice what you are feeling and push through it. Everyone will be grateful you did, including you as you notice how your students react. Assuming you are masked, be sure the mask is simply a part of you, greet them with it as a normal thing. If someone wants to talk about it, bring humor or simplicity to what is, especially for older students. Your eyes and other non-verbal messaging are enough to let them know that you are welcoming and happy to see them. Masks do not have to be a deterrent for connection.

As your students are each greeted by you, have them circle up - no desks or chairs. Backpacks, etc., go to the side of the room or other out of the way place. Paper, pens, etc., are not needed. If possible, have them do this outside your room. Circle up making sure all safety health measures are adhered to.

Once circled up, do a collective welcome, address the elephant in the room right away. The elephant has no power if we make friends with it!

Engage in conversations, giving each student time to share their current state. Be sure to go first, model it with sincerity and as much creative expansiveness as you can. Try framing it as one of the check-ins on [Page 30](#) if necessary.

Weather Check  
Atmosphere Check  
Temperature Check

Poster Check  
Color Check  
Charade Check

Some kids may be hesitant to share. Offer the opportunity to pass but encourage them to try. Silence and patience can be a very powerful tool when used with compassion. When students pass, give them a chance at the end, be careful not to forget. They are paying attention to how you pay attention.

After the initial check in, try to engage in broader sharing using starters such as:

- What are you thinking about being back at school? What do you see as benefits and what do you have concerns about?
- What was the best thing that happened during the pandemic?
- What did you enjoy about being at home and what did you not enjoy?
- What surprised you during stay-at-home time?

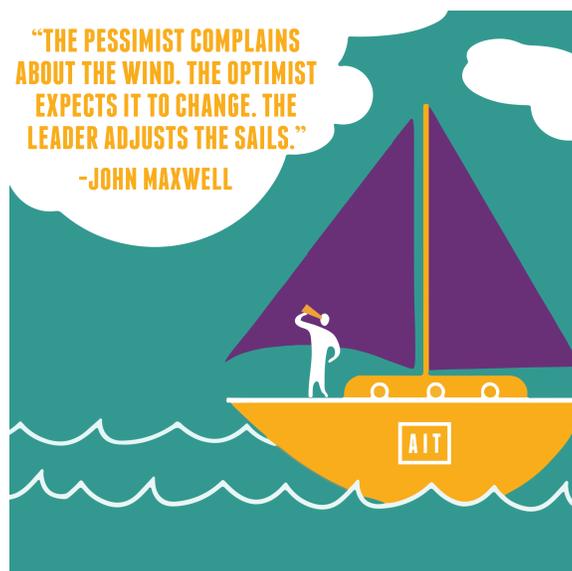
Be sure you model all first sharing. Over time, students will start to want to be first!

# DAY ONE NOTICE

## Checking In!

## Adds, Alternatives, and Tips For Success

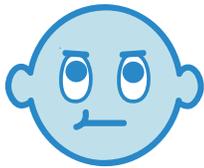
- **Creative Expression:** After some sharing is done, tune into the mood of your class. If sharing is going on too long for everyone, have an alternative to move into. An expressive art project is a great way to engage students into identifying their feelings. Use any of the starter sentences tied to creative expression, give them the opportunity to answer in art, poem, journal, song identification, etc. Have students share their art form at completion.
- While we are NOT trying to *be fast*, it is important to be sensitive to your students attention. If sharing is not possible for everyone, use sticks or cards to have 4 or more students share at that time and let others know they will be heard on a different day.
- Do some kind of check in *every day*, and use it as a class redirect when needed, also. This is not a one day or first day or first week situation. It can be really great, especially for younger students and unruly classes, to do this at the beginning of each return from breaks. It can be super fast as each child points to a color or poster face. They can write on a post-it, or in the chat room. It does not need to be a conversation.
- The next level to identifying feelings is to identify what we need to self-manage when our feelings are overwhelming or alarming. We might need to Take 5, or go talk to someone. Getting students to recognize first, and then identify what to do second goes a long way in developing life changing SEL skills.



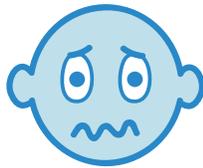
# NOTICE



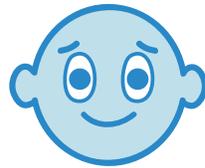
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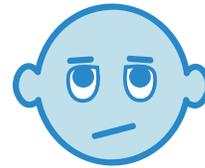
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ANXIOUS



APPRECIATED



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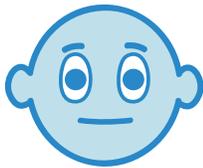
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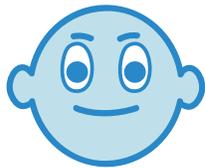
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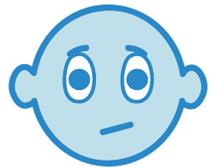
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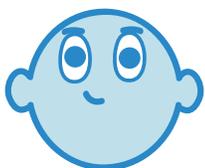
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DISAPPOINTED



EMBARRASSED



EMPOWERED



EXCITED



FORGIVING



FREE



FRUSTRATED



GRATEFUL



HAPPY



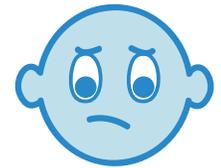
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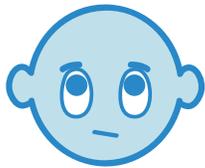
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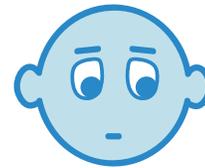
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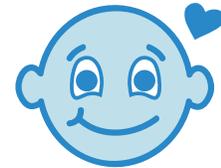
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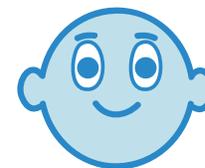
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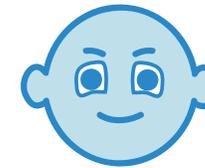
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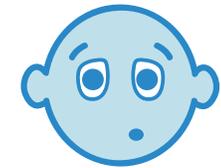
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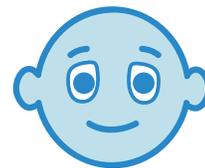
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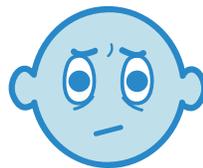
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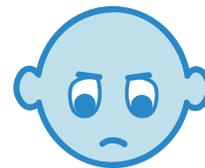
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SECURE



STRESSED



UNAPPRECIATED



UPSET



VULNERABLE

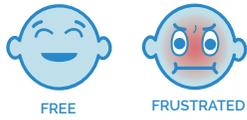
**NOTICE. CHOOSE. ACT.**<sup>®</sup>



BORED CHEERFUL



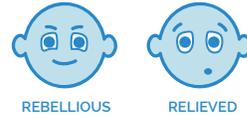
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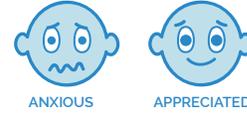
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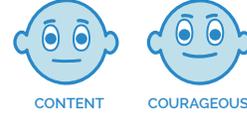
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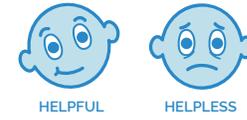
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CONTENT COURAGEOUS



EXCITED FORGIVING



HELPFUL HELPLESS



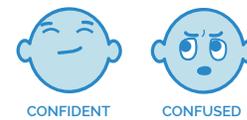
LOVED PROUD



STRESSED UNAPPRECIATED



ANGRY ANNOYED



CONFIDENT CONFUSED

# NOTICE

## POSTER CHECK IN'S

Use the AIT NOTICE Poster to have students check-in with themselves and how they are at various times during the day. Post-Its, pointing, miming, and verbalizing the feeling that they are experiencing are all options for students to express what they are feeling.

