



Greater
Good
Science
Center

greatergood.berkeley.edu

Warm-up

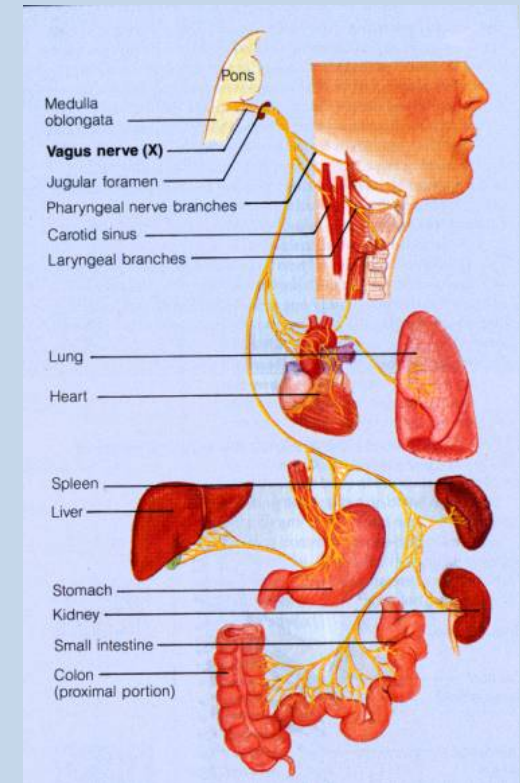


Stretch
(de-stress; improve mood)

Deep breathing
(vagus activation)

Visualize a positive experience
(rewiring the brain)

Share with a partner
(creating positive connections)



Science of a Meaningful Life for Education

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August 28, 2014

Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley

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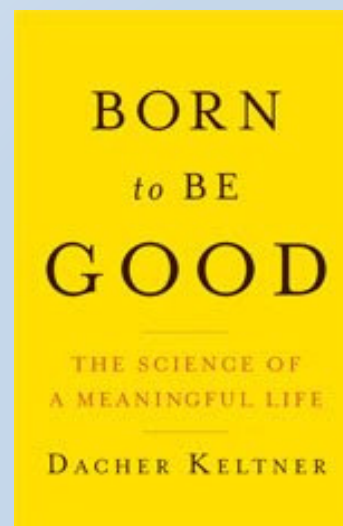
<http://greatergood.berkeley.edu>

Learning Objectives

In this workshop, you will:

- Explore the latest research showing how leading a meaningful life is good for both you and your students;
- Learn how the science on awe, hope, mindfulness, empathy, compassion, self-compassion, and gratitude can be used to enhance the lives of both teachers and students;
- Practice research-based tools for fostering awe, hope, mindfulness, empathy, compassion, self-compassion, and gratitude in yourself and your students.

A New View of Human Development



The origins of human goodness are rooted in our emotions, and these social instincts may be stronger than those of any other instinct or motive.

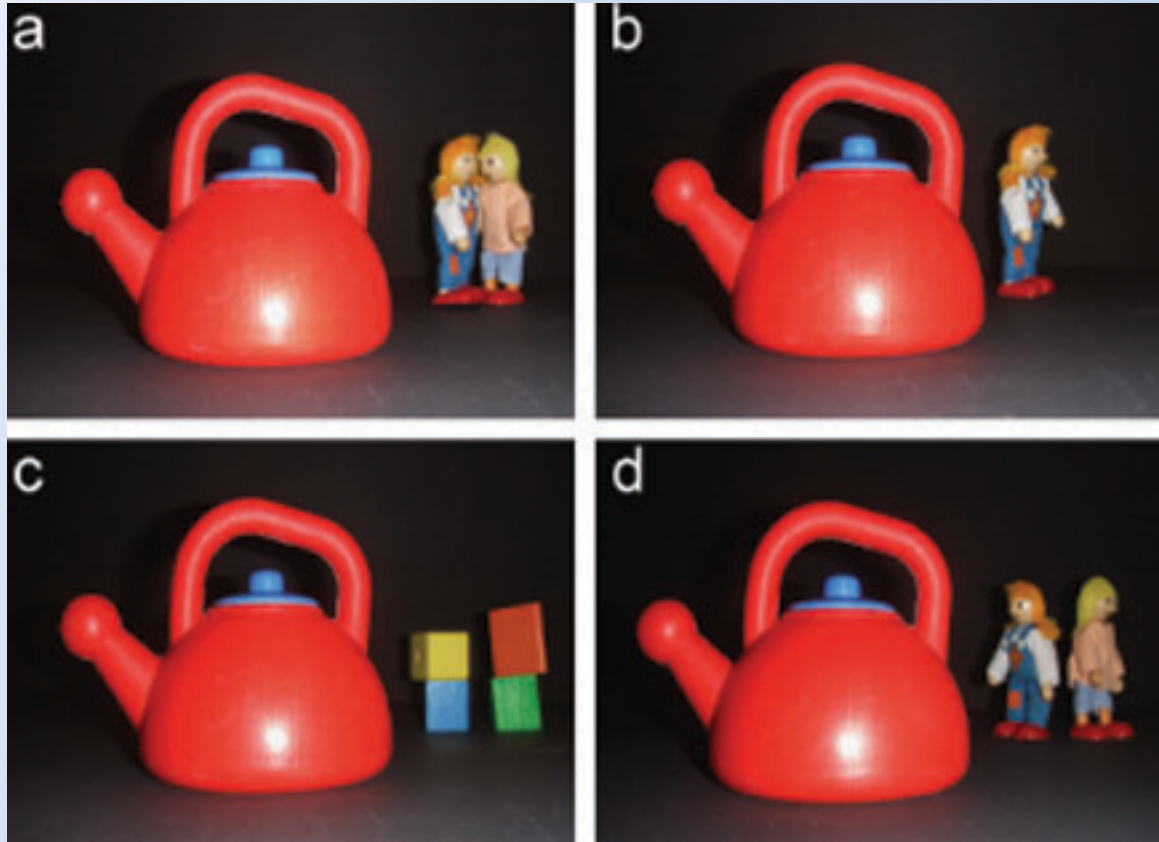
– Dacher Keltner



Kindness starts young...

