

Mindfulness and Social Emotional Learning for Anti-Racist Practices

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Overview

We will explore how, through authentic and collective mindfulness practices, modeling social and emotional competencies helps to build self identity, relationships and community based in anti-racist and anti-oppressive practices and systems.

Communal Norms

- Honor diverse ideas and discourse styles
- Trust that no one knows everything; together we know a lot; share what you know
- Breathe
- Land Acknowledgement

Before We Begin

BROOKLYN CENTER

PERSONAL+
COMMUNITY

WELLNESS

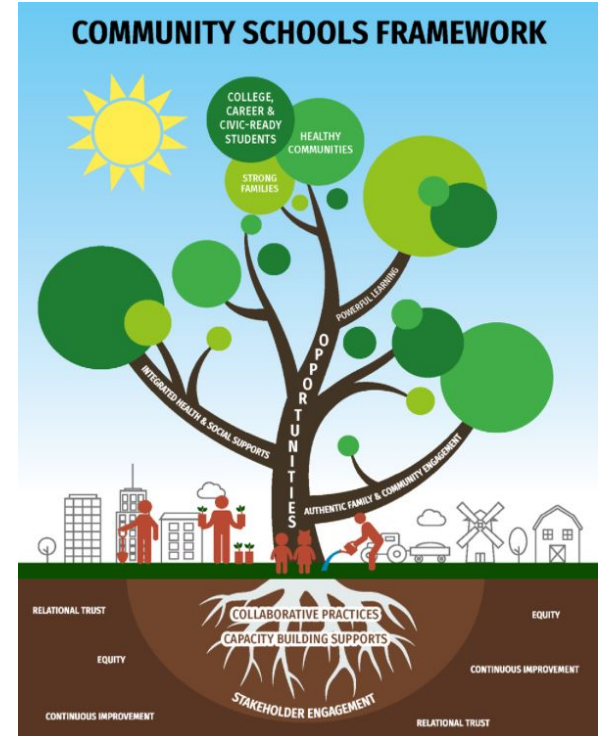
PDF of the slides

Speaker notes

Companion
Guide/Handbook

Mindfulness and Social Emotional Learning for Anti-Racist Practices: Community Schools

- Community Schools model: a strategy to provide robust and culturally relevant curricula, restorative practices, and to foster a healthy school climate
 - A method to advocate for justice in education, remove obstacles and eliminate oppression
- Recognizes that both academic and out-of-school factors influence student learning, development and wellbeing
- A comprehensive and effective equity strategy to provide all children with opportunities and supports that historically only some children have routinely experienced



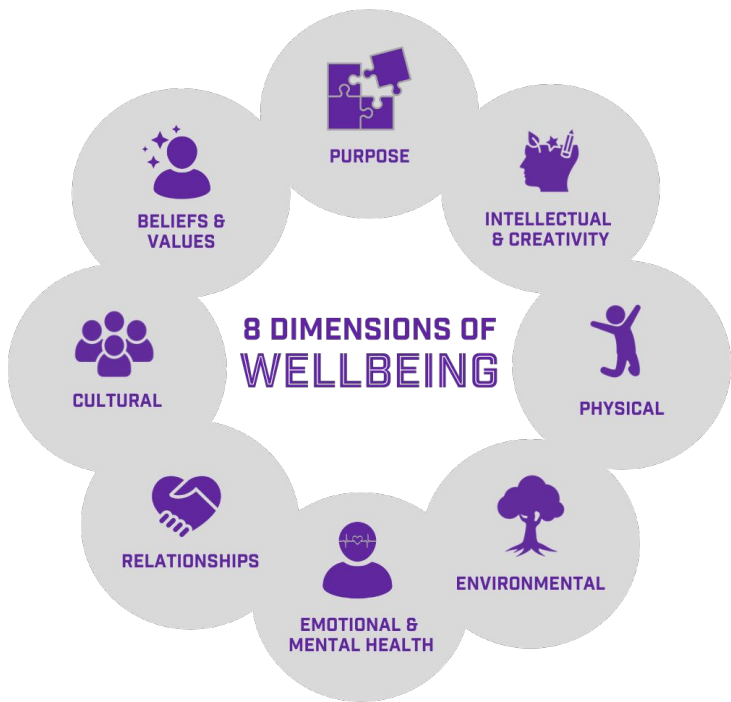
Mindfulness and Social Emotional Learning for Anti-Racist Practices: The WSCC Model



- The Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child model shows that developing children require multiple domains that interact with each other, in order for students to feel healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged.
- “Typically, SEL is practiced more heavily when working with youth. However, SEL is an important framework to implement throughout all developmental stages of life.”

Social Emotional Learning Handbook: Practical Applications for Trauma-Informed and Anti-Racist Social Emotional Learning in Educational and Communal Settings, Mykella Auld, Amy Bedford, Najlah Iqbal, and Nathan Wiesehan: University School Partners Team, School of Education, Loyola University Chicago, 2022

8 Dimensions of Wellness



PURPOSE: Participating in work and opportunities which provides satisfaction & life enrichment; Practices consistent with lifestyles, goals, needs



INTELLECTUAL & CREATIVITY: Feelings of agency, autonomy & efficacy; Curiosity & lifelong learning; Play and fun; Exploring creative outlets; Skills to manage monetary resources & realistic financial practices



PHYSICAL: Lifestyle Practices to fuel energy (nutrition, movement, rest, monitored screen time, etc.); Habits that help the body feel eased; Supporting the immune system; Respectful of all bodies and sizes



ENVIRONMENTAL: Respectful of surroundings and nature; Awareness of environment's effect on wellbeing; Collective relationships to and accountability for natural resources



EMOTIONAL & MENTAL HEALTH: Space to experience & express emotions; Practicing self care & expressing identities; Self esteem & acceptance; Feeling heard, understood; Sense of belonging; Resiliency & optimism; Sexuality



RELATIONSHIPS: Expressions of love & care; Developing trusting, meaningful & reciprocal relationships; Engaged in community; Holding space for others & engaging in healing practices; Awareness, understanding & accountability to diverse identities & backgrounds



CULTURAL: Affiliation & connection; Social & civic engagement & responsibility; Celebrations of seasons & traditions; Access to ancestral knowledge; Making informed financial decisions



BELIEFS & VALUES: Self reflection and self-awareness; Contributing beyond the self; Practicing gratitude; Feelings of hope, wonder, awe; Practices of worship, renewal or spirituality

Mindfulness

Awareness and acceptance of body, mind and emotional states and needs:

- Develops self-awareness
- Develops sense of interconnectedness
- Increases emotional regulation and mental focus
- Increases empathy

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Promotes intrapersonal, interpersonal, and cognitive competence (CASEL, 2017)