### Use this check in at anytime including:

1. Start of school day, everyone can do it or pull popsicle sticks to limit the timing and spread out sharing and include all kids over time.
2. When returning from breaks like recess and lunch.
3. At the end of the day.

### When the class is derailed, use the poster to support overall understanding and impact of each other's behavior.

- Point to two or three feelings and ask the class to raise their hands if they are feeling the one pointed out.
  - For instance, ask the class, "How many of you are feeling FRUSTRATED because we are not all working well together?"
  - Then ask the class how many of you are feeling HAPPY with the way the class is feeling right now.
  - Then ask for a couple people to share other feelings they may be experiencing.
  - Then ask,
    - How do you **want** to be feeling?
    - What do you (we) **need** to start feeling that way?
      - Is it a need or a want?



EMBARRASSED



GRATEFUL



HAPPY



INTIMIDATED



LONELY



SCARED



SECURE



ANXIOUS



APPRECIATED



CONTENT



COURAGEOUS



EXCITED



FORGIVING



HELPFUL



HELPLESS



LOVED



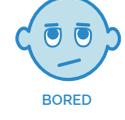
PROUD



STRESSED



UNAPPRECIATED



BORED



CHEERFUL



DEPRESSED



DISAPPOINTED



FREE



FRUSTRATED



HOPEFUL



INSECURE



WHAT **COLOR** ARE YOU FEELING TODAY?



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# COLOR CHART CHECK-IN

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 Brick Red	 Burnt Orange	 Forest Green	 Purple
 Red	 Brown	 Mint Green	 Lavender
 Salmon	 Goldenrod	 Jungle Green	 Magenta
 Light Pink	 Yellow	 Sky Blue	 Hot Magenta
 Pink	 Buttercup	 Teal	 Mauve
 Hot Pink	 Yellow-Green	 Blue	 Platinum
 Peach	 Chartreuse	 Royal Blue	 Silver
 Red-Orange	 Pine Green	 Navy Blue	 Slate Gray
 Orange	 Green Apple	 Royal Purple	 Black
 Yellow-Orange	 Green	 Purple-Grey	 White

---

WHAT **COLOR** ARE YOU FEELING TODAY?



# Day Two: Noticing Each Other

# NOTICE.

Social Awareness,  
Recognizing Similarities & Embracing Differences

<b>TOPIC:</b>	Building relationships by learning about one another.
<b>FOCUS:</b>	Awareness of others, learning similarities and embracing differences
<b>SEL:</b>	Empathy, understanding, acceptance, belonging
<b>LESSON:</b>	Non Verbal Communication
<b>ACTIVITY:</b>	All My People

## Non Verbal Communication

The things we are able to understand about ourselves and others through non-verbal body language (including eyes, motions, facial expressions) often outweigh our ability to speak our feelings. With non verbal communication, however, there are many opportunities for messages to get lost in translation. While we can get clues, we are not always accurate, and acting on our assumptions can lead to misunderstandings. Checking in with ourselves and others can support what we sense from non verbal language. It is important to encourage inquiry based on what we *notice*, rather than operating fully from assumptions, *especially when we do not have access to each other as we've had in the past, we are now 'noticing' through masks and screens.*

**Show your students how powerful nonverbal communication can be when it comes to noticing others, even when masked up or front of a video monitor, we can notice others.**

First, explain what Non-Verbal Communication is.

Communication without words, for example, facial expressions, eye contact, eye movement, tone of voice, posture, touch, and *spatial distance* (*good conversation here, explore what 'used to be,' and 'what is' today in spatial distance awareness*) are the most commonly talked about. At this time ask students to statue **FREEZE**. Have them look around and Notice each other's non-verbal messages. Without pointing anyone out, observe how some students are engaged, others unfocused, paying attention to other things, etc. Ask students to tell you what they observe around them. Explain and give examples of how non-verbal communication is often 'listened' to and 'heard' more than words. Make a statement, such as 'I love teaching,' using disregarding non-verbal cues; no eye contact, low, disinterested tone, one foot out body positioning, etc. Ask students if they believed the words. When they say no, ask them why.

*If time allows, have some fun with non-verbal role-playing.* Throw out an emotion and ask everyone to do it like charades. Or, hand out slips of paper to half the class and have them act the emotion and have others guess what they are 'feeling.'

## Activity for Day Two: *All My People*



# Noticing Each Other: **All My People**

## Day Two Virtual Activity

Let the class know that you are going to do an activity called *All My People*. For this activity, you will need popsicle sticks with student numbers on them. Make sure your students know their numbers and that you have a stick in the bunch too! *For older kids adjust the questions for maturity level and consider taking out the clapping pattern or making it simpler. Work to believe they will do this rather than they won't do this. It is surprisingly fun and engaging for EVERY age.*

Encourage every student to turn on their cameras and microphones. Without this the student will not feel the impact of the activity to the same degree. For students who are unable to turn on their cameras suggest they use the 'raise hand' feature when they would be standing on camera.

Each person will take turns in this activity. For this first round, make sure everyone gets a turn.

(Future experiences of All My People can be cut shorter. See Adds, Alternatives, Tips on [Page 42](#).)

1. You will go first, have your stick in your hand and everyone's presence, unmuted if possible.
2. Explain that when it is each person's turn, they will say:
  - "My name is \_\_\_\_\_"
3. Everyone will then clap twice, snap twice, and point at the screen and repeat the person's name back. The person will then say:
  - "All my people who \_\_\_\_\_"
4. They will fill in the blank with something that is true about them. For instance:
  - "All my people who love pizza"
  - "All my people who are happy to be back in school"
  - "All my people who wish we were back at actual school"
  - "All my people who like to read"
5. After they say it, everyone in the group who the statement is true for will stand up. (If needed, you can have them raise their hands, or another action that you decide upon.) Have them look around and **notice** who is standing with them.
6. Everyone sits back down. A new popsicle stick is drawn and that person goes next.
7. Once everyone has had a turn, ask for sharing. Some questions might be:
  - Did you learn anything about someone you didn't know before? What?
  - Were you surprised by anything?
  - What is the value of doing this activity?



