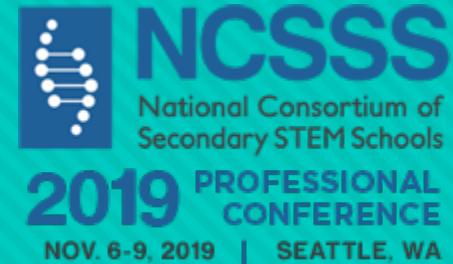


Educator Stress: Finding Solutions to Combat Negativity, Exhaustion, and Burnout

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Who We Are

Kevin Kusy

- Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor
- School Counselor
- Doctoral Student
- Future Educator

Sarah O'Leary-Driscoll

- Educator
- Researcher
- Mental Health officianado

Habits of Mind of a Teacher

What are habits of mind necessary for effective teaching?

- high levels of uncertainty
- attention to others
- mental flexibility
- emotion regulation
- relationship management skills
- working with conflict creatively
- being resilient after conflicts
- practicing forgiveness and relationship reengagement after conflict.

Easy, right?

Current Statistics Around Teacher Retention

Stress:

- Between 25% and 30% of teachers rate their jobs as either very or extremely stressful
- Up to 30 percent of teachers leave in first five years
- 84 percent leave voluntarily
- only 26% of teachers—compared to 54% of other public employees—continue to work until the normal retirement age

Reasons for Leaving:

- Lack of resources
- Low pay
- Poor political environment
- Poor preparation for job
- Too much teaching to the test and emphasis on testing students

Does this sound like you?

- You're a teacher who puts everyone else's needs before your own
- You never have enough time and energy for everything, and only what's left over belongs to you
- You know you need to prioritize self-care but just haven't been able to create habits that you can stick with long-term

"It's not hard to make the assumption that the only way to be successful as a teacher is to put your students' achievement before everything else in your life. If the kids — that is, other people's kids — aren't your #1 priority, if you're not working 24/7 for them, then you're letting everyone down and your students won't be successful."

What we deal with

Stress

- Pressure or tension experienced
- Mental or emotional strain
 - Resulting from demanding circumstances
- Can be motivational or detrimental

Burnout

- Chronic feelings of emotional exhaustion or fatigue
- Negative attitudes towards students
- Lack of feeling accomplished on the job

Compassion Fatigue

- Excessive caring of others
 - In helping fields, associated with shared trauma

Why Does it Happen?

We:

- Tend to be high achievers, Compulsive, and Perfectionistic
- We think busy is normal.
- We don't realize how dire the situation really is.
- Have a hard time saying no to people and things we care about.

We deal with:

- Exhaustion
- Imbalanced personal life
- Being Overloaded with work
- Lack of support systems
- Frustrations with stagnation

Screening Assessment

Please take the assessment being handed out

- Upon completion, a scoring chart will be provided
 - Please take a minute to reflect on your score
 - What are the overall scores, but what areas are higher/lower than others, if any?

Discussion

Please connect with a small group around you and share some of your thoughts with others

- What is your level of self awareness? What did you find out about the following?
 - Level of vigor
 - Level of dedication
 - Level of absorption
- Did anything surprise you from the assessment?
- What challenges stand in your way in improving your scores?
- What kinds of supports do you need to help you? How can you help support each other?

Sharing Perspectives and Ideas

Importance: Research

The relevant question asks participants to rate to what extent health and/or mental health problems have affected their productivity at work from 0 (no effect on my work) to 10 (completely prevented me from working) over the previous four working weeks. Measured as “presenteeism”

- Low teacher well being = high presenteeism
- High teacher presenteeism = lower student well being
- Poor teacher well being = higher absenteeism
- Connection between teacher presenteeism, student well being, and psychological difficulties in students
- Poor well being and depressive symptoms in teachers = less able to engage in positive classroom and behavior management or be more likely to display negative emotions or behaviors

Self Care

Self-care is any activity that we do deliberately in order to take care of our mental, emotional, and physical health. It is key to improved mood and reduced anxiety and important for a good relationship with oneself and others.

It should be:

Something you do not have to force yourself to do (do not enjoy it)

Something you want to and can realistically maintain permanently

Something that has a meaningful impact on your well being

How do we improve?

Personal

- Develop a self-care plan
- Addressing own mental health
 - Take time to reflect and learn about self
 - Make use of supports available
 - Realize when “typical” teacher stress becomes something more serious like depression or other conditions and get appropriate help

4 STEPS TO CREATING HABITS OF SELF-CARE

1. Build in rest as a catalyst for productivity, not a break from it.
2. Streamline your schedule by doing fewer things, better.
3. Pair a self-care habit with your regular routine so it becomes automatic.
4. Focus on the habit of the habit: value right actions over right results.