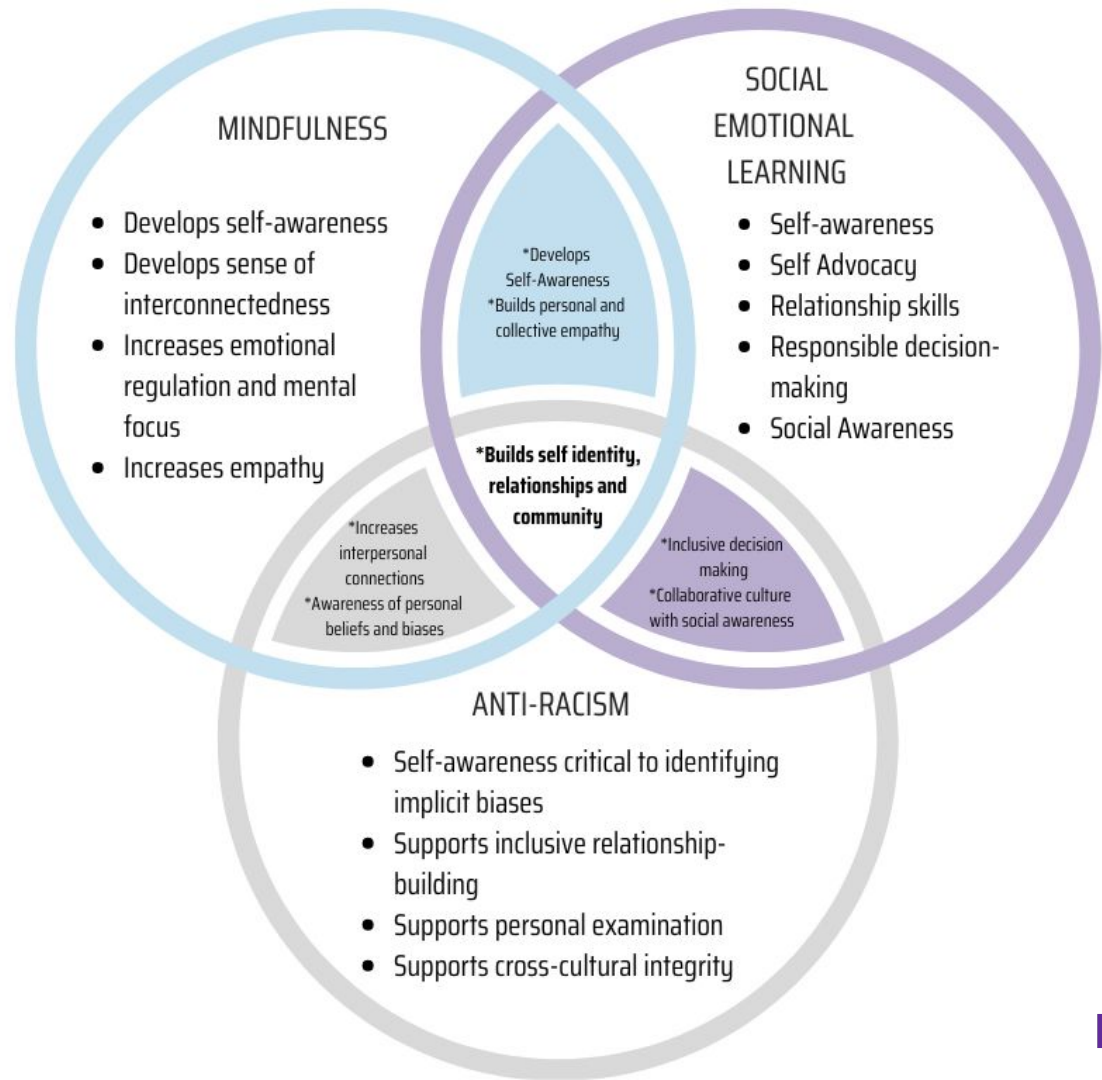
- Self-awareness
- Self-advocacy
- Relationship skills
- Responsible decision-making
- Social Awareness

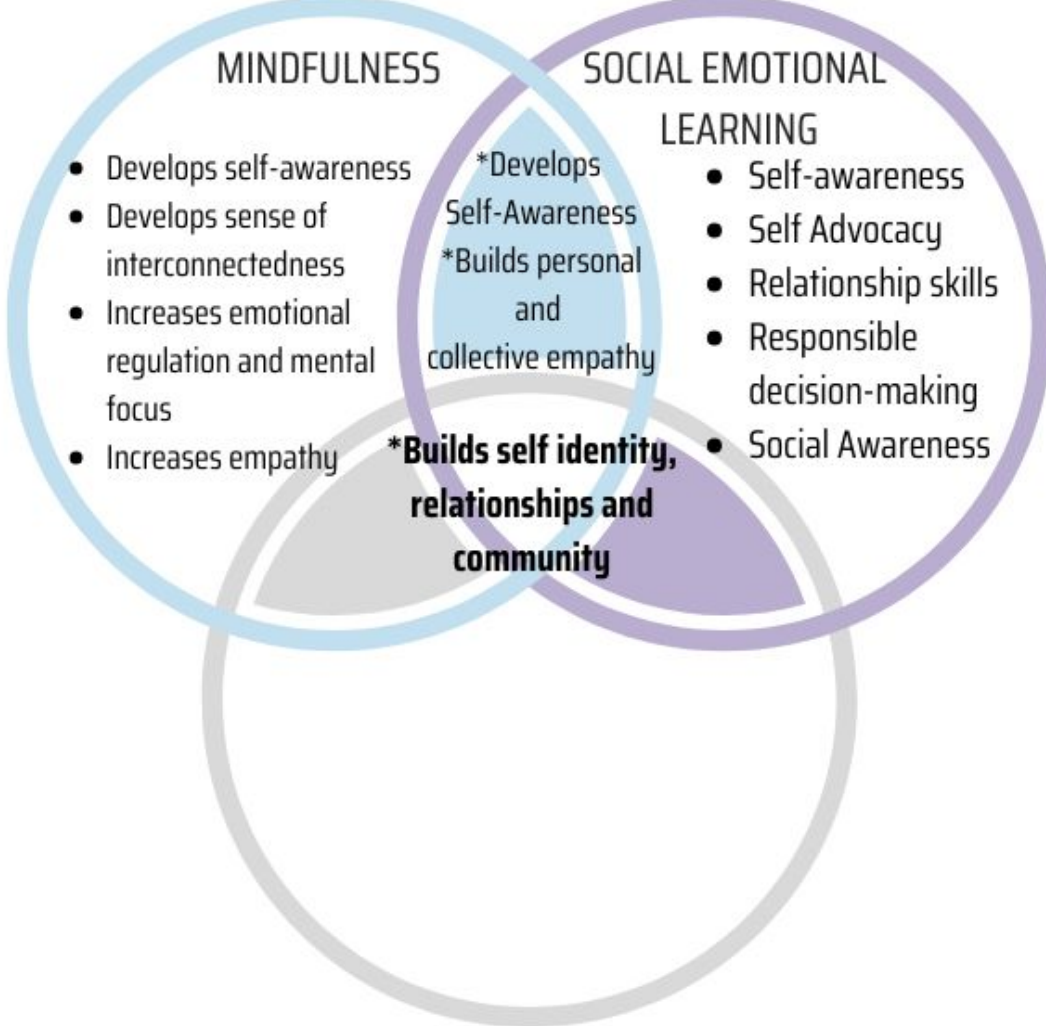
Anti-Racist Practices

Anti-Racist practices include the ability to learn from and relate respectfully with people of all cultures. (NCCrest, 2018)