# Noticing Each Other: **All My People**

## Day Two In-Person Activity

**Process: Keeping in mind distancing/safety:** Have students get in a circle. If your class is unable to do this as a large group consider doing it in smaller groups (as a center activity) until they have the skill set to expand into larger groups. *If you are working with older youth (HS/college) or very young kids, you can adjust to meet their developmental capabilities. The clapping sequence could be eliminated if needed however this activity is fun for ALL ages and is used with adults. The impact of people saying your name with enthusiasm can be felt palatably, try it!*

1. Standing as tall and proud as you can, say my name is...! Upon saying that all students will pat their legs twice, clap twice, point at the person in the center with both hands and say their name, loud and solid, not screaming or whispering.
2. You will then say the statement, All my people who... or All my (Insert your school mascot), who... followed by, something true about yourself. Example: All my Falcons who have younger brothers and sisters!
3. Once that statement is said, all students who share that in common with will leave the spot they're on, run (walk) through the middle, and return to a new spot that is at least 3 spots away from where they started. **Social distance, have them move from one spot to another spot staying 6 ft apart (or whatever the protocol).**
4. Once students start leaving their spots, you will also leave the center spot and go find a spot on the outside. One person will not have a spot on the outside and that person must go to the center where they repeat the sequence.
5. Encourage the new student in the middle to stand tall, speak **loud and proud** so everyone can hear, and share something true about them. For really shy and scared students, join them and guide their ability to find their voice and chose something true about them. Patience, support, and belief that they can do this will be everything for them!
6. The activity continues for as long as makes sense with your students, your time limits, etc.

### **Classroom Alternative:**

When students are at their desks, you can have them sit and stand, instead of cross through the middle. Popsicle sticks are good for full participation, as well as example guiding questions.

Some guiding questions are:

1. All my people who have a fear of \_\_\_\_\_
2. All my people who have a dream of \_\_\_\_\_
3. All my people who love the color \_\_\_\_\_
4. All my people who feel frustrated by \_\_\_\_\_

# DAY TWO NOTICE

## All My People

## Adds, Alternatives, and Tips For Success

- Students will often focus on sports, video games, and food. If this pattern arises let them know that no more of a specific topic can be used. Or, tell them that at the beginning. Students are easy to just agree with others and say the same thing. We want them to be thinking for themselves, about themselves. This is critical for awareness development for both self and others.
- Do this activity multiple times a week and multiple ways, as a class 'reset' or morning warm up. Use the activity as a 'reset' when the class is disengaged, when your frustration rises significantly, when a general 'state change' is needed. Use sticks and pull a minimum of 6 each time. Remember to keep yours in the mix. You can play the original way or you can give a topic, such as:

- Something you are scared of
- Things that make you smile
- Things that make you nervous
- Something you are really good at
- Something about you that you think NO ONE else will stand up for. This is not a challenge or a competition, it is just another way of bringing forward individualism.



- Use it to reset the class when focus is lost. Instead of getting frustrated and taking the distractions personally, launch into, "Hi, my name is\_\_\_\_, and they will become alert. Use the moment to bring awareness to how you are feeling.
  - "Hi, my name is Mr. / Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_, all my people who are feeling frustrated right now."
  - "Hi, my name is\_\_\_\_, all my people who would like to get through the lesson."
    - From here, you can ask a couple more students (through sticks) how they are feeling.
- There are no fingers being pointed, nor kids getting into trouble. Simply an expression of what people are feeling. At this point, you can jump into some Notice Choose Act problem solving also (taught in lesson 4).

# Day Three: Choosing With Intention

Self Management, Self Regulation,  
and Establishing Purposeful Intentions

# CHOOSE.

<b>TOPIC:</b>	Considering the outcomes we want after noticing what we are experiencing.
<b>FOCUS:</b>	Establishing purposeful intentions.
<b>SEL:</b>	Self-Management and Self-Regulation
<b>LESSON:</b>	Proactive vs Reactive
<b>ACTIVITY:</b>	Interactive Story and Class Courtesy Agreements

## Proactive vs Reactive

Learning to manage our feelings and actions is critical in developing key skills in independence, decision making, resilience and coping. To get to a point where we are self-managing we first must learn to discern whether we are, in each moment, being proactive or reactive to circumstances, opportunities and emotions. Being able to notice gives us the opportunity to choose and in that we are in control and responsibility which supports us being powerful and independent.

To begin recognizing the difference in Proactive and Reactive responses, it is helpful to reflect back on times when we are unhappy or upset and think about our responses. In first a quiet reflection and then with sharing, ask kids the following:

- When challenging/hard things happen, do you instantly react or do you think through what it is you need and then decide purposefully what to do about it?
- What are some situations when instant reactions don't work out so well? What would make the outcomes better for everyone? Keep in mind that we can ONLY control ourselves, not others.

**Reactive:** Saying something unkind and impulsive when angry.

**Outcomes:** I get in trouble. The other person is hurt. I feel regret. I don't know how to fix it. I hold it against myself. Others don't trust me.

**Proactive:** Using an I-statement: I was feeling..... then asking them for what I need.

'I feel angry because \_\_\_\_ and what I want to feel instead is \_\_\_\_\_. Can you help me figure out this situation so we can both feel good about it and move on? Proactive also means getting support to help solve things when attempts to do so alone do not work.

**Outcomes:** Build trust by being human and honest. Feel good about problem solving rather than guilty over reactions. Self-control, coping skills, self-efficacy, and self-esteem are developed.

## Activities for Day Three:

*Interactive Story & Class Courtesy Agreement*

# CHOOSE.

The next step is to Choose what we want to do with what we noticed. It is the mindful consideration of options. Many times there is no conscious choosing, simply bouncing from event to event and conversation to conversation without actually thinking about what we are doing, saying, and creating. This unaware way of being puts us in a helpless position, one that leads us to be a passenger in our life rather than the driver of it.

When we are Choosing, on purpose, sometimes we want to do nothing, we want to stay the course because what is happening is exactly what we want to happen and the result is a positive or neutral outcome for all involved, self, others and the environment. Other times we might Choose to stay a course that leads to negative results that are feeding insecurities. This can be combated through emotional intelligence training that builds self-esteem and personal accountability.

Choosing, along with noticing, both happen in our heads, they are cognitive processes. What we think and how we feel about what we notice drives how we choose, and it is all done in our heads. Sometimes the process of figuring it out is quick and decisive and other times it needs contemplation and reflection. In this area we can coach students who tend to be overly quick and rash decision makers and others who never make a decision, as they painstakingly feel paralyzed by options and a desire to 'get it right.'

## **CHOOSE includes the following:**

- Being purposeful in choosing the type of environment we want to be in, who we want to surround ourselves with, and how we want to feel.
- Mindfully considering options and steps to get where we want to be and feel.
- Paying attention to actually choosing vs. just flowing mindlessly with the least resistant path or the status quo.
- Being the 'in charge' catalyst for all results in our lives, including our attitudes.



# Choosing with Intention: Interactive Story

## Day Three Activity #1



This activity is designed to initiate connection between you and your students and it can also be used as an after-break reengagement exercise, or anytime a reset is needed.

This will integrate the previous *notice* lessons with today's *choose* lesson.

This activity can be used for any age group, either in person or online. The activity will require that an order be established. This can be accomplished by allowing the students to choose, either a number system, color system, or you can get clever and integrate it with other curriculum; for instance state capitals, elements on the periodic table, shapes, sports teams, favorite foods, it could be anything, as long as it is agreed upon. Once the students have chosen their designation, the teacher will randomly select a sequence. All names will be written on a piece of paper or a popsicle stick and put in a bag for random selection to determine who starts.