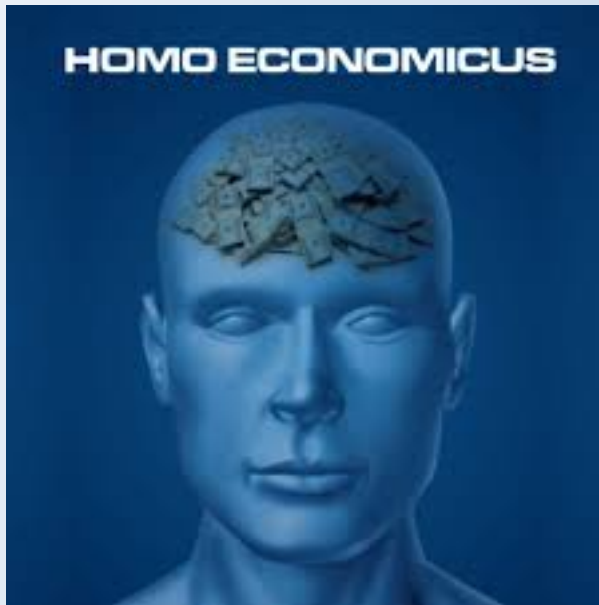


Encouraging kindness is simple...



(Over & Carpenter, 2009)

A New View of Human Development



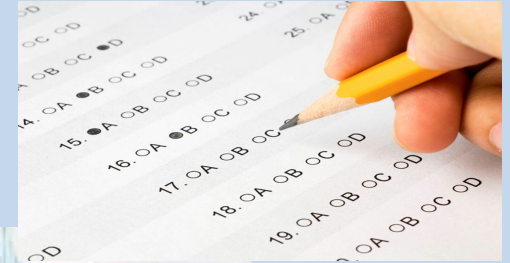
VS.



So what happens? This...



a new york city public school



... or this?



Students today...

(American College Health Association, 2013)

Depression

30%

Self-injure

7%



Anxiety

51%

Hopeless

45%

Eating disorders

25%

Substance abuse

42%

Social-emotional learning



&

Contemplative practice,
e.g., mindfulness



Benefits of social-emotional learning (CASEL)

Promotes:

- Academic success
- Health & well-being
- Communication skills & teamwork
- Positive attitudes about self, school, peers, teachers

Prevents:

- Alcohol & drug abuse
- Violence
- Truancy
- Bullying



Benefits of mindfulness in education

(Flook et al., 2013; Jennings et al., 2013; Kemeny et al., 2012; Meiklejohn et al., 2012; Schonert-Reichl & Lawlor, 2010)

For students:

- Increases ability to pay attention, self-control, self-care, optimism, social-emotional skills
- Decreases anxiety, stress, & fatigue

For teachers:

- Increases well-being, efficacy, positive emotions, self-compassion, & teaching skills
- Decreases burnout, stress, depression, negative emotions, & anxiety



New View of Human Development & Learning



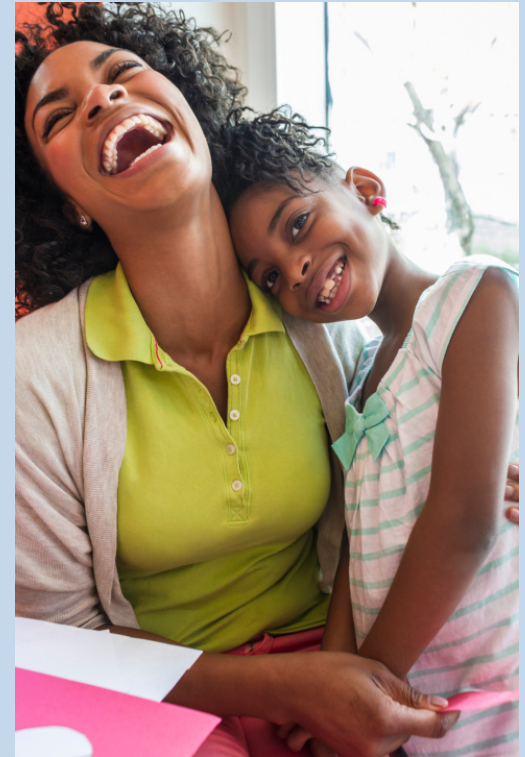
50% social-
emotional

50% cognitive

Negative vs. Positive Emotions



or



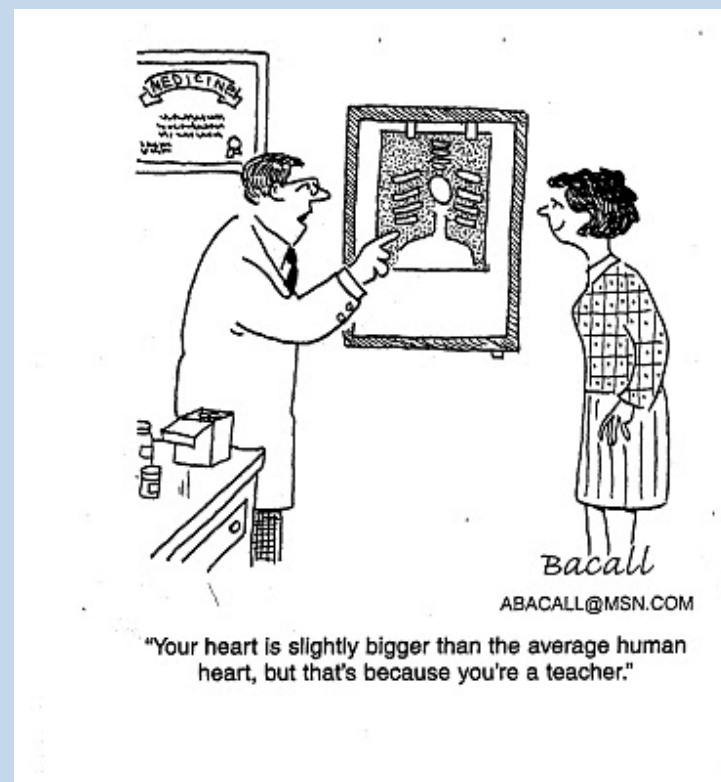
Not just for students....