- Self-awareness and personal examination to identify implicit biases
- Supports inclusive relationship-building
- Supports cultural appreciation
- Supports cross-cultural integrity

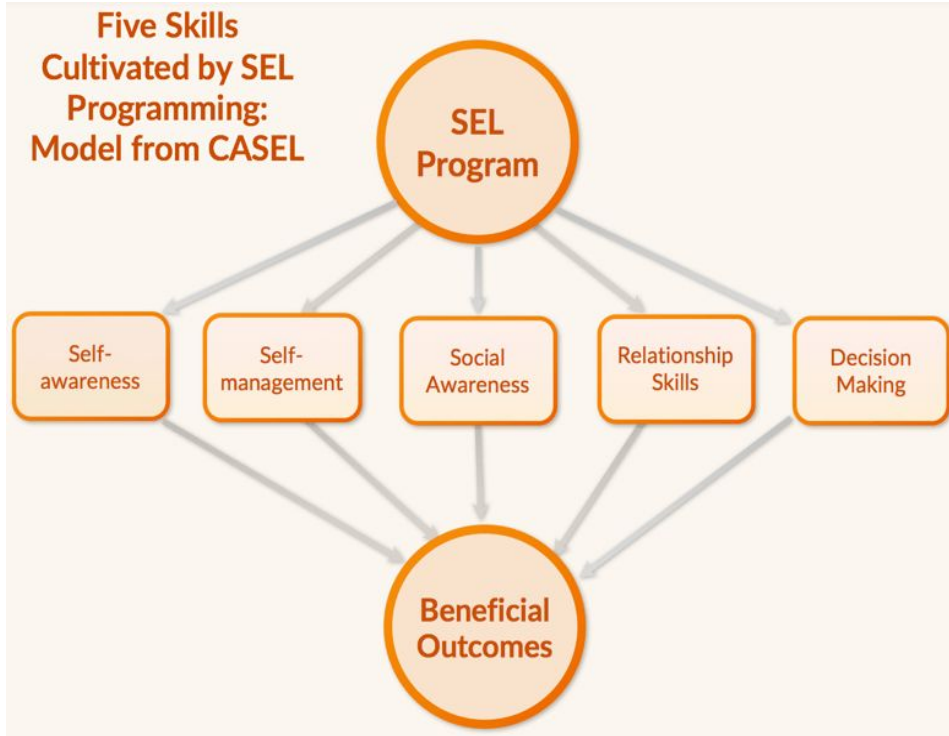
Social Emotional Learning - for youth and adults - in the education setting via utilization of mindfulness practices as a tool to dismantle racist systems and create anti-racist environments.





INTERCONNECTION: MINDFULNESS AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

SEL + Mindfulness

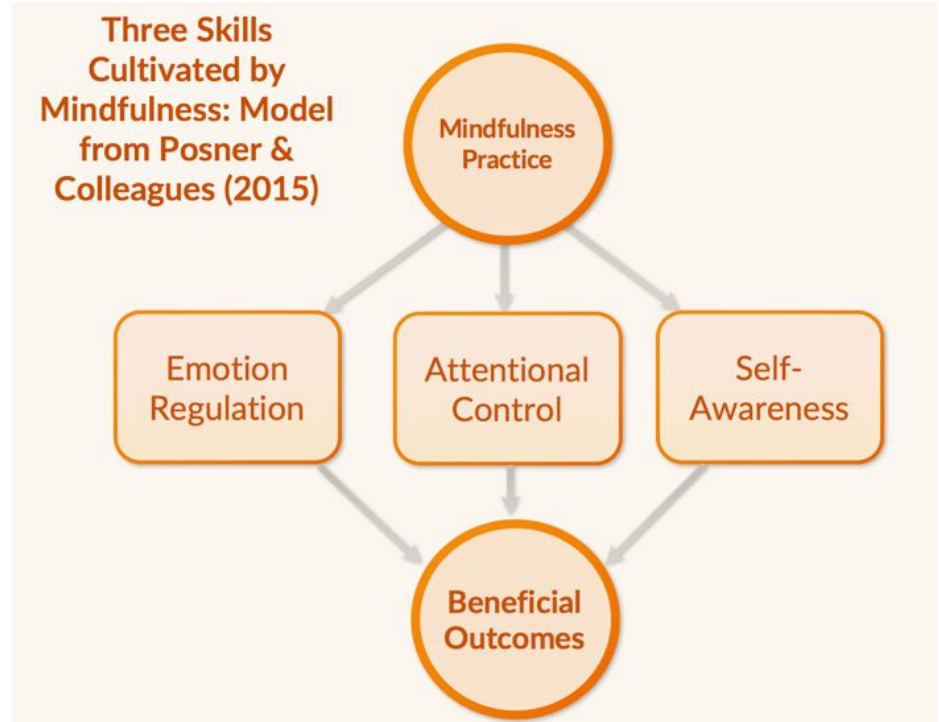


Mindfulness benefits include promoting prosocial attitudes that are core competencies of social-emotional learning and they must be modeled as well as taught.

Mindfulness + SEL

Mindfulness reveals life's struggles and suffering, its joy and love. The intimacy of our encounter with ourselves provides a deeper basis for self-compassion & empathy for others. Data supports this.

Mindfulness and empathy are also linked through their shared relationship with stress. Research shows that **mindfulness decreases stress and stress weakens empathy.**