The instructor will initiate this activity with a prompt, (when creating this prompt, do not use a name of a student in your class, use a random example that is relevant), that will suggest something you or your students could have noticed just prior to this activity, or a regular occurrence that the class deals with or observes.

For instance:

- As Emily came to class today I noticed that she seemed sad.
- When David logged in after lunch, I noticed he was off camera.
- When I heard that school was going to be virtual again...

The first person makes the statement and the predetermined sequence continues adding one sentence at a time to build the story. One person in each group (if full group, you as teacher can do this) writes down the story as it goes.

"Student One: When I heard that school was going to be virtual again I felt anxious.

Student Two: I worried about how I was going to be able to pay attention to my school work.

Student Three: I also felt sad because I wasn't going to see my friends..."

To make it more challenging, have the students retell the story up to where they will add their part or have them retell what the person before them said.

To create more opportunities for reflection, have the class tell the story (same prompt) in two groups. One group will use reactive responses and the other will use proactive responses. If you are using virtual breakout rooms or in-person groupings, you can make four groups, two for each reactive and proactive. This will allow for more creativity and move the process along faster.



# Choosing with Intention: Interactive Story

## Day Three Activity #1



Once the story is complete, two things can happen first:

One student says the story back from memory. This can offer an opportunity to discuss how we all interpret things differently, like the telephone game. After the student shares the person who wrote it as it went, reads the story. It could also be recorded on a phone to be played back, then NO misinterpretations can be made. So many great discussions can come from the telephone game concept.

After reading the story to the class, the next step will be to help the students reflect on the story. This is great to start as a group discussion and then can be leveraged in a journal entry, a writing activity, perhaps a cartoon strip or art expression. All of it should be adjusted for the grades you teach. Depending on the students, stories may contain responses to the story's situation that you can the students to identify if these responses are proactive or reactive. You can also ask what are some proactive or reactive responses that could happen after the story.

Reflection questions:

- What did you notice about the story and how might it reflect things that happen in real life?
- Stories can have a lot of fantasy to them, decipher which things are reflective of real life.
- What were some of the helpful, proactive things you learned? How can you use these in your real life?
- Did you find yourself listening with **intention**? Is this a reactive or proactive response?
- What were the results, how did people feel, when the story was based on proactive choices vs reactive choices?
- If you were one of the characters, how would you have liked the responses to be for you, proactive or reactive and why?
- What are some of the long term effects of reactive and proactive words and actions?

Final question that leads into the next activity:

- What are some proactive intentions we can set for our class? We call these common courtesies.



# Choosing with Intention: Common Courtesies Day Three Activity #2



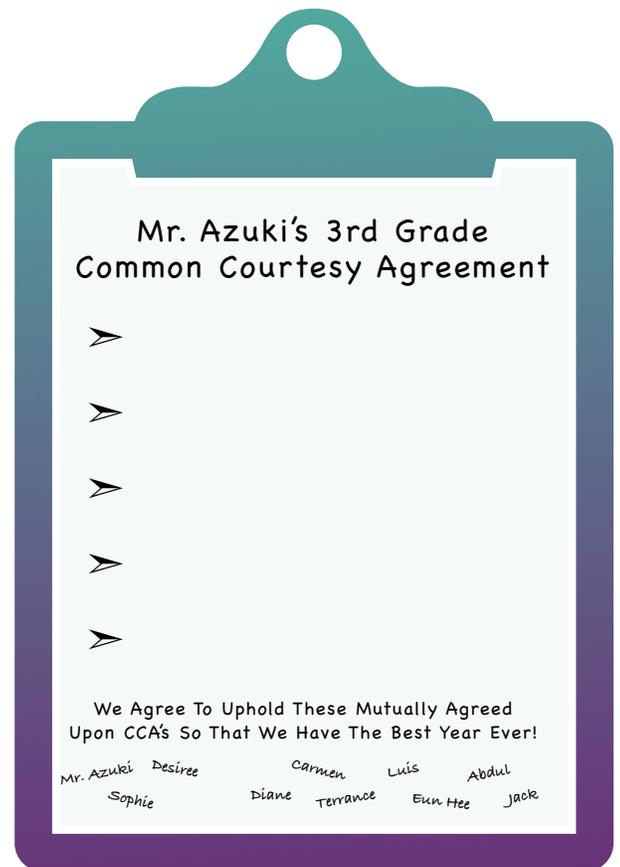
The Common Courtesy Agreement will serve as class guidelines that everyone participates in creating and then agrees to follow for the year. The goal of the agreement is to create an atmosphere where everyone is safe to engage, share, learn, slip up, and recover - individually and as a group in both virtual and in-person settings.

### Class Courtesy Brainstorm:

After doing the story activity together, students will be primed to create a common courtesy agreement. They will have just explored what *proactive* and *reactive* means and how it feels when proactive responses and behaviors are used, versus ones that are reactive.

The Common Courtesy Agreement (CCA) is about being proactive, setting the intention for how we want to feel and what actions will help us do that, together. It is an 'operating agreement' that serves everyone equally, giving direction and permission for breakdowns and resets to happen without shame or recrimination.

A CCA is not the class rules, they are agreements. Make it clear that rules are about extreme safety and they are non-negotiable for safety reasons. All classrooms have rules, though there should be very few of them; they are hard line boundaries. Students can not touch other students, throw things, run out of the room unaccompanied, etc. Broken rules need to be referred for extra support. Broken CCA's have discussion and proactive intervention applied, including benefit of the doubt.





ONLINE

# Choosing with Intention: Common Courtesies

## Day Three Activity #2



FACE TO FACE

### To create your Class Courtesy Agreement with any grade:

Brainstorm what actions, words, moods, attitudes, etc., make a safe and Trusted Space. Write down all the things that the class says. Even kindergarteners can and will do this. You might need to ask the prompt differently, but they will get it *and* all grades will respect the fact that you are asking them!

After brainstorming what makes a safe and Trusted Space, do a brainstorm for those things that make spaces unsafe and unwelcoming.

Side by side, have students review (or you summarize to them) what was written. Now, ask this:

*“All My People who would rather be a part of a safe and Trusted Space, stand up!”*

If you have anyone who does not stand, honor them. Let them know that you see them and ask if would they like to share why? Don't push, just let them own their space and feelings.

Then let the class know that they are going to write a Class Courtesy Agreement that will govern how they work together, all year. The agreement should have no less than 3 agreements and not more than 8. Ask for ideas,

*“What do we as a class want to promise each other? What do we want to commit to so everyone, including ourselves, feels safe and can learn well, all year?”*

It is VERY important that the students create the agreement. Of course, you as the teacher also get to agree with the outcome because you are a part of the whole. What is critical is that you are not guiding, giving tips, or saying what you think should be there and then hoping that they agree. They will surprise you with their insights and desire to create this atmosphere.

Additionally, once they write and agree to this as a group, you have only one place to look to when they (and you) slip up. We are not perfect, we will mess up, and this is a graceful way to clean up our mistakes and move forward. This will be addressed further in Day 5's lesson.