Teacher Social and Emotional Competence

- Warm & supportive teacher-student relationships
- Positive classroom climate
- Better classroom management
- More open to innovation & change
- Stronger relationships with colleagues
- Effective implementation of

SEL programs (Developmental Studies Center; Jennings & Greenberg, 2008)

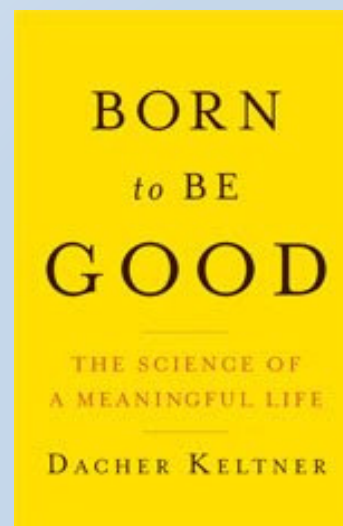


Discuss with a partner:

How does this new view of human development impact your thoughts about education? About your role as a teacher?



A New View of Human Development



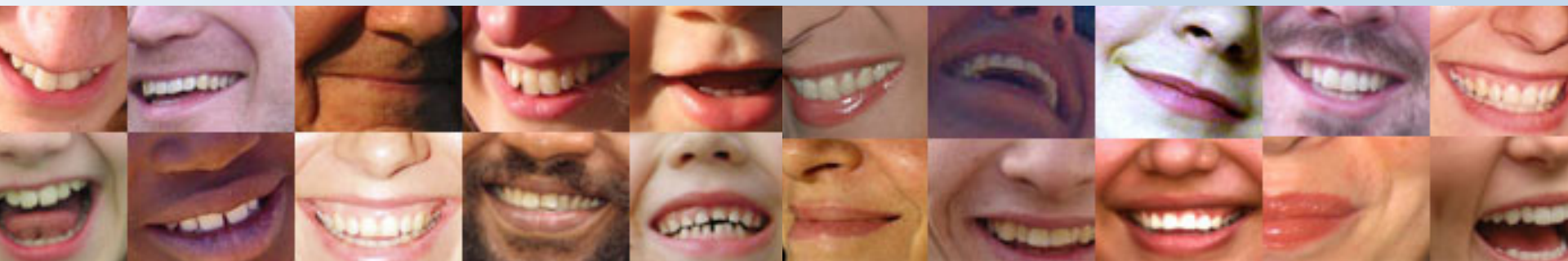
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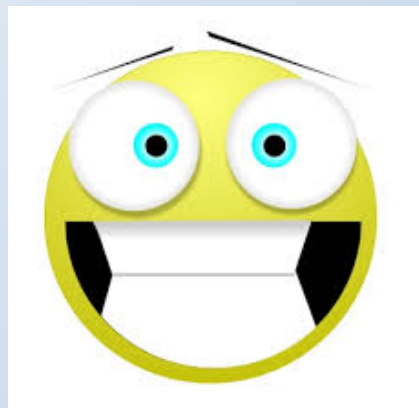
Happiness

“the experience of joy, contentment, or positive well-being, combined with a sense that one’s life is good, meaningful, and worthwhile”

(Lyubomirsky, *The How of Happiness*, 2007)

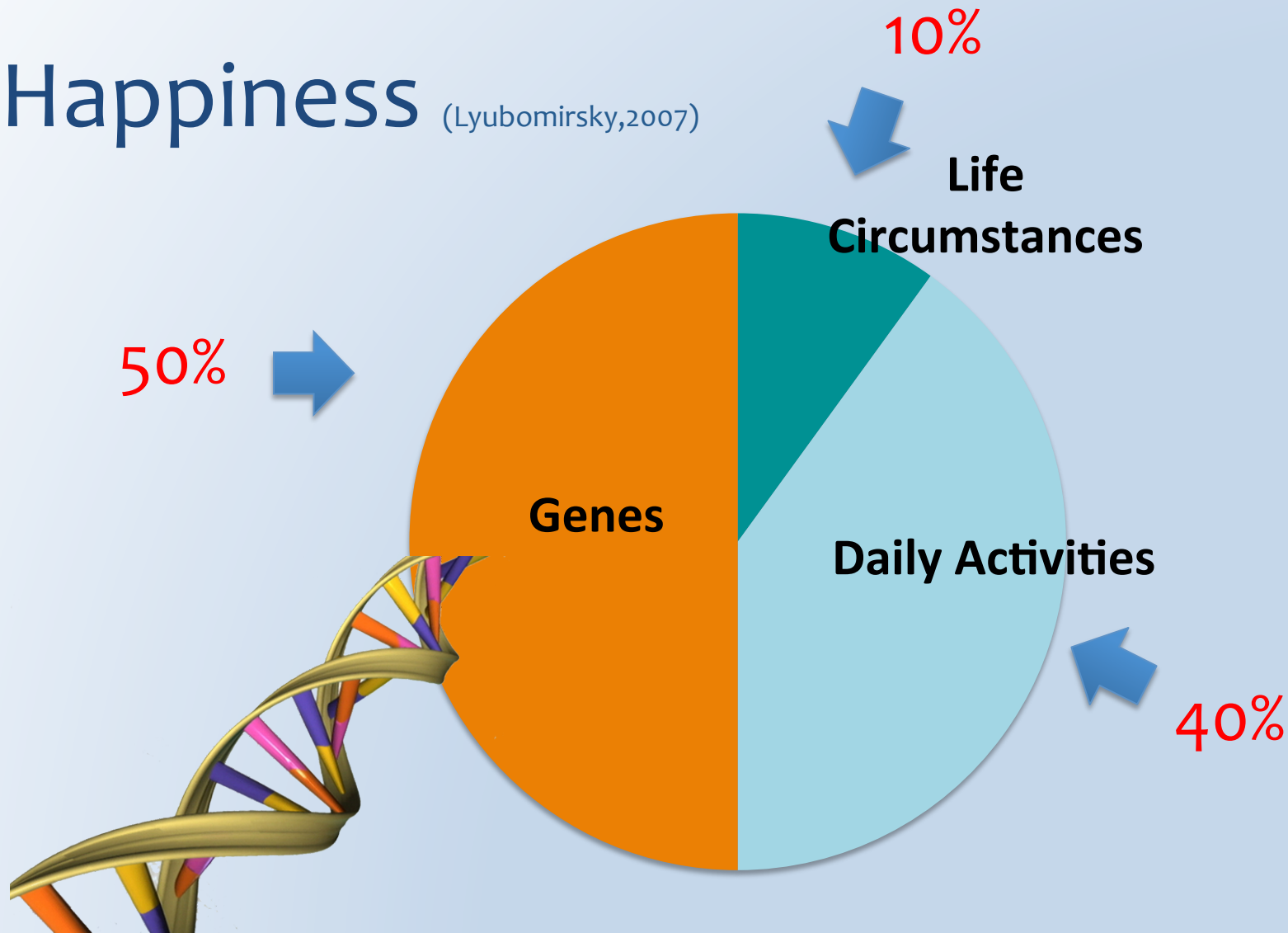


A few caveats...