SEL + Mindfulness: Impact on the Brain

Brain Functionality



Frontal Lobe

- problem solving
- creative thinking
- personality



Parietal Lobe

- visual functions
- reading
- understanding language



Temporal Lobe

- memories



Occipital Lobe

- vision



Brain Stem

- basic life functions



Cerebellum

- balance
- coordination
- motor learning

UPMC LIFE CHANGING MEDICINE

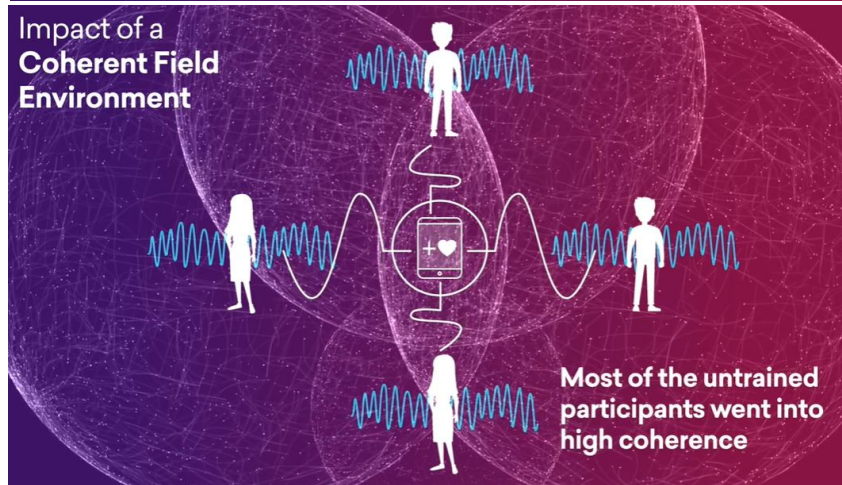
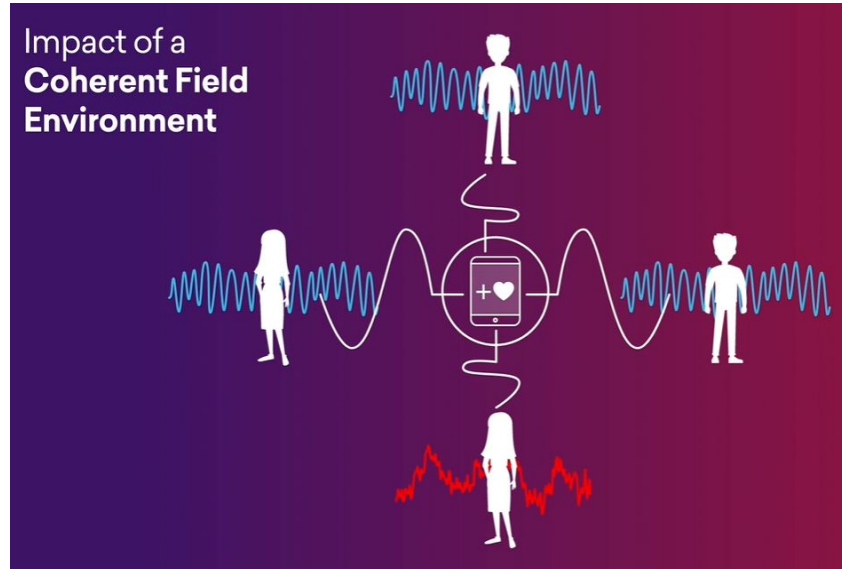
When the amygdala is activated from stress and trauma, the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex are not in control. We may be expecting people to learn, practice empathy and/or make socially-relevant decisions and their brains are not able to function accordingly.

1. The amygdala: Following sessions of mindfulness training, this part of the brain has been shown to be less activated.
2. The hippocampus: is more activated, and actually produces more gray matter density following mindfulness training.
3. The prefrontal cortex: This part of the brain is more activated and developed following mindfulness training.

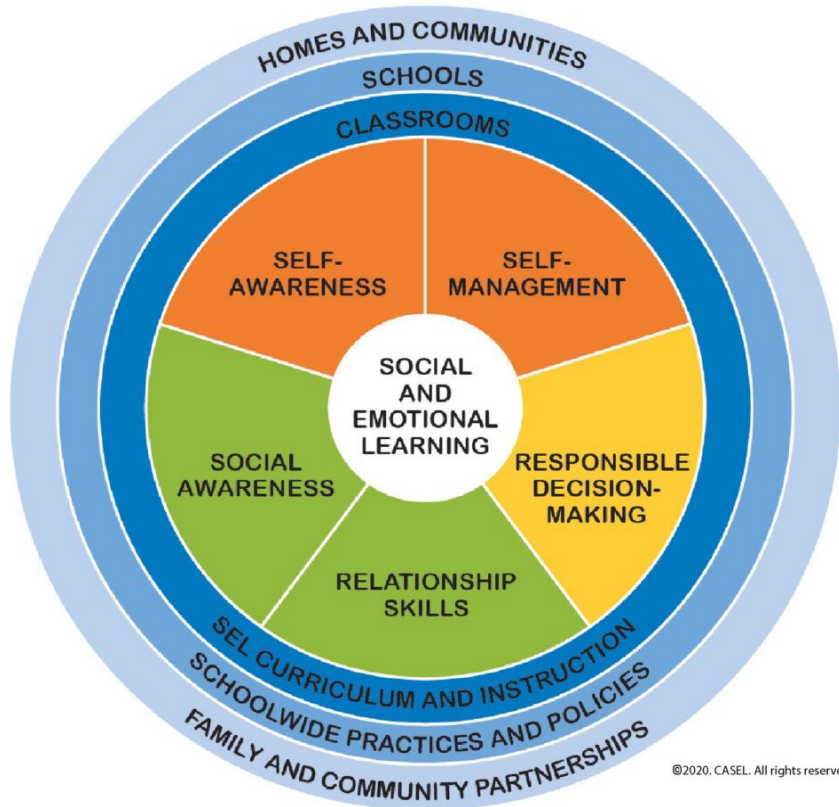
Mindfulness + SEL In Practice

Mindfulness and social awareness: Build personal coherence to support communal coherence

A consistent personal mindfulness practice can help staff to be better able to respond to student needs that may develop during a classroom practice.