# Choosing with Intention: Common Courtesies

## Day Three Activity #2



### For your guidance, some common CCA examples:

(some more basic for younger students, some with more depth for older students)

- ◆ We will respect each other (when this is said, be sure to have them define what respect each other means in action)
- ◆ We will listen to each other and the teacher
- ◆ We will be kind to each other
- ◆ We will allow each other to be ourselves without judgement
- ◆ We will give each other the benefit of the doubt when something goes wrong
- ◆ We will get to know each other and talk out our differences
- ◆ We will believe in each other positively
- ◆ We will share
- ◆ We will work together
- ◆ We will be kind to each other
- ◆ We will be accountable for our actions
- ◆ We will notice when things are not safe for someone and work together to make it better

Once you have 3-8 agreements that feel good to you and are widely accepted by the class, summarize them and have the class stand up and, visually and verbally, agree to them one by one and sign the agreement. Virtually, you may ask every student to write their final agreement yes in the chat thread.

Be sure that any student who is absent agrees to this when they return. It can be effective to have another student share about it and have that student get the returning student's agreement.

Post your Class Courtesy Agreement in a visible place (virtual or in person) for the rest of the year. Use it to reflect things you notice as the year goes on. More on this in lesson 5.

# Day Four: Acting On Our Intentions

Positive Decision Making, Perseverance,  
Responsibility, and Accountability

**ACT.**

<b>TOPIC:</b>	Intention Without Action = Fantasy
<b>FOCUS:</b>	Embracing that we are each capable of, and responsible for, and creating atmospheres we want to be a part of.
<b>SEL:</b>	Positive decision making, responsibility, accountability
<b>LESSON:</b>	Notice Choose Act Framework
<b>ACTIVITY:</b>	Using NCA to create action plans

## Notice Choose Act Framework

The Notice Choose Act (NCA) framework is by definition a straight forward and simple decision making process that once mastered, will guide your students to be independent and responsible choice makers. The process does not inherently create positive outcomes however it guides the thought process to get to (sometimes it takes awhile) outcomes that we are proud of and accountable for.

Critical to keep in mind:

For optimal growth of self-efficacy, responsibility and accountability, our actual decisions are not what matter most, contrary as that may seem. What matters most is our embrace that we made the decision, acted from it, and now are accountable for the results. When we live in this mindset we are able to choose and act differently when we do not like (for us and others) what results from our our actions, words, and attitudes. Example:

*A student notices a classmate eating alone every day. Before noticing the person was simply invisible to them, so noticing is an important first step. The student chooses not to engage and to eat with friends like always. We do not shame this decision, we simply want the student to be able to say, 'I noticed the student eating alone and I decided to say or do nothing.' Day after day the student continues to notice the student alone and recognizes that it does not feel good to continue doing nothing. Over time, (usually not long), for most people, there will be an engagement to make a positive difference. The positive difference will be for both people, the supporter and the person alone.*

As in all situations with students, be **aware** of developmental ages and capacities. Believe in their ability to learn to notice, choose, and act while supporting them in understanding impacts and outcomes. Elementary age students will interpret what they notice differently than high school students. In having open discussions you will gain precious insight of their processing and interpretation, giving you access to better facilitation of their SEL development.

This same scenario can be applied to our personal grades, behavior, our relationships and every other place in life by utilizing the NCA framework. Doing it with a worksheet at first will support the ability to do it quickly in our heads in the future.

# ACT.

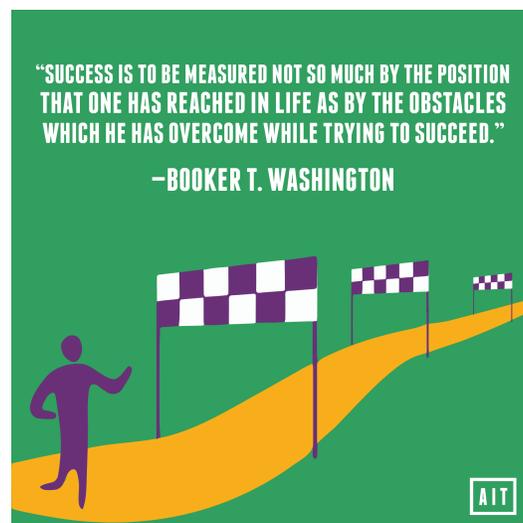
The final step in the process is to Act on what was first noticed to produce results that were positively chosen. Unlike the first two steps, to Act is outside of our minds, it comes after the awareness and thinking is done. The reality is that we can think forever, be determined forever, wish forever, be committed forever, and hope forever, however, without action none of those things matter.

ACT is what actually changes things in our own lives and for others also. Action that aligns with what is noticed and chosen creates results in line with our desires, our passions and our goals. Action that does not follow what we notice and choose becomes arbitrary and lends itself to blame and victimization when things do not go the way we want. The Bystander effect is an example of not engaging purposefully in this process.

Purposeful action results in responsible accountability for outcomes regardless of whether they feel good or not. When we create outcomes that we are proud of self-esteem grows. When we create outcomes that don't feel great, owning it helps us recover from the disappointment and frustration and builds self-esteem. Self-esteem grows through personal experience, victories and setbacks, winning with grace and losing with honor - not from being taken care of, being given false accolades, or placing blame rather than owning outcomes.

### **ACT includes the following:**

- Actions, including words and attitudes, that align with what we chose to feel based on what we first noticed about ourselves, others and our environment. .
- Acknowledging that outcomes are ours to own whether they feel good or not.
- Owning our power to make a difference and improve situations and circumstances for ourselves, others and the planet.





# Acting On Our Intentions:

## NCA Worksheet

### Day Four Activity



Using the NCA worksheet, have the class map out solutions in any of the following three ways. It's a good idea to model a handful of examples for the class before asking them to complete them on their own. Younger children may have a hard time doing this in groups, do it as a whole class or offer the opportunity for them to draw their thoughts and feelings as you guide the process.

**Do a Full Class NCA Process:** Ask first for several ideas before settling together on one that is relevant and will really support the class moving forward. Because you don't all know each other yet, you might have to stretch to find a problem. Some might be:

- A. The class often talks when the teacher is talking.
- B. Not everyone joins the virtual classroom.
- C. Some students don't feel like they fit in.

**NCA Process in Small Groups:** Depending on the age of the students and the ability to group them, in person or in virtual breakout rooms, have groups of 2-4 do a joint NCA process. They will pick any issue they can agree on that needs to be improved and work through the framework. They will then share with the rest of the class. Depending on age, topics are often:

- Name calling
- Kids being excluded
- Trash/litter on campus
- COVID topics might be:
  - Don't like virtual learning
  - Hard to concentrate at home
  - Miss my friends
  - Worried about getting sick

**Individual NCA Sheets:** Students pick an individual goal or area for improvement and work through the framework on their own. They can then share with the class or in small groups. Some topics that students often problem solve on are:

- Get better grades
- Have better friendships
- Stop arguing with siblings
- Complaining a lot
- Staying out of trouble



# Acting On Our Intentions:

## NCA Worksheet

### Day Four Activity



Here are some samples of how the framework evolves based on a couple of the topics above. To be sure all students understand the process give and work through other examples as well.