How do we Improve?

In the Classroom: some ideas

- Breathe!
- Accept imperfection
- Talk about it –
 - Admit challenges
 - Ask your students how they are
 - be an example and a collaborator on hard days; “WE can do this”
- Take a break; side step in conversation; stretch
- Plan ahead so time can be spent working smarter, not harder
- Use class time creatively to lessen some of the out of class work work for you (peer review, etc)

Sarah's 5 Step Program:

- Take a moment to quiet the “Squirrels”
- Consider your goals for the day
- Look at yourself, your attitude, the emotion you are exuding, and your carriage
- Look at yours students and sense their “vibe”
- Engage!

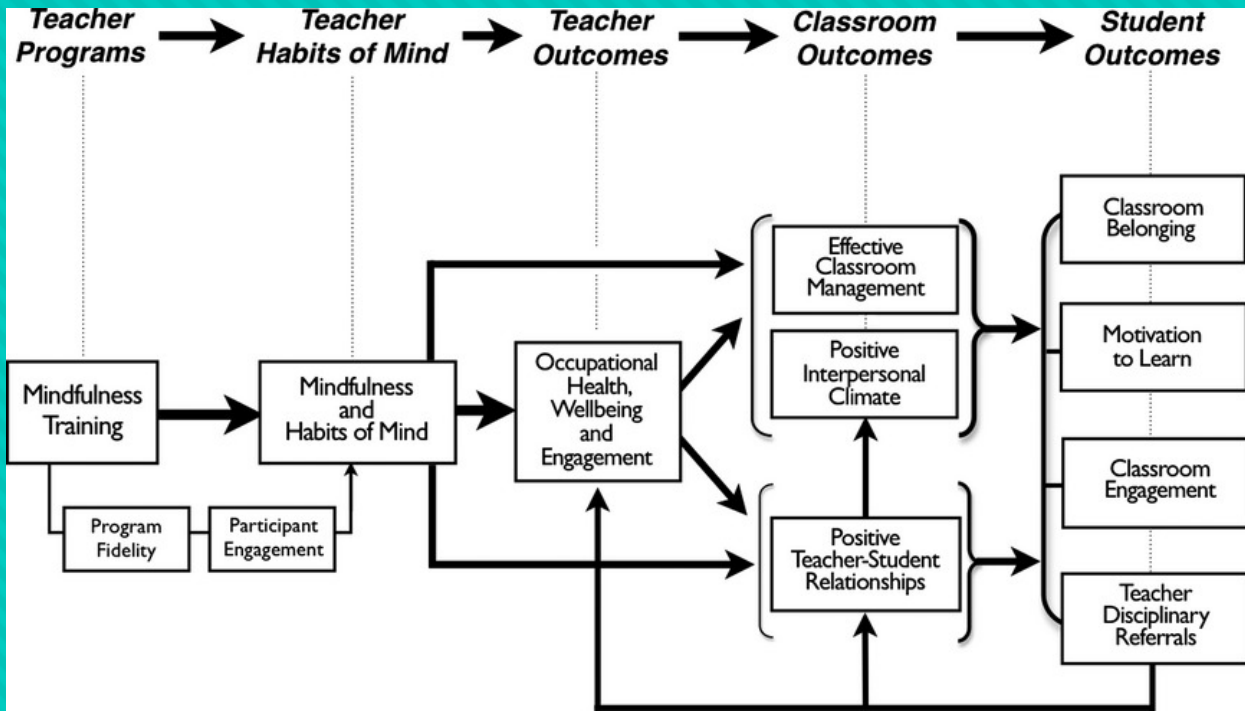
How do we improve?

Mindfulness

Training:

- explicit instruction on emotions and stress, and on how to use mindfulness to regulate emotions and stress more effectively

Teaching, learning and leading may not be solely emotional practices, but they are always irretrievably emotional in character, in a good way or a bad way, by design or default. Studies showing that mindfulness training (MT) with adults can help with stress reduction, emotion regulation, health, and prosocial dispositions. This can better prepare them for the demands of the job and help them to lead by example.



Mindfulness Training for students can add to the success.

Mindfulness Training Model for Teachers and Students

How can we Improve?

Organizational level

- Addressing student mental health
 - Research states better teacher wellbeing with better student wellbeing
 - Utilize parents and community resources
- Develop a mentoring program or support structure for faculty and staff
- Address challenges faculty face (excess duties, too little time, lack of support etc) to support their well being

Your ideas and Questions?

Please share!

Contact Us

We will submit an updated pwpt with additional resources for the NCSSS app.

FB Group: Teacher Wellness: Research, Resources, and Ranting

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/teacherwellnessR3/>

If you would like to email us:

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