Mindfulness + SEL

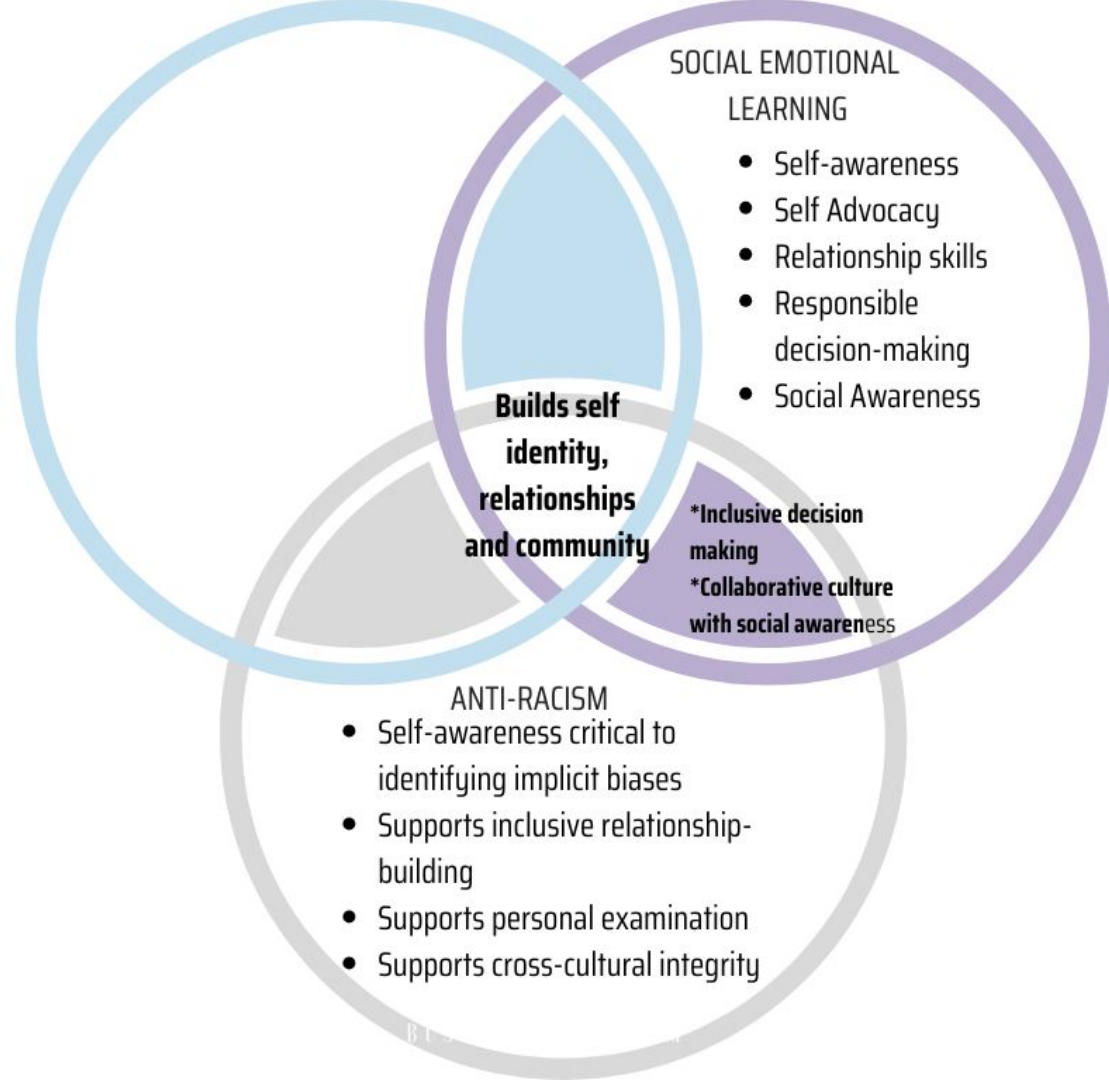


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A core competency of social-emotional learning is self-awareness; mindfulness increases self-awareness; anti-racist practices are rooted in self-awareness that supports identification of implicit biases.

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/fall-2017/mindful-of-equity>

INTER- CONNECTION: ANTI-RACISM AND SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING



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Anti-Racism + SEL



- SEL devoid of culturally-affirming practices and understandings does not embody what SEL is.
 - Rather than relying predominantly on individual skill development, creating empathic and responsive systems are more effective for improving educational outcomes of all identity groups.
- Educators can respond constructively across differences through identifying and interrupting microaggressions, engaging in restorative practices and building capacity to make amends.

SEL + Anti-Racism

Transformational social emotional learning won't happen without a culturally relevant starting point.

To advance equitable self-awareness for educators:

- Examine your own conscious and unconscious beliefs
- Develop a personal mindfulness and/or self-awareness development practice
- Consider whether your beliefs hold negative stereotypes about students' cultural and stylistic codes
- Adopt a socio-cultural, historic context to understand how students experience social inequities
- Help students make connections between curriculum and personal community and culture

Evidence-based classroom practices that promote equitable SEL:

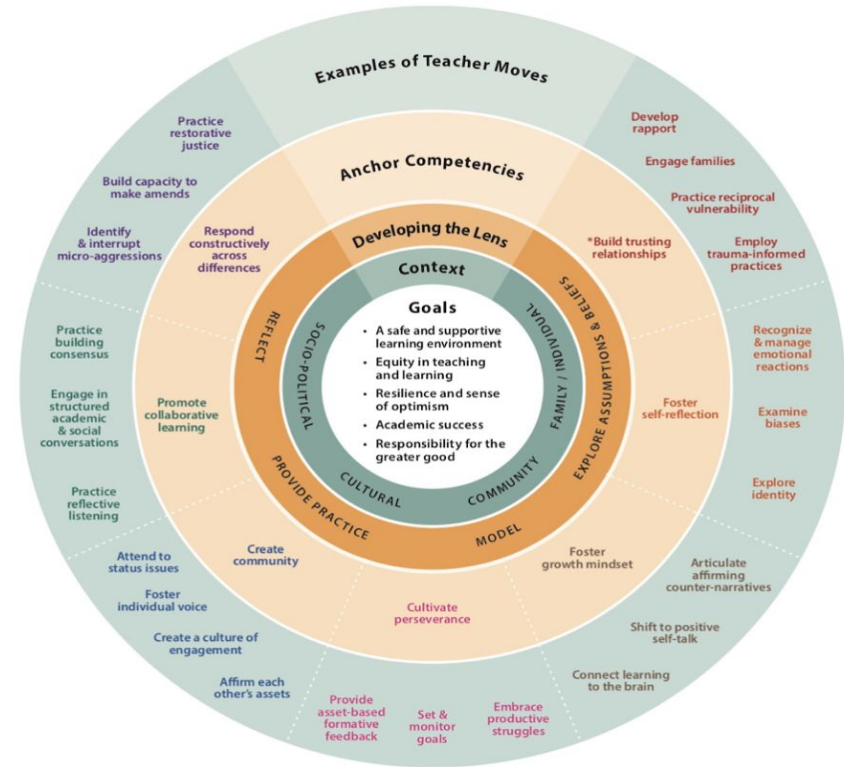
- Communal values and practices
- Critical consciousness
- Safe, healing spaces
- Cultural responsiveness
- School and community engagement



Seven Anchor Social, Emotional and Cultural Competencies

1. Build trusting relationships
2. Foster self-reflection
3. Foster growth mindset
4. Cultivate perseverance
5. Create community
6. Promote collaborative learning
7. Respond constructively across differences

Social, Emotional, and Cultural Anchor Competencies Framework



*Building trusting relationships is essential to the development of all anchor competencies.

Social-Emotional Learning Skills & Culturally Responsive Teaching



Classroom Strategies: Build Equity into SEL Efforts



Learn about families.

Talk with or collect surveys from families. Ask about family composition, language, values, traditions, and concerns to help you understand and connect with families and students on a more personal level and build on students' competencies.



Engage families in SEL.

Engage families in understanding the purpose of SEL and how it supports academic learning. Involve families in generating SEL goals for their children so that they can help their children meet these goals outside of the classroom.



Affirm diverse backgrounds and traditions.

Have students share and listen to others' experiences and values. This builds empathy and affirms the strengths of diversity in the classroom.