#### Full Group:

**Notice:** We are not all following the class courtesy agreement.

- We feel: unsafe, irritated, frustrated.
- Our behaviors are: disruptive, talking when the teacher is talking, off task.

**Choose:** Class Courtesies are followed by everyone.

- We would feel: productive, safe, happy, satisfied, supported.
- Behaviors would be: paying attention, doing our work, respecting the teacher, better grades

**Act:** Very specific actions:

- We will review the agreements and remind each other kindly about them
- We will ask other students what they need from us
- We will notice our impact when we are off task
- We will be kind to everyone and ask how we can help
- We will pay attention to the teacher

#### Small Group:

**Notice:** We do not like virtual learning.

- We feel: unconnected, lonely, depressed, sad, frustrated, unmotivated.
- Our behaviors are: distracted, not doing work, not getting on the computer.

**Choose:** Deal better with virtual learning (be sure the choose is doable, saying no virtual school would not be in the control of the students, for older students if they want to really press into what seems out of their control, be sure they put realistic actions down)

- We would feel: accepting, open to learning, connected to others, not alone, optimistic
- Behaviors would be: engaged in learning, talk to others, less grouchy

**Act:** Very specific actions:

- Remind myself everyday (little voice) that this is temporary
- Do my work so I feel successful even if I don't like it
- Talk to people to help lift me up when I am feeling upset about it
- Participate in virtual learning fully, take advantage of what is there rather than worry or complain about what is not there.

#### Individual:

**Notice:** I am grouchy around the house to others.

- I feel: upset, unkind, lonely, disconnected, alone, attacked.
- My behaviors are: being rude, being annoying, isolating myself, not being helpful.

**Choose:** To be friendly with my family.

- I would feel: accepting, open to learning, connected to others, not alone, optimistic
- Behaviors would be: others will treat me better, everyone will be happier, I will be helpful, I will look after others and they look after me, we would all talk better to each other.

**Act:** Very specific actions:

- I will offer to help my mom with dishes
- I will be careful not to argue with my siblings
- I will take a break when I feel myself get irritated, I will not take it out on others
- I will share how I am feeling with my family in a kind way
- I will stop blaming them for my moods

# NOTICE.

Recognition of opportunities to improve situations or create new ones.

What needs improving? Is missing? Doesn't feel good?

How do you feel because of this?

What behaviors go with these feelings?

# CHOOSE.

Purposeful consideration of options.

What do you want instead?

How would you feel if you had what you choose instead?

What behaviors would happen if you felt this way?

# ACT.

Matching actions that deliver desired results.  
What will I **DO** to create what I choose?

What specific steps, actions or words will you use to create what you intend?



# Day Five: Overcoming Obstacles

Forgiveness, Benefit of the Doubt,  
Resilience, and Compassion

**ACT.**

<b>TOPIC:</b>	Accepting and moving forward after mistakes or breakdowns
<b>FOCUS:</b>	Recognizing that we are all perfectly imperfect and we are not alone
<b>SEL:</b>	Communication, resilience, compassion, forgiveness, accountability
<b>LESSON:</b>	Benefit of the Doubt ,Apologies and Forgiveness
<b>ACTIVITY:</b>	My Bad, All Good

## Benefit of the Doubt

For Day 5 there are several lessons that can be taught in one day, collapsed into a blended message or taught over several days. They go together as they focus on resilience, offering the benefit of the doubt to others, and acknowledging things that have happened authentically and then moving on. Youth (and adults) often get bogged down in being upset with themselves and others, when this can be cleared quickly safely and Trusted Spaces are maintained.

### Key Points & Language:

#### Ownership - My Bad:

What we create is ours to own, even when it feels bad. This is a tough concept for youth, and often adults, to embrace. What makes it so much easier is when the culture of the atmosphere is one of acceptance, forgiveness, understanding, allowing each person to accept, learn, and move on from the moments that are less than ideal and we don't feel proud of.

#### Benefit of the Doubt - All Good:

Replacement behavior that allows others to be human, make a mistake, and move on without being ridiculed, or shamed.

Review teacher muscle #1 and bring this concept to your students. When we can stop taking things personally and offer benefit of the doubt, we can allow imperfections to exist without recrimination, embarrassment, or judgment. Making this an atmospheric condition of the classroom will create a sense of safety for everyone.

#### My Bad/All Good:

When small mistakes, misses, and regular human imperfections happen. The student/adult learns to simply say, *My Bad*, all those around them say, *All Good* and then *everyone* moves on. No one has time to wallow in the mistake or tease/laugh/snicker at each other. Both My Bad and All Good are replacement behaviors for what we often do to ourselves and others when a mistake is made.

## Apologies and Forgiveness

**Apologies:** When events/words happen that are purposeful, hurtful, and repetitive, there is a need for a much more sincere ownership than, My Bad. During these times it is important to understand that full authentic apologies are needed and that offering them cultivates truthful relationships that we can count on. Being perfect is not the goal, being honest and accountable is.

1. I am sorry for \_\_\_\_\_ (be specific)
2. I know you must have felt \_\_\_\_\_ (empathy & depth: bad vs disappointed)
3. Next time I will \_\_\_\_\_ (what I will do differently next time)
4. Do you forgive me? (others DO NOT have to say yes, we get to accept where they are)
5. Do you have any requests? (be open to this)

**Grudges:** holding something against someone or something that is perceived to have 'wounded' them. A grudge is something we hold onto for over two weeks. When students notice that they hold grudges against others and events, they begin to recognize the negative impact these grudges have to their thoughts, feelings, actions and relationships. From this awareness students can choose positive outcomes that are associated with releasing grudges. To get to these positive feelings, students will act through the process of releasing grudges and live into new ways of relating to others. Students will experience growth in the areas of self-awareness, empathy, self-efficacy, resiliency, and accountability.

**Ask for examples of grudges:**

- Someone says something mean and two years later you are still upset about it.
- Someone accuses you of something you didn't do and you are still burning about the injustice of it 3 months later
- You aren't invited to a birthday party and are still hurt a year later
- A parent doesn't let you do something that you really wanted to do or have and a month later you are still angry.

**Now ask students to identify thoughts and actions that occur because we are holding grudges, samples are:**

- Revenge tactics like starting rumors or spreading them
- Talking unkind about that person to others
- Inviting others into our anger and grudge, gathering a pity party

**Ask students and discuss:** Who gets hurt when we hold grudges? What happens inside us? To others? To relationships? What does it take to release grudges and what are the benefits?

