

An aerial photograph of a blue body of water, possibly a lake or a large river, with several small boats visible. The water is a deep blue, and the boats are small, dark shapes scattered across the surface. The overall scene is calm and serene.

Learning from Losing:

Building reflection and resilience after challenges

Presented by: Monica Ruppert & Stephanie Benson-Gonzales

University of Wisconsin–Madison

Tuesday, November 13, 2018



Road Map



- Session outcomes
- Community building
- Research and peer-reviewed best practices
- Well-being strategies
- Individual and small group reflection
- Large group share-out and closing

Session Outcomes



In this session, we will...

- ...challenge the perception that no other colleagues “fail,” and that we have to be “perfect” in our work with parents and families.
- ...discuss the science of well-being and strategies for building resilience.
- ...reflect on past, present and/or future work experiences and consider how we might apply well-being strategies to our work.
- ...leave with knowledge and tools to support our well-being.

Building Community



➤ Who we are

➤ Who you are

- Introduce yourselves to 1-2 people that you don't already know with the following:
 - Name, gender pronouns
 - Institution, location, role
 - What brought you to this session?
 - What you're hoping to get out of this session?



Reflection



➤ Community Guidelines:

- 1. Space for productive solutions, not complaints
- 2. Normalize our *own* experiences

➤ What was a recent time when you experienced a mistake, loss or challenge in your work?

- How did you process it afterwards?
- Did it affect your work or wellbeing?
- What worked well about how you processed it, and what are areas of growth for how you can process and proceed from similar situations?

Learning from Losing



Accept it.

Talk about it (if needed).

Laugh at it (when appropriate).

Learn from it.

Build wellbeing and resilience from it.

Well-Being Research and Key Takeaways



➤ Background and [video](#)

➤ Research suggests...

- We can train the brain to benefit our well-being
- Well-being is a skill that we can learn, like riding a bike
- There is no one-size-fits-all approach

(Center for Healthy Minds, 2015)

➤ How do we know this?

➤ Neuroplasticity

- The brain can change in response to experience and training

➤ Epigenetics

- Think of our genes as having “volume controls”
- Data show how a mom treats her child will induce certain changes in gene expression

➤ Bidirectional communication between mind/brain and body

- There is a connection between our psychological well-being and physical health

➤ Innate basic goodness

(Davidson, "The Science of a Happy Mind", 2016)

Cultivating Resilience



➤ So, what constitutes a healthy mind?

- Awareness
- Insight
- Connection
- Purpose

(Center for Healthy Minds, "Why Well-Being?", 2015)

➤ Practices

- Breath counting (awareness)
 - (Hays, 2015)
- Self-compassion break (insight)
 - (Neff, n.d.)
- Compassion meditation (connection)
 - (Hays, 2015)
- 5-3-1 Practice (purpose)
 - (Mirgain, 2015)

Find more at centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement

Reflection



➤ Practice

➤ Prolonging positive emotion and having a positive outlook have been shown to improve psychological well-being. What are three good things that happened to you this week?

Ø Research suggests that cultivating purpose may also promote well-being. How do you define your purpose?

Ø How do you focus on the present moment? What obstacles make doing so difficult at times? How might you address these obstacles?

Ø Do you have any of your own best practices for practicing self-care or building resilience in your work?

Ø Application

Ø How can you use any of these practices to grow/build resilience from either the past experience you reflected on earlier, or a future experience?

Ø Call to Action: How will you remind yourself to incorporate these wellbeing practices into your everyday work?

Closing thoughts



Ø“Perfectionism is a twenty-ton shield that we lug around thinking it will protect us when, in fact, it’s the thing that’s really preventing us from flight.”

— Brené Brown, *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed to Be and Embrace Who You Are* (Brown, 2010)

Sources



Brown, B. (2010, August 27). *The Gifts of Imperfection: Let Go of Who You Think You're Supposed To Be and Embrace Who You Are*. Hazelden Publishing.

Davidson, R. J. (2016, March). The Science of a Happy Mind. Retrieved from <https://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/the-science-of-a-happy-mind>

Hays, B. (2015, December 17). Guided Practice: Compassion at Work. Retrieved from <https://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/compassion-at-work>

Hays, B. (2015, December 17). Guided Practice: Just Stop and Breathe. Retrieved from <https://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/just-stop-and-breathe>

Minds, C. F. (2015, December 17). Center for Healthy Minds. Retrieved from <https://centerhealthyminds.org/>

Mirgain, S. (2015, December 17). Try the 5-3-1 Practice. Retrieved from <https://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/try-the-5-3-1-practice>

Neff, K. (n.d.). Self-Compassion Break. Retrieved from https://ggia.berkeley.edu/practice/self_compassion_break