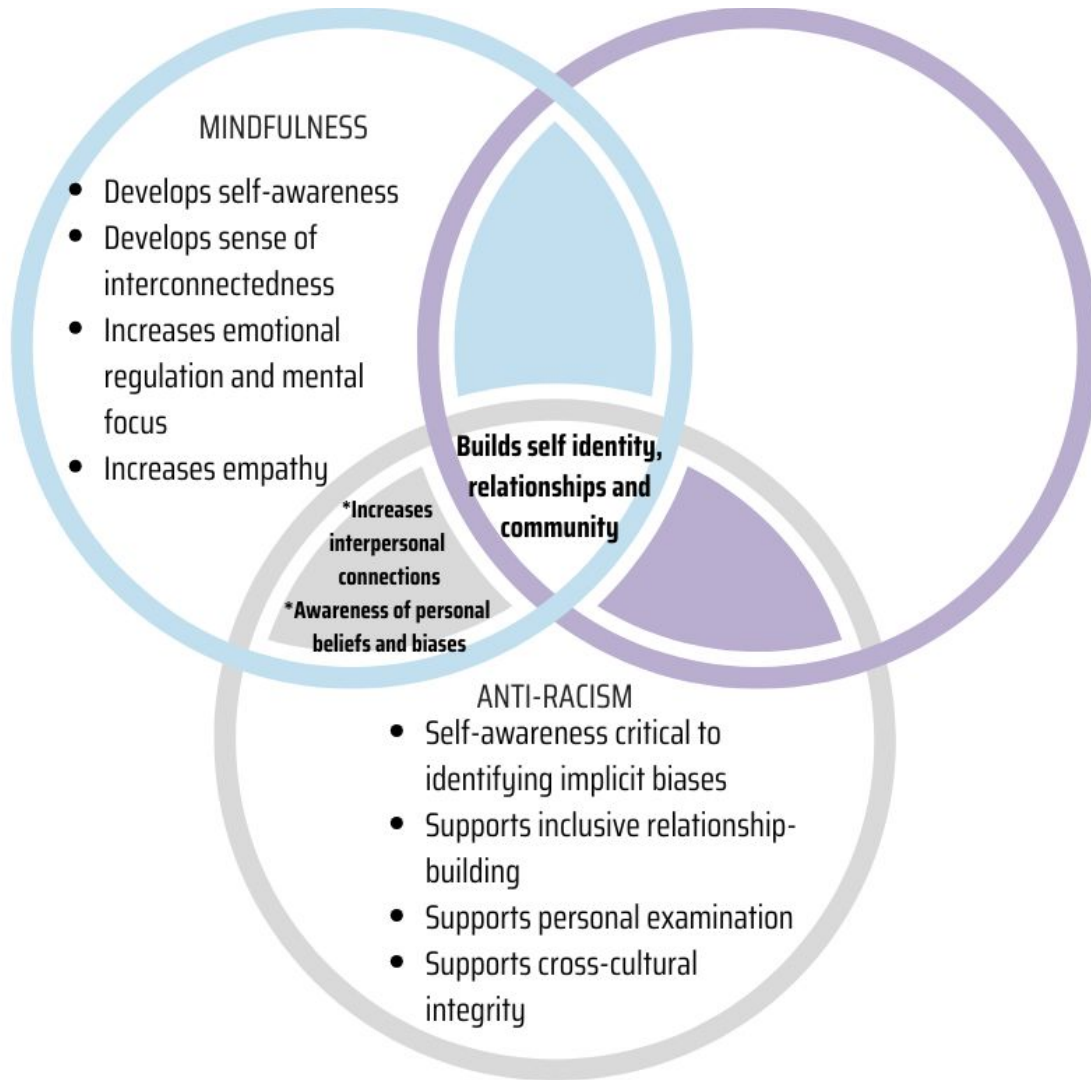
Use effective discipline practices.

Reduce and prevent the use of exclusionary discipline in your classroom. Teach students skills that help them take responsibility for their actions and manage their behavior in alignment with your SEL program.



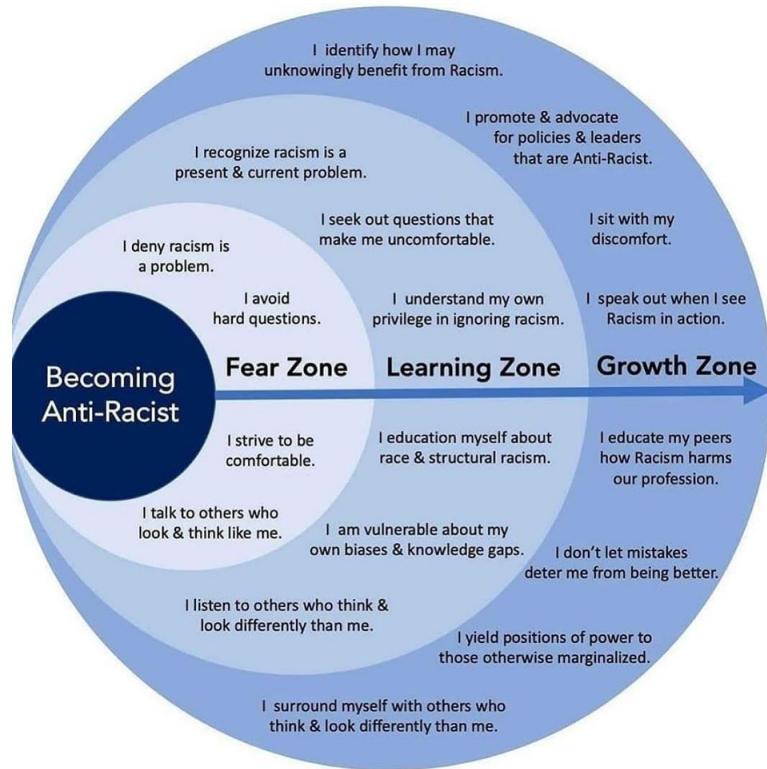
Don't forget your own social and emotional assets and needs.

Educators can experience stress from supporting students' social and emotional needs, managing behavior, and navigating student trauma. Regularly reflect on how you can leverage your assets to support SEL in your classroom and seek guidance and support from peers as needs arise.



INTER- CONNECTION: ANTI-RACISM AND MINDFULNESS

Anti-Racism + Mindfulness



“Mindfulness practiced by students may reduce some of the behaviors that lead to referrals, but it doesn’t address implicit biases in their teachers, which can harm students in numerous ways.”

- Educators must acknowledge - be aware of - their own biases and adopt practices that challenge systemic inequities
- Teach mindfulness as a tool to understand that our own well-being depends on the well-being of others due to systemic oppressive systems
- **Mindfulness has the potential to increase a sense of personal agency in all situations**

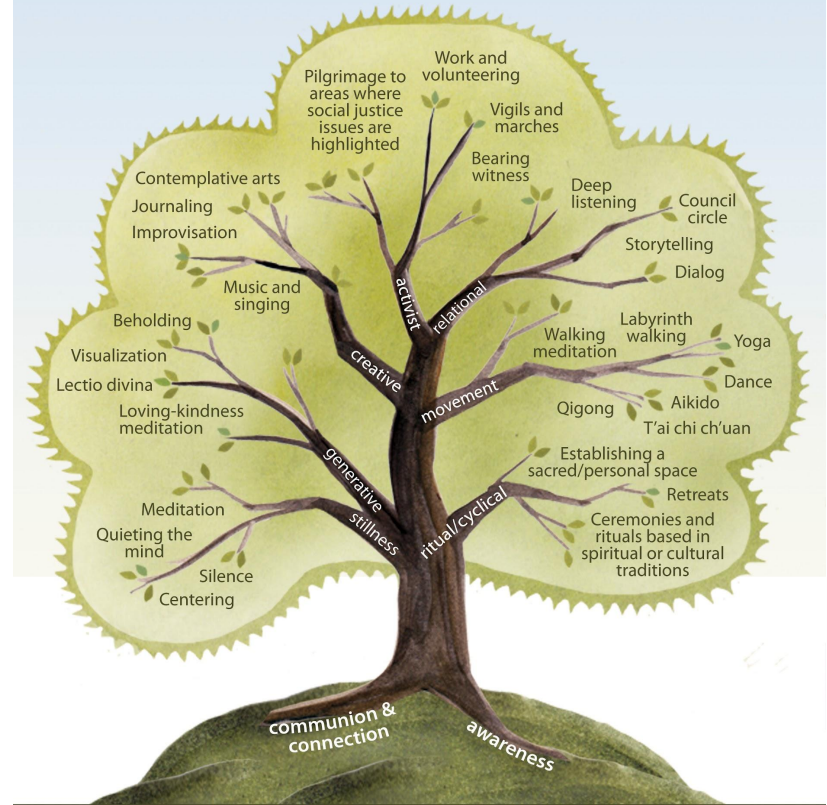
Mindfulness + Anti-Racism

‘While the practice is not magic, mindfulness can be one piece of a culturally responsive approach that equips staff and students with skills that can benefit them in multiple areas of life while supporting a school’s commitment to equity.’