# Apologies and Forgiveness



## **BONUS VIRTUAL and IN PERSON activity:** Grudges activity (4th grade - college):

- Ask students if they have a grudge against someone that is over 2 weeks old. Tell them sometimes grudges go back years, maybe even to kindergarten. Grudges are against anyone in our life, at home (parents, siblings), school, friends, sports teams, clubs, etc. Example: not being invited to a birthday party; someone used something that was yours without permission...
  - Ask students to raise their hands, (arm pit style), if they have ever been hurt or let down by someone they care about? (100% hands should be up, we are human)
  - Ask students if THEY have ever hurt or disappointed someone (100% of hands should be up)
  - Ask students to raise their hand if they hope (wish) that the people they have hurt or disappointed would forgive them and give them a chance to be better every day. If they hope they will be allowed to fix things by apologizing and improving actions in the future. (usually about 85-100% of hands go up here)

**Notice** and share this insight to your students: (adjust percentages by what you experience with hands raised)

- 100% of you have been hurt by others
  - 100% of you have hurt or disappointed by others
  - 100% of you want others to forgive you and give you a chance to be better...
  - 80% or so of you are holding a grudge against another...
- Allow for the 'AH HA' to start to sink in, you will see those who get where this is going start to perk up or smile. Punch Line: "What I just **noticed** is that 100% of you have hurt others, 100% of you have been hurt and ~85% of you have are holding grudges against someone... This means that most of you **want** something from others that you are **not** giving to them.
  - Now talk about Grudges hurting us and our ability to move free and unburdened in the world. This hurts **us**, not others. Grudges also give 'reasons' to do hurtful things. This however is **not** an **excuse** to be hurtful.
    - There is **always** a reason and **never** an excuse to be hurtful. If we have a reason, we get to release it and choose to be kind and peaceful, rather than vengeful or nasty.
  - Now give students scratch paper and something to write with. Ask them to write down every grudge they have and keep writing until they got them all. Once done, have them tear them up in tiny pieces and put them in the trash.
  - Lastly, have students share: (examples)
    - I have released 'anger' and replaced it with 'kindness'
    - I have released 'resentment' and replaced it with 'acceptance'
    - I have released 'all my grudges' and replaced them with, 'giving others new chances'

## Activity for Day Five: *My Bad, All Good*



# Overcoming Obstacles: **My Bad, All Good**

## Day Five Virtual Activity

My Bad, All Good is an experience of making simple mistakes and moving on without getting caught up in stories, excuses, self beat up, or teasing others by offering *replacement* words. Being able to simply embrace, let go, and move on from our mistakes is key to developing resiliency, coping, understanding, compassion, and perseverance.

Teacher says to the students, "Before we get started, scoot back a little bit and make sure we can all see your hands on the screen. Everyone raises both hands (have them wave, two thumbs up, or do twinkle fingers - be silly and have fun!). Teacher also checks that all students know their number.

Explain that in My Bad, All Good, when mistakes are made, (ask, "What did I just say? You will get all sorts of answers, but the key is: *when* mistakes are made, not *if*). When you make a mistake three things happen, all immediately:

1. You simply put your hands up in the air and say, "*My Bad!*" - nothing else.
  2. The rest of the class says, "*All Good!*"
  3. Then everyone starts over, immediately, doing two new motions of your choice.
- The goal is to get around the entire class without starting over.

### How to play:

- Teacher shows the class three hand motions:
  - (Fist Bump (fists towards the screen), Two hand Clap, Two Thumbs Up)
- Teacher goes through all three of those a few times with the class to make sure all students know how to do them.
- Begin round one, teacher starts with two motions (i.e. hand clap, two thumbs up)
- Student number 2 then does the teacher's *first* motion (hand clap) and adds one of the other two motions (fist bump or two thumbs up).
- Student number 3 then does student number 2's *first* motion (hand clap) and adds one of the other two motions (two thumbs up or fist bump)
- This pattern continues in number order with each student in the group doing the *first* motion the student did before them and then adding one of their own.
- Continue until you have gone through the entire class, ending with the last student. You may not get all the way through the first time you play because of start overs it may take longer than you allowed timed for. Give this a lot of time the first time you play and less time in subsequent playing. Also **be sure** to allow time for post activity sharing and reflection on Page 60.



# Overcoming Obstacles: **My Bad, All Good**

## Day Five In-Person Activity

The goal is to get the group to follow a specific pattern, repeating a set of moves, as quickly as possible, and to practice bouncing back and quickly starting over, when mistakes are made. Students will need to notice each other's actions closely for success, tuning into the group completely.

Demonstrate the entire pattern of 20 before going back over the guidelines. Once that has been done, explain the following:

### 1. The Play:

- The first person starts by placing their arm across their chest so that their hand taps one of their shoulders and says, "One." Whichever shoulder (left or right), their hand taps, is the direction the pattern will move, and indicates the person the pattern passes to.
- The person closest to the hand of #1, repeats the move and says, "Two." This person can tap whichever shoulder they choose. Again, the pattern moves toward the person closest to that shoulder.
- When the play gets to number five, the player must clap their hands, say "five", and then points both their hands toward someone random in the circle (anyone other than the person to their left or right). The player pointed at takes up the pattern and says "six".
- The play continues going around the circle as each person makes the appropriate move and says the corresponding number.

### 2. The Pattern:

- Tapping one of your shoulders and saying your number make almost all of the moves in the pattern. (Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18, and 19)
- If the number is a multiple of 5 (meaning 5, 10, 15 or 20), the move is to clap your hands and then extend your arms and hands outward to point at a random person in the circle (anyone other than the person to your left or right).
- If the number is a multiple of 7 (meaning 7 or 14), the move to make is to cross both of your arms in front of your chest, with one arm above the other. The play will move in the direction of the top hand if your number is 7, and in the direction of your bottom hand if the number is 14.

### 3. The Rules:

- When a participant makes a mistake or interrupts the pattern, they are asked to raise their hand in the air and claim loudly, "My bad," then the rest of the group says, "All Good!" The person who made the mistake then immediately starts the pattern over by saying, "one" as they tap a shoulder.
- The real objective of this game is to get participants really comfortable making mistakes and learning how to move on from them quickly, rather than living in self resentment or judgment.

# DAY FIVE ACT.

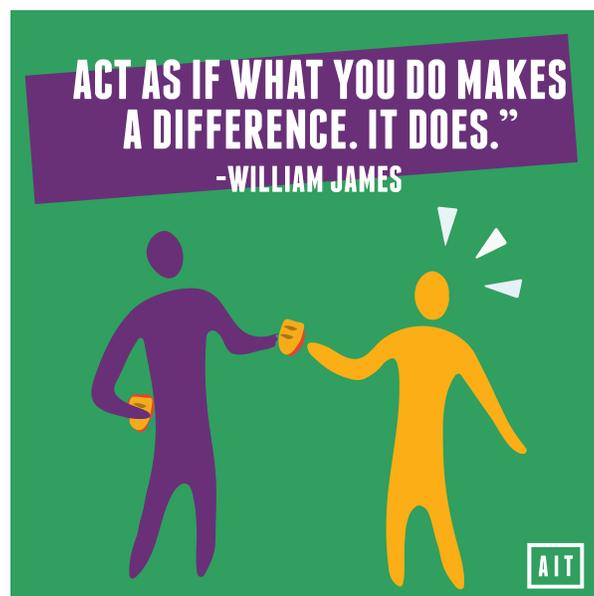
## Adds, Alternatives, and Reflection Questions

## My Bad, All Good

- Ask each team to create their own unique version of the pattern for “My Bad”. They may alter the moves (i.e. stomp a foot instead of tap a shoulder, or turn in a circle, or clap, or whatever they choose) AND / OR they can alter when the pattern switches (i.e. multiples of 3 instead of 5, etc.) Have each team play their own version of My Bad, and when they are comfortable, join another team to teach the new version.

