Creating a Culture of Care in Education

The Consortium for Public Education

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CHRISTINA PATE, PHD

Deputy Director
cpate@wested.org

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Agenda

Introduction and background

Brain science and strategies

Q & A and discussion

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Polls

How prepared do you feel to address the existing (and continuing) wave of stress and even trauma of education stakeholders?
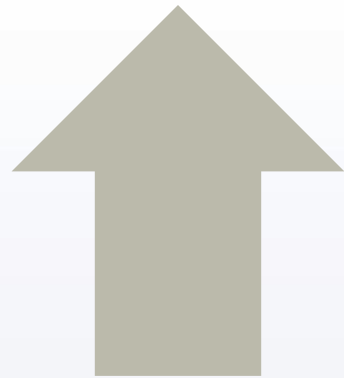
5 – Totally Prepared

4 – Somewhat Prepared

3 – Fairly Unprepared

2 – Totally Unprepared

1 – N/A

In terms of YOUR Wellness, How would you rate YOUR stress level?

5 – Totally Prepared

4 – Somewhat Prepared

3 – Fairly Unprepared

2 – Totally Unprepared

1 – N/A

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Two Crises, Two Narratives

For Some…

↑ Anxiety, Fear, Stress

↓ Proximity to School Support Networks

For Others…

↑ Agency, Purpose, Leadership

↓ Proximity to School Support Networks

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The North Star

Safe and supportive *relationships* and *environments* promote resilience, provide protective factors, and create the conditions in which every person — regardless of age — can learn, grow, and thrive.

What do we need to reconsider, rethink, and revise as schools move forward?

Kleim & Connell, 2004; Lenzi et al., 2017

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Self-Care FIRST!

Many definitions exist, but self-care generally refers to:

- Providing adequate attention to one's own physical and psychological health and wellness

- Taking an active role to preserve, protect, or improve one's own health and well-being

It has also been described as an "ethical imperative" in many helping professions

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Self-Care: Why?

Burnout and Retention

Student Outcomes

Teacher-Student Relationships

Empathy for Self and Others; Vicarious Stress and Trauma

Exacerbated by Shifts to Distance Learning & Other Current Stressors

We put students at the center of learning –

so why should we make educators' self-care a priority?

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Consider One Important Process – 3 Steps – in This Order!

Regulate: physically and emotionally calm and settled

Relate: socially and emotionally connected through safe and supportive relationships attuned to needs

Reason: ready and able to engage in teaching and learning

Perry, 2017

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Additional Polls

Does your agency have a training plan in place to address education stakeholders' dysregulation?

– Yes
– No
– I don't know – N/A

How prepared do you feel to build and maintain relationships virtually or socially distanced?

– Totally Prepared

– Somewhat Prepared

– Fairly Unprepared

– Totally Unprepared

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Regulate

Regulation looks different for everyone.

Regulating activities for students may differ from those that help adults or make them feel comfortable.

This may also differ across races and cultures.

Consider your biases and work toward developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive practices.

Pate, 2020; Perry, 2017

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Regulate (continued)

Begin meetings, classes or lessons with grounding and centering exercises.

Create structure and consistency: re-establish or co-create new routines and expectations.

Create safe and welcoming rituals through a staff-centered lens for leaders and student-centered for educators.

Pate, 2020; Perry, 2017

GROUNDING EXERCISES

STRUCTURE AND CONSISTENCY

RITUALS

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Regulate (continued)

BREAKS

SELF-AWARENESS

SELF-REGULATION

VOICE AND CHOICE

Create more opportunities for breaks and physical activity.

Encourage self-awareness by creating opportunities to communicate feelings.

Promote self-regulation by providing relaxing and calming activities or invigorating activities. Consider various sensory needs.

Offer meaningful opportunities to express voices and make choices.

Pate, 2020; Perry, 2017; Zarate, Maggin, & Passmore, 2019

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Let's Discuss *Regulate*! Type Into the Chat Box

Which *Regulate* Strategies Already Work for You?

What Is Challenging?

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Relate – Behavior

**Behavior Is Communication!**

Fight, flight, or freeze responses may look like defiance, noncompliance, or task avoidance
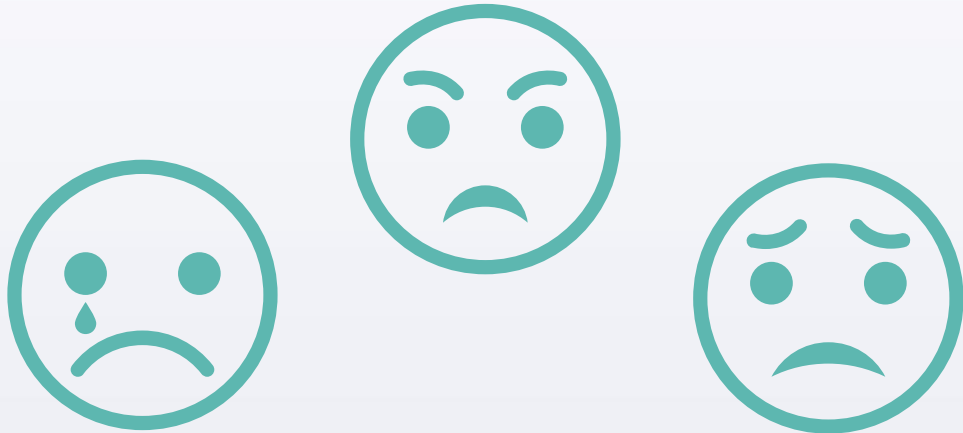
Consider how you perceive and respond to challenging behaviors:

- Reframe
- Respond versus react
- Consider biases and apply culturally responsive practices

Pate, 2020; Perry, 2017

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Relate
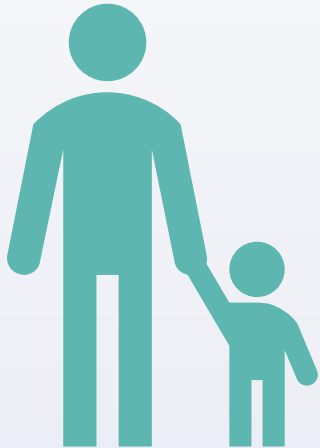
Be intentional about creating space and opportunities for healthy interactions.

Model and explicitly address the importance of safe and supportive social connections.

Ensure consistent connections to a caring, reliable adult.

- Similarly, ensure that new staff are connected to a buddy or a mentor.

- Also, ensure that families are connected to either a staff member or a fellow family.

Kleim & Connell, 2004; Lenzi et al., 2017; Pate, 2020

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Relate (continued)

Greet staff and students by name and with a smile or emoji.

Plan activities that allow for interaction.

Emphasize well-being over work or academics.

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Relate – Boundaries

Find a place where you can be alone, even for a brief moment.

Communicate when you need space. Create a norm and normalize this.

Communicate when you need connection. Ask others if there are ways to connect that respect their needs and boundaries.

Respect each other's needs to protect health by limiting physical touch.

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Let's Discuss *Relate*! Type Into the Chat Box

Which *Relate* Strategies Already Work for You?

What Is Challenging?

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Reason

Be realistic and gentle about creating a "new normal"

Support executive functioning and self-management skills by breaking work into smaller pieces

Before discussions, emails, texts, activities, and videos, ensure that they are not activating for staff (and students/families)

Create opportunities for voice, choice, agency, and leadership

Kleim & Connell, 2004; Lenzi et al., 2017; Pate, 2020; Perry, 2017; Zarate, Maggin, & Passmore, 2019

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Reason – Mindsets for Self- & Collective Care

Thoughts and Feelings

Calm and Focused

Self-storytelling

Contagious Emotions

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Reason – Mindsets for Self- & Collective Care
(continued)

Flexible and Adaptable

Solution-Focused

Pessimism to Optimism

Opportunities and Meaning

Gratitude

Compassion for Self and Others

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Reason – Boundaries

Validate and accept your own feelings without judgment.

- Understand that others' thoughts, emotions, and reactions or responses are their own and their responsibility, not yours.

Approach interactions with **curiosity** and **openness** (versus defensiveness).

Respect others' decisions, but know what's right for you.

Have compassion for yourself and others – no need to judge.

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Reason – Boundaries (continued)

Create communication norms and expectations – for yourself, colleagues, students, and families.

- Provide clear and consistent messaging to staff (and students/families). Elicit feedback. Ensure communication is reciprocal.

- Be clear about when you are available and when you are not. We all need boundaries. Set official work hours. Set virtual travel hours.

- Create schedules for clarity and stability – for yourself and others.

- Create a workspace for yourself.

- Take more breaks. Schedule breaks.

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Reason – Boundaries (continued)

Monitor the **amount** and **type** of information you take in.

Be a critical consumer of information.

Set boundaries with yourself and others.

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Let's Discuss *Reason*! Type Into the Chat Box

Which *Reason* Strategies Already Work for You?

What Is Challenging?

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When to Seek Help for Yourself and Colleagues

Friends, families, and colleagues can be a great source of support when you're feeling stressed or down.
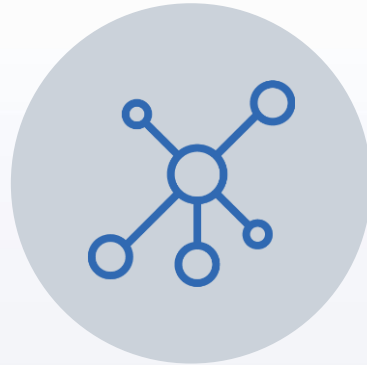
A low mood or some anxiety is normal but intense, persistent, or prolonged feelings of hopelessness, despair, or anxiety are not.

Seek professional help if you feel your fear or hopelessness is significantly disrupting daily functioning.

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Conclusion and Thoughts

QUESTIONS?

CONNECTIONS?

INSIGHTS?

Thank you!

selcenter@wested.org

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