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/fall-2017/mindful-of-equity>

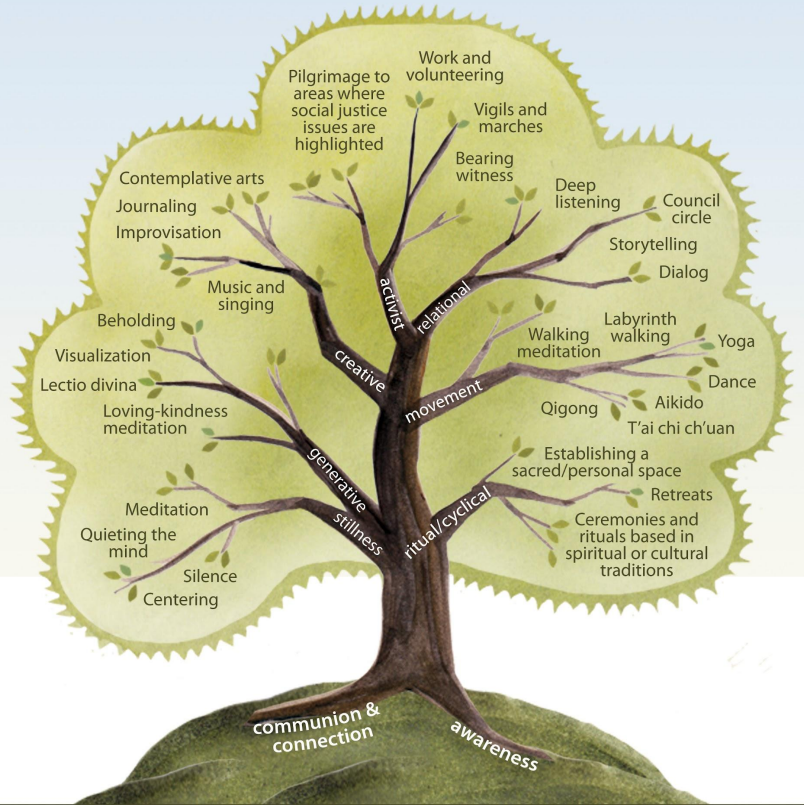


The Tree of Contemplative Practices



The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society
www.contemplativemind.org

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Mindful Reflection

Mindful reflection combined with anti-racist action have the greatest potential to build collective empowerment, and mediate a new standard for education.

“Emotions, such as anger, fear, happiness and sadness, are cognitive and physiological processes that involve both the body and mind”. As such, mindfulness can be highly valuable to students experiencing oppression, trauma, and emotional upheaval.

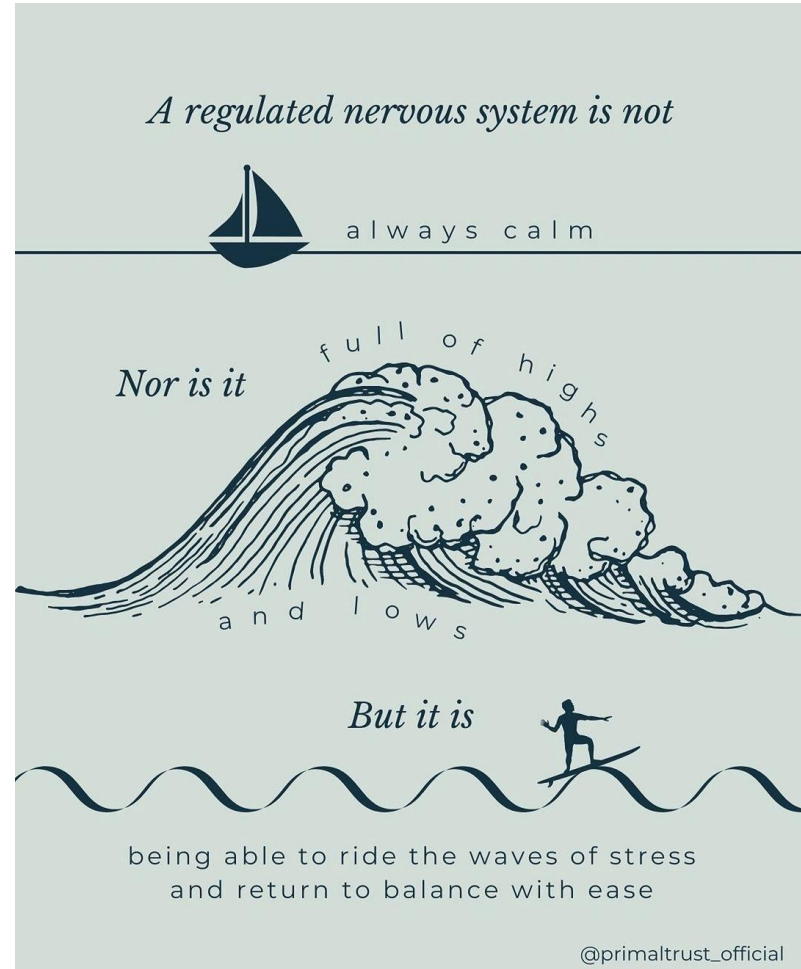
Mindfulness reflects a “problem-posing” education system, where staff and students learn to reflect.

<https://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2018/08/10/meditation-isnt-just-about-self-help-heres-what.html?cmp=eml-enl-eu-news2&M=58577581&U=1321823>
<https://crteducation.wordpress.com/mindfulness/>

Anti-Racism through Mindful Coherence

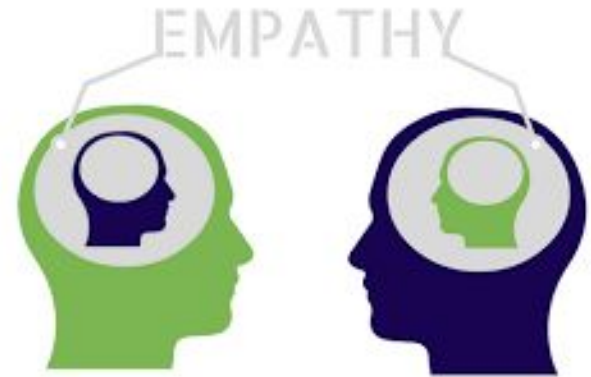
We need to tap into and FEEL the emotional core of the current systems, and build personal and collective coherence within the process, so we can experience or enact the transformation we know is necessary for a more just and equitable world.