**Once the experience is done, engage the class in a discussion using these starters, or ones that you observe to be relevant for your class at the time:**

- What were your observations/ah ha's about the activity?
- What are some feelings you experienced during the activity?
- What did you learn about mistakes and how you deal with them? How others deal with them?
- What did you discover about saying, 'All Good? Does it make a difference? Why?
- What are some times when, My Bad, is not appropriate? Give examples of when apologies are needed instead. Examples:
  - Recurring issues, like being late to class over and over, brushing off the impact to others with a My Bad is not cool, one would need to make an apology and acknowledge what is created for others and self in this action. Racing in the door late once or twice is a My Bad.
  - Harsh and hurtful words and actions - both impulsive and calculated. Saying, “I didn’t mean it,” or “She made me because...” are not acceptable for a My Bad.





# Creating A Take 5 Space

## Recover, Reset, & Re-Engage

Take 5 Spaces are key to developing self-awareness, self-regulation, positive decision making, and coping mechanisms. Rather than always being redirected by an adult, students learn to notice what is happening for them and decide purposely what they need to manage the moment. As they decide what they need, they can consider a Take 5 Space as one option. This is a 'space' to reset without disruption to the class or the teacher. These spaces rely on self-management from start to end.

One major goal of a Take 5 Space is to keep the student in the classroom (both in person and virtual). Allowing students to self manage before saying or doing things that may get them in a more challenging situation. When a student starts to feel anxious, belligerent, disconnected, or some other internal atmosphere that will not allow them to engage and learn, they can choose to reset in a Take 5 Space. This opportunity is seen as positive problem solving and rewarded as such. A student who begins to use it too often may be addressed kindly and proactively in a private conversation where the teacher and student discuss each others needs and how to fulfill such needs.

General Take 5 Space attributes:

- Students stay in the room (virtual or in person)
- Students get to choose to Take 5 anytime they need to, no disruption is created.
- Students understand that they still need to do the work or learn what they miss and that the teacher is happy to assist in facilitating this.
- Students understand that the Take 5 Space is a support to them, not an escape for them.
- The atmosphere of the classroom is full acceptance and agreement that when we Take 5 it benefits both the student individually and the class collectively.

Take 5 Spaces set up options for students to proactively notice and reset stress reactions (fight/flight amygdala responses, [page 6](#)), so engagement and learning can take place. . [Edutopia](#) identifies, movement, focused attention practices, and understanding the brain, as three ways to help manage stress reactions.

While Take 5 Spaces are meant to support focused attention, it is advised that teachers facilitate understanding and discussions about the relationship between stressors and the amygdala and frontal cortex pathways. The more we understand the more we can engage in problem solving.

When available, adding movement opportunities to Take 5 Spaces is also encouraged as long as it is not a significant distraction to others.



# Creating A Take 5 Space Virtually

Virtual Take 5 Spaces have the students remain in the virtual classroom. They will indicate that they are Taking 5 by signifying to the class that they are doing so. This signal will be established when the Take 5 Space is explained by the teacher. Examples might be:

- Student writes, *Taking 5* in the one-on-one teacher/student chat section of the virtual classroom
- Student puts up a hand showing 5 fingers and waits for acknowledgement from the teacher
- Students use the hand emoji and leave it up until they return to focus 5 minutes later

A plan for timing the 5 minutes is established and is used for everyone the same.

## Creative things to do in a Take 5 Virtual Space:

- Students can draw or color (see the Take 5 Coloring/Tracing book virtual option)
- Students can work on a puzzle
- Students can listen to a playlist that the teacher designs, (this would be instrumental music, calming, drums, etc.)
- Students can journal

All of this ideally happens with the student still on screen and present in the virtual classroom, but every situation is unique, so take the time to understand each students **need** for a reset and act accordingly.

## OPTIONS for VIRTUAL and IN PERSON:

Teachers may ask students to indicate how they are feeling (using a weather check, color check, feelings chart, typing into the chat function, etc.) before they leave to take 5, and then when they return from taking 5. This will create self-awareness and accountability as well as give the teacher an indication of success with the process.

When more than 5 minutes is needed, students will indicate this responsibility (based on a predetermined method, at the end of the first 5 minutes). If this is a repeated occurrence in a single day, it is time to have a side conversation with the student and determine if elevating to MMTS Tier 2 ([page 8](#)) is appropriate to provide optimal support.

**Note:** Only 2 students at a time can Take 5. At times some students will need to wait and this alone may allow them to reset and they will not need to take 5 once it is open for them to do so. If you find 'friends' trying to Take 5 together, new limitations can be set. They need us to stay one step ahead!



# Creating A Take 5 Space In Person

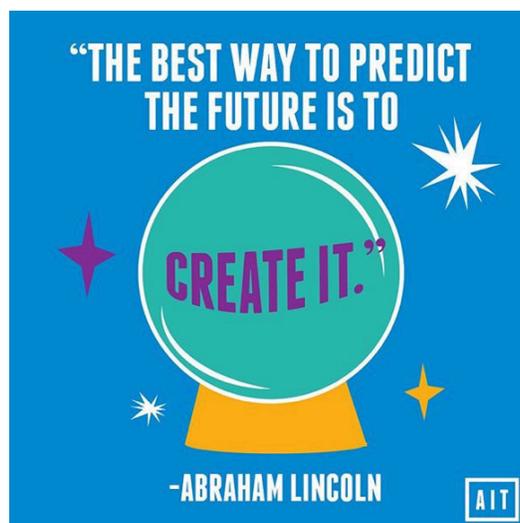
In Person Take 5 Spaces have the students go to a Take 5 set up space in the room. This space is designed by the teacher and is a comfortable atmosphere. Students will not need to ask for permission to Take 5, however they will need to indicate that they are doing so using a predetermined signal. Examples may be:

- Place a colored card on their desk before getting up
- Put a hand up with all 5 fingers showing and wait until non-verbal acknowledgement from the teacher
- A feeling word is demonstrated (on a note card or other) and placed on the students desk. This word is an indication of what the student is feeling to validate taking 5. When they return, they would flip the card and write how they are then feeling

Make sure there is a timer in the Take 5 Space and that students use it to monitor their use of the space.

## Creative things to do in an in person Take 5 Space

- Headphones are set up with instrumental music playing, drumming, and other rhythmic playlists can support student reset
- Coloring books and supplies
- Mandala tracing sheets or boards with stylists
- Puzzles that can be worked on by multiple students and overtime are complete
- Silly putty or other moldable, non toxic, product
- Random legos or other items that can be creatively put together, building on others' creations.



# Additional Resources

Reunite, Renew, and Thrive: SEL Roadmap for Reopening School:  
<https://casel.org/reopening-with-sel/>

Brains in Pain Can Not Learn:  
<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/brains-in-pain-cannot-learn-lori-desautels>

ANXIETY & THE AMYGDALA:  
<https://www.unlearninganxiety.com/amygdala>

Understanding the Stress Response:  
<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/understanding-the-stress-response>

Have No Fear, the Brain is Here! How Your Brain Responds to Stress:  
<https://kids.frontiersin.org/article/10.3389/frym.2017.00071>

Calming Your Brain During Conflict:  
<https://hbr.org/2015/12/calming-your-brain-during-conflict>

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