- The pursuit of happiness... makes us less happy
(Gruber, Mauss, & Tamir, 2011)
- Positive emotions in extremes can be problematic (e.g., proneness to mania, risky behavior)
- Negative emotions are part of the mix

Happiness (Lyubomirsky, 2007)



Cultivating Happiness...

(Peterson, 2006)

1. Hedonic treadmill

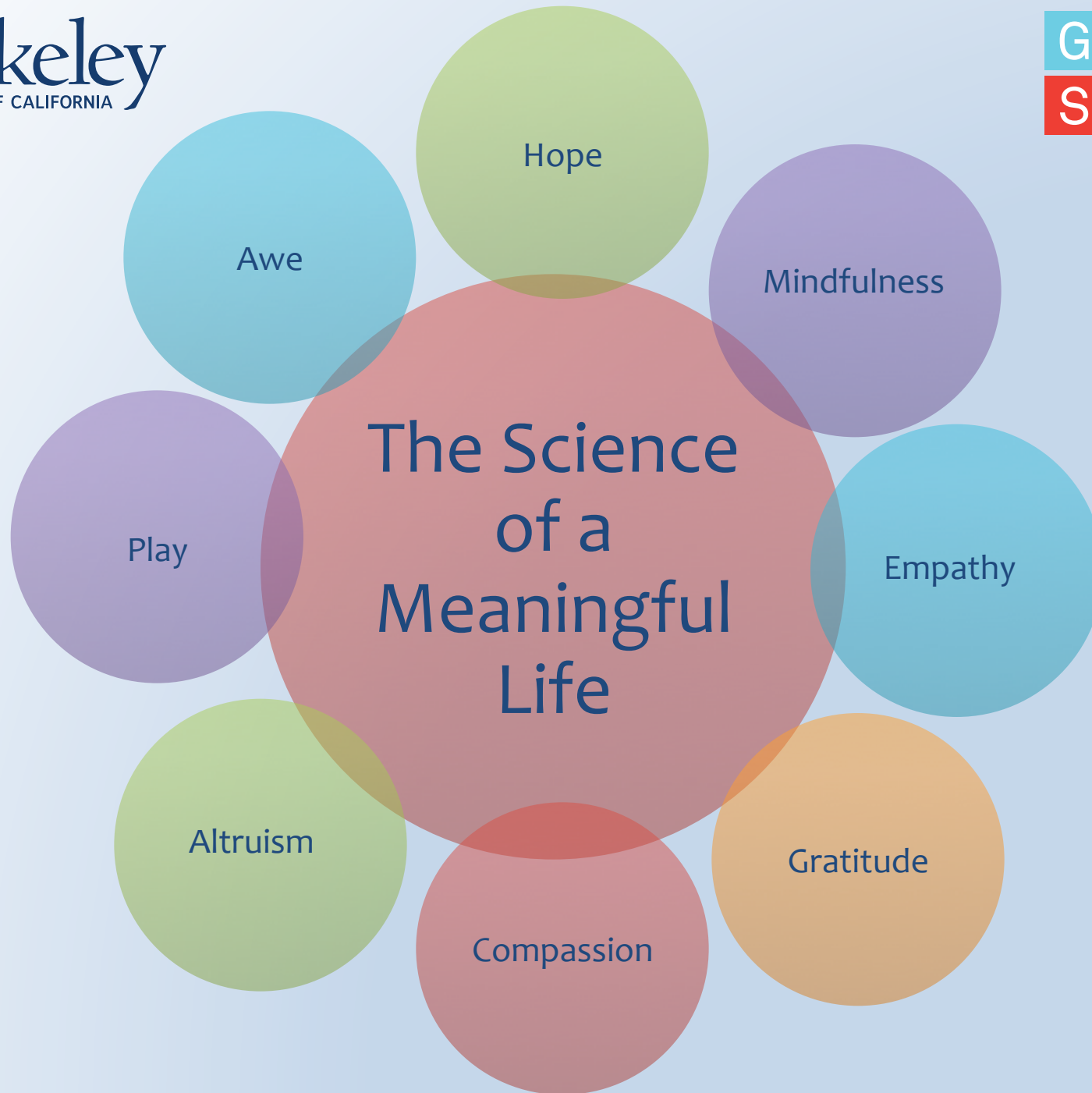


2. Flow



3. Meaningful life

What IS
“a meaningful life”?



got purpose?

Something that is meaningful to you that
also serves the greater good.

Where the students are...

- Disengaged
- Dreamers
- Dabblers
- Purposeful



Awe!



The Experience of Awe

(Shiota, Keltner, & Mossman, 2007)



1. Sense of vastness
2. New perspective on the world and our place in it

Mental and Physical Effects of Awe...

(Shiota, Keltner, & Mossman, 2007)

- We get goose bumps and an expansive, warm swelling in the chest
- Lessens the focus on self and highlights our common humanity
- Connects us to something larger than ourselves
- Increases our altruism, our sense of time, and well-being (Rudd, Vohs, & Aaker, 2012)



What Generates Awe?

(Shiota, Keltner, & Mossman, 2007)

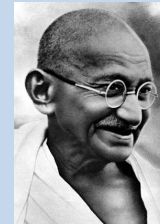
- Nature



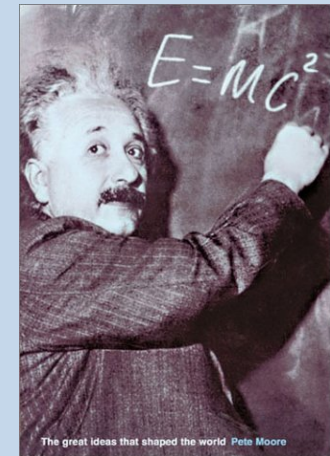
- Art



- People



- Grand Theories



History of the Earth in a single day

(Courtesy: NASA / Goddard Space Flight Center & Burt)

12:00 to 4:00am: No life. A planet with poisonous gases in the air, no soil and a hot sea.

4:00am to 8:00pm: Single celled organisms, some begin to produce oxygen.

Just before 8:30pm: First marine plants

8:50pm: Jellyfish and simple multicellular organisms

Just after 9:00pm: Great diversification of multicellular life, Trilobites, Vertebrates

10:00pm: First plant life and then animals appear on dry land

11:00pm to 11:45pm: Reign of the Reptiles – Dinosaurs Rule!

1 minute and 17 seconds to midnight: First humans appear.

Discuss:

How might you incorporate awe into your classroom?



Characteristics of Kid High in Hope

- Can set *clear and attainable* goals.
- Able to develop *multiple* strategies to reach those goals.
- Stay *motivated* to use the strategies to attain goals, even when the going gets tough. (Lopez, Rose, Robinson, Marques, & Pais-Ribeiro, 2009)



Students High in Hope:

- Greater academic success
- Stronger friendships
- More creative & better at problem-solving
- Lower levels of depression & anxiety
- Don't take failure personally—they use it to improve performance.
- **More optimistic** (Lopez, Rose, Robinson, Marques, & Pais-Ribeiro, 2009)



Developing Hope

(Lopez, Rose, Robinson, Marques, & Pais-Ribeiro, 2009)

1. What's most important to you? Why? Looking back on your life, what do you want to be remembered for? Why?



2. List the broad categories of what's most important to you (e.g., family, friends, school, sports, environment, future career).

Developing Hope

(Lopez, Rose, Robinson, Marques, & Pais-Ribeiro, 2009)

3. Pick one category you could improve. Create 2-3 goals that are specific, measurable and take a “solutions-oriented” approach.
4. Rank those goals in order of importance.



5. Breakdown the top ranked goal into steps.
6. In case you encounter obstacles to any of these steps, visualize at least 1 different pathway to reach that goal.

Discuss with a partner:

What might be challenging about this goal-setting process?



Two More Things About Hope...


7. Tell stories of success.



8. Enjoy the process!



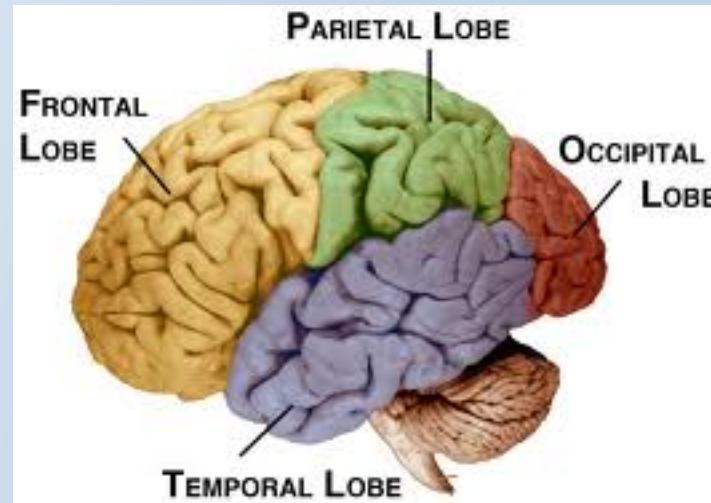
Mindfulness

A black silhouette of a person sitting in a meditative posture (cross-legged) under a tree. The tree has a thick, curved trunk and several bare branches. The person is facing right, looking towards the tree.

“The awareness that arises out of intentionally paying attention in an open, kind, and discerning way” (Shapiro & Carlson, 2006)

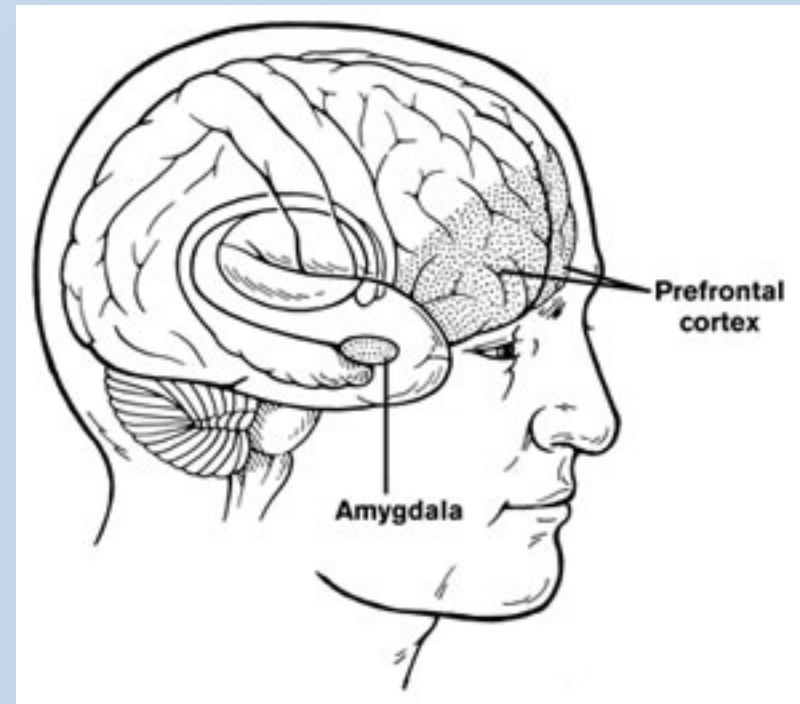
Mindfulness and Brain Plasticity

(Davidson & Begley, 2012)



Resilience (Davidson & Begley, 2012)

- The role of the prefrontal cortex and the amygdala



Mindfulness Practice

- Sitting



- Walking

- Loving-kindness

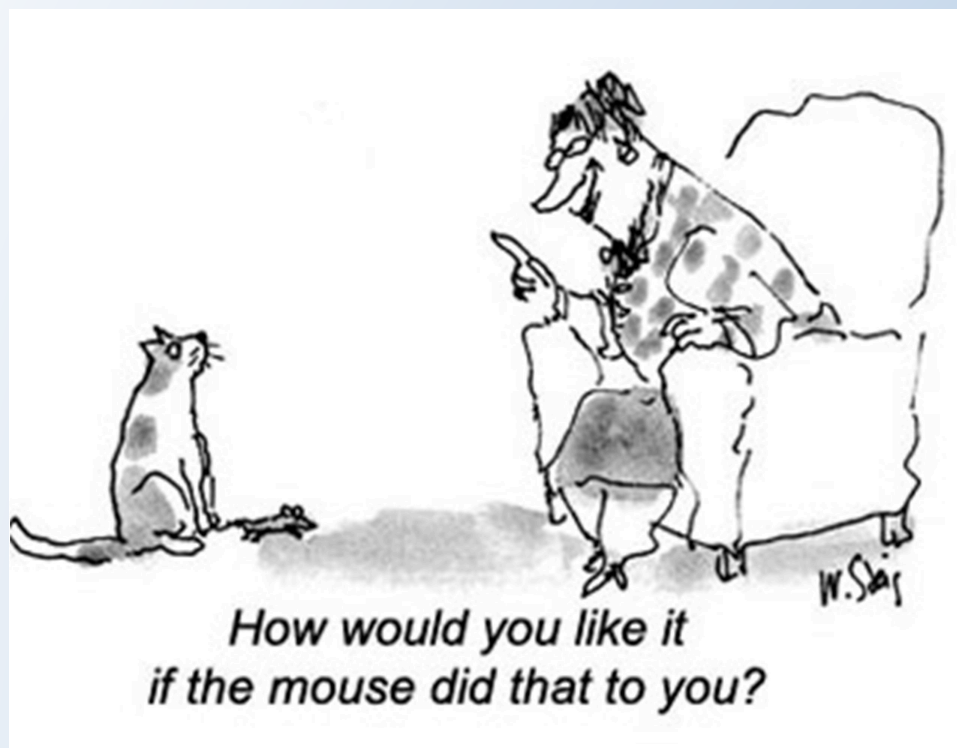


Empathy

“the ability to sense other people’s emotions, coupled with the ability to imagine what someone else might be thinking or feeling.”



Why is empathy important?



- Building block of morality
- *Relationships*
- More likely to help
- *Reduces prejudice & racism*
- Good for marriage
- *Lessens bullying*

How to develop empathy in children...

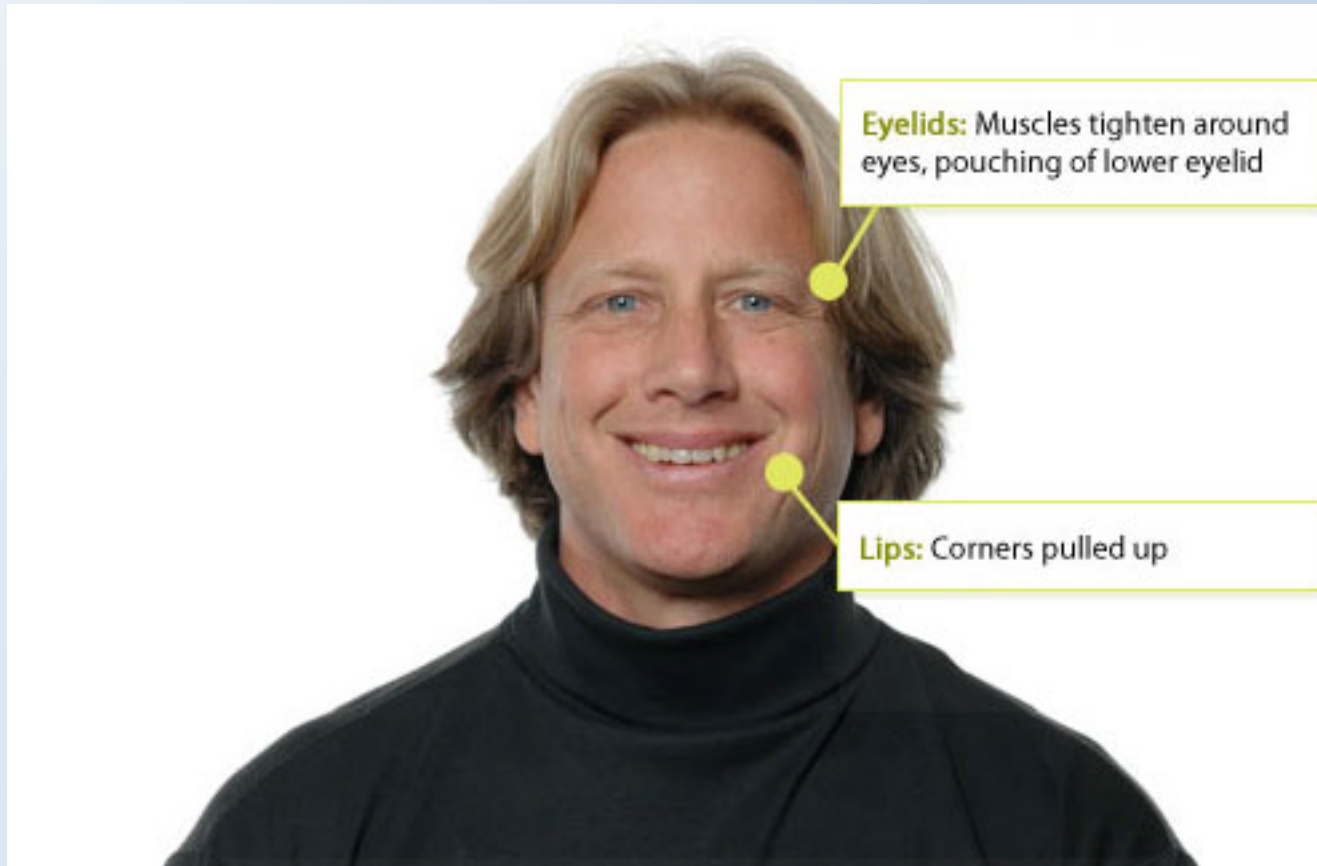


- Actively imagine how another is feeling
- *Play games*
- Be open about emotions
- *Meditation*
- Don't jump to conclusions
- *Teach emotional literacy*



- Flirtatiousness
- Interest
- Happiness
- Politeness

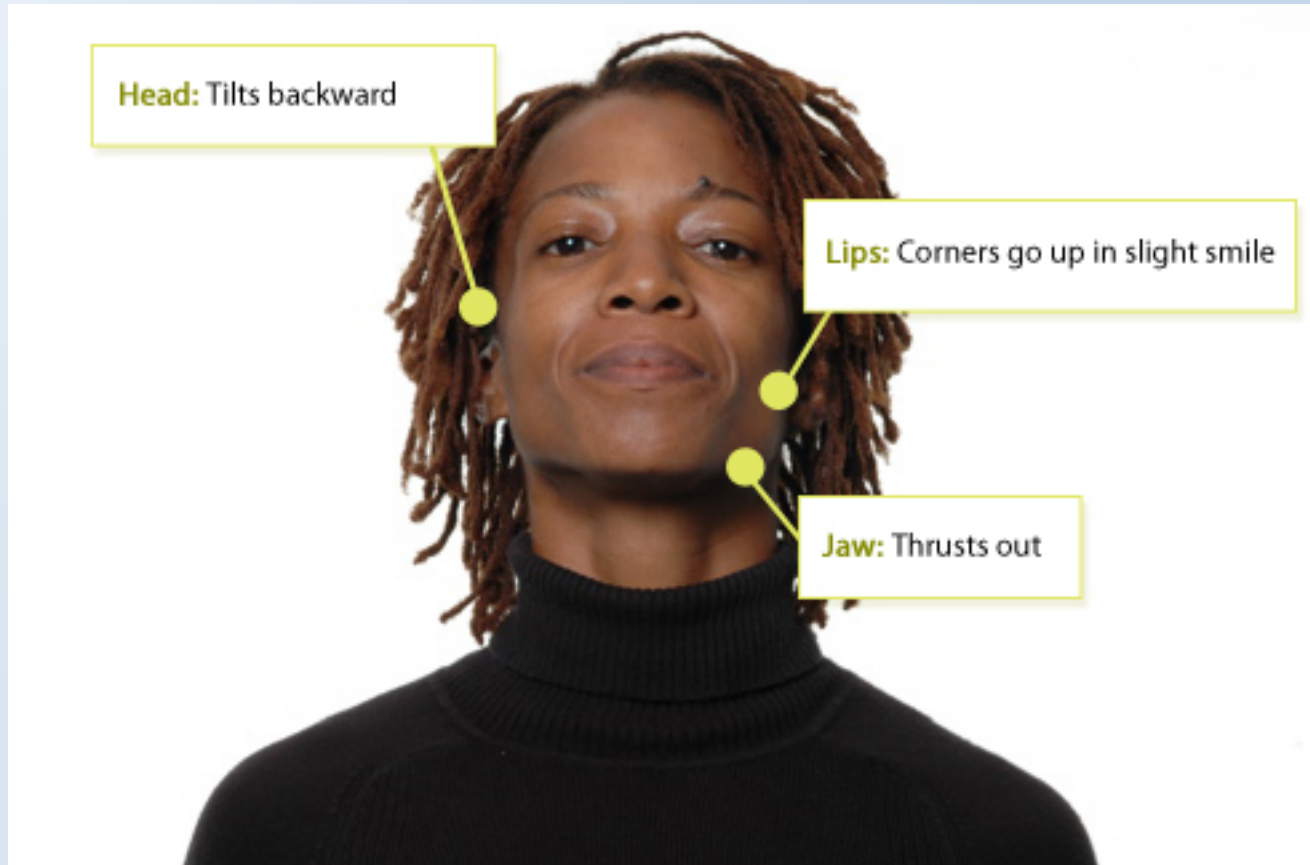
Happiness





- Pride
- Contempt
- Excitement
- Anger

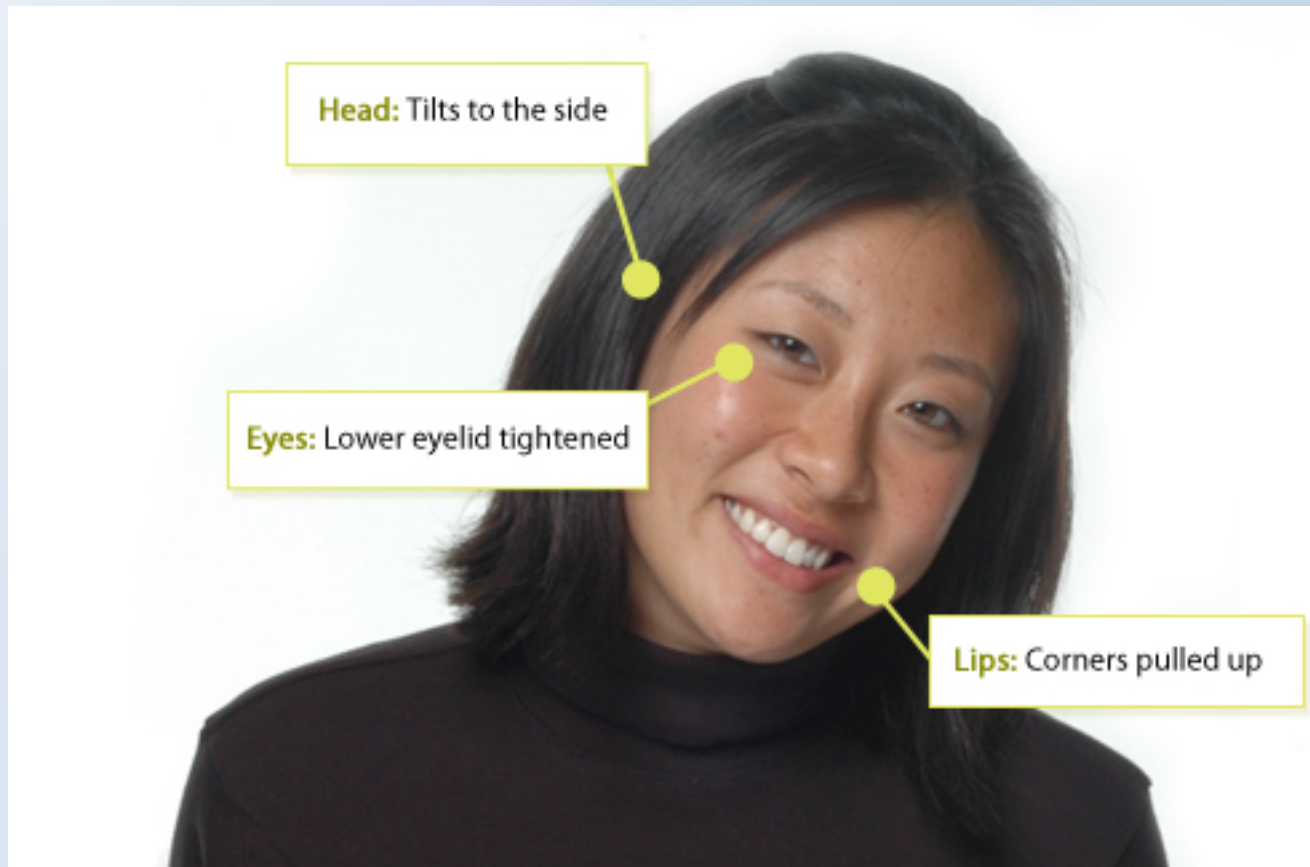
Pride





- Satisfaction
- Flirtatiousness
- Love
- Compassion

Love



Compassion

“the feeling that arises when you are confronted with another’s suffering and feel motivated to relieve that suffering.”



Benefits of Compassion



- Health
- *Happiness*
- Better relationships
- *More compassionate society*

Empathy & Compassion Inhibitors

1. Lack of resources
2. *Don't feel safe*
3. Lack of time
4. *Not deserving of help*
5. Lack of identification with other Person
6. *Power imbalance*
7. Emotion overload – the myth of “compassion fatigue”



How to develop compassion

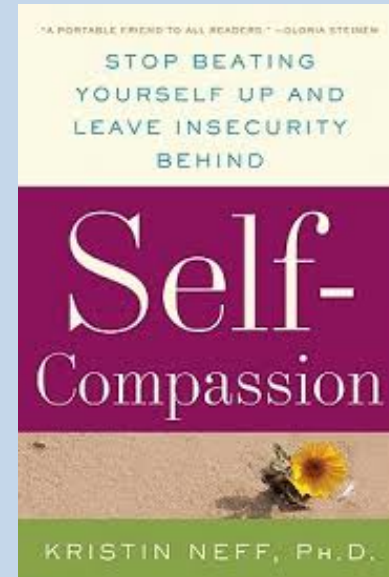


- Look for commonalities
- *Calm the inner warrior*
- Encourage cooperation, not competition
- *See people as individuals (not abstractions)*
- Don't play the blame game
- *Know you're capable of making a difference*
- Model compassion for your kids
- *Don't be a sponge*

Self-Compassion

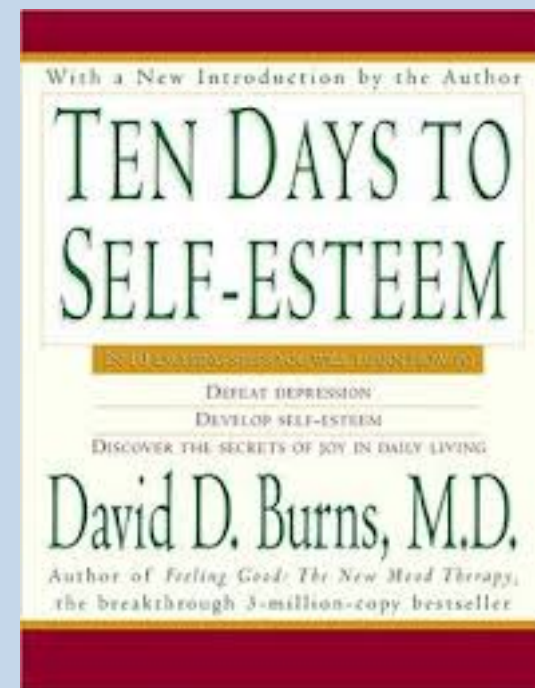
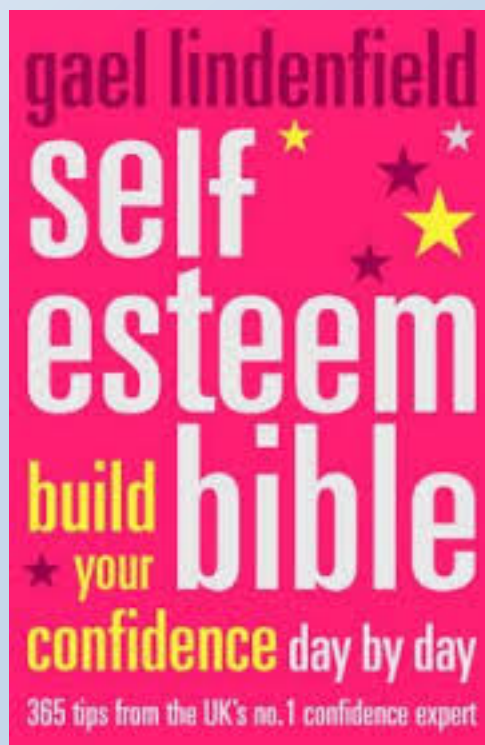
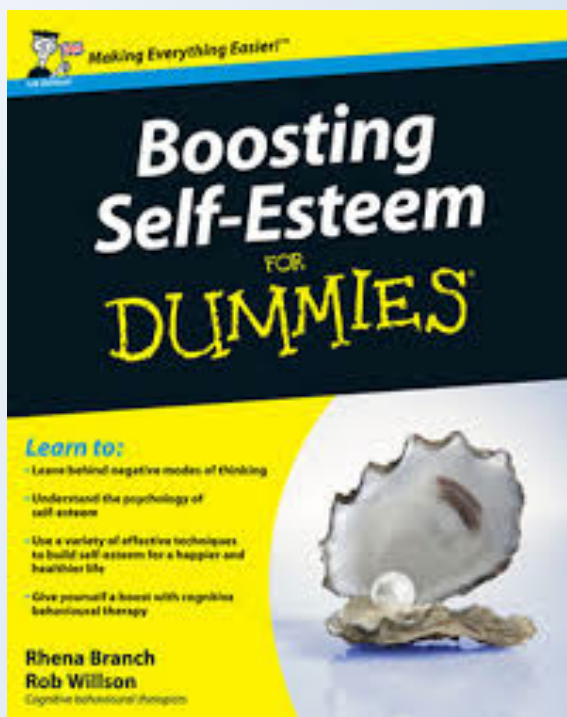
The ability to become aware of, accept, and be with our own stress, pain, and suffering, and respond with warmth and kindness.