“There cannot be any lasting or meaningful systemic change if we aren’t making room to feel and heal.” Lili Farhang, Human Impact Project

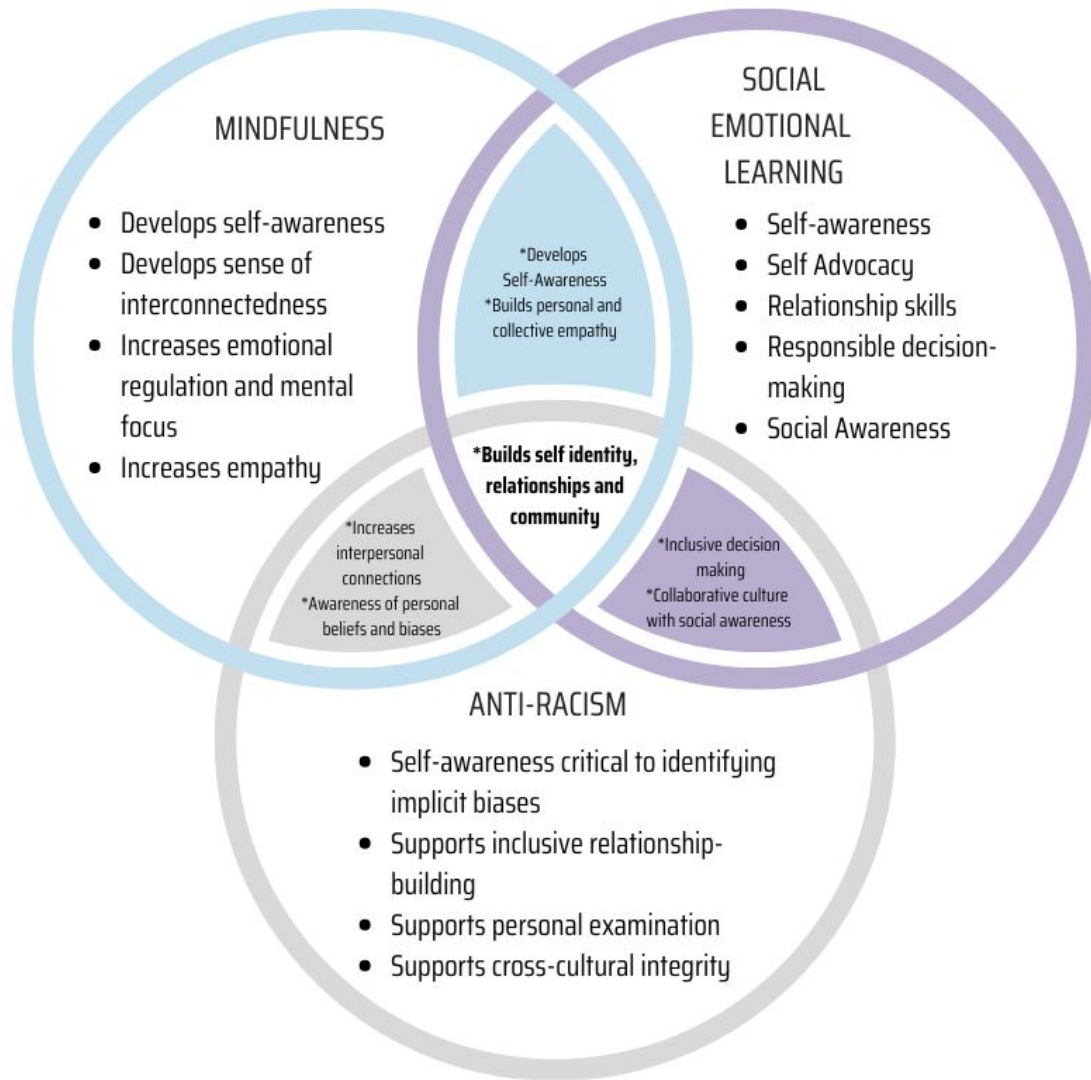


Empathy: Equity

- In order to build empathy, we must grow our awareness of and our capacity to understand others perspectives.
- Empathy (“to walk in someone else’s shoes”) presumes that we already know what it is like to walk in our own shoes.
- Empathy is profoundly beneficial in our efforts to understand someone else’s reality more clearly. Each of us has a role to play when our actions are motivated by a desire for justice.



ANTI-RACIST, SEL AND MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES, PRACTICES AND SKILLS



Resources

- Handbook
 - Practices
 - Activities
 - Research links
- Employee Wellbeing
 - [1:1 wellness sessions](#)
 - [Good Human Work](#)
 - [AllOne Health](#)
- PD trainings
- [Website resources](#)
- Classroom activities



The screenshot shows the Brooklyn Center Community Schools website. At the top left is the BCCS logo with the tagline "WE STAND FIGHT AND CENTER". To the right is the text "Brooklyn Center Community Schools" and two buttons: "District Home" and "Select a School". Below this is a breadcrumb trail: "Home > Community Schools > Wellness > Mindful Movement, SEL and Anti-Racist Practices". A purple "WELLNESS" button is visible. A list of links includes "Wellness in BCCS", "Classroom Celebrations and Events", "Farm to School", "[Mindful Movement, SEL and Anti-Racist Practices](#)", "Nutrition", "Physical Activity", "Rewards and Incentives", "School Events and Fundraisers", "Smart Snacks and Nutrition Promotion", "Wellness Committee", and "Wellness Projects with Partners". The main content area is titled "Mindful Movement, Social-Emotional Learning and Anti-Racist Practices" and is divided into three columns: "Mindful Movement", "Social-Emotional Learning", and "Anti-Racist Practices".

Brooklyn Center Community Schools
WE STAND FIGHT AND CENTER

Brooklyn Center
Community Schools

District Home Select a School

Home > Community Schools > Wellness > Mindful Movement, SEL and Anti-Racist Practices

WELLNESS

Wellness in BCCS

Classroom Celebrations and Events

Farm to School

[Mindful Movement, SEL and Anti-Racist Practices](#)

Nutrition

Physical Activity

Rewards and Incentives

School Events and Fundraisers

Smart Snacks and Nutrition Promotion

Wellness Committee

Wellness Projects with Partners

Mindful Movement

Mindful movement incorporates movement and breathing together to help both teachers and students to increase concentration, lessen emotional reactivity and increase positive relationships within the classroom. Our teachers participate in training where they learn the concepts of mindful movement and how to first develop a personal practice and then introduce it in the classroom as life-long tool for students to elevate their voice, culture and emotional autonomy. Mindful movement benefits include promoting social attitudes, such

Social-Emotional Learning

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is implemented in BCCS through curriculum and instruction. However, the Wellness Committee supports SEL skill-building for adults and students, through the understanding that, "All learning is social and emotional - even for adults." (CASEL, 2020). One of five core competencies of social-emotional learning is self-awareness; anti-racist practices are rooted in self-awareness that supports identification of implicit biases. We understand that SEL interventions need to be culturally

Anti-Racist Practices

We believe that we must implement practices that disrupt systemic inequities and challenge personal biases in order to create anti-racist systems and empathetic environments as an effective method for improving education outcomes for each student. Knowing that unjust and racist systems create stress and dis-ease for all in the community (including the oppressed, the oppressors and the silently complicit), the BCCS District Wellness Committee is committed to implementing policy and programs to dismantle inequities and create an inclusive community.



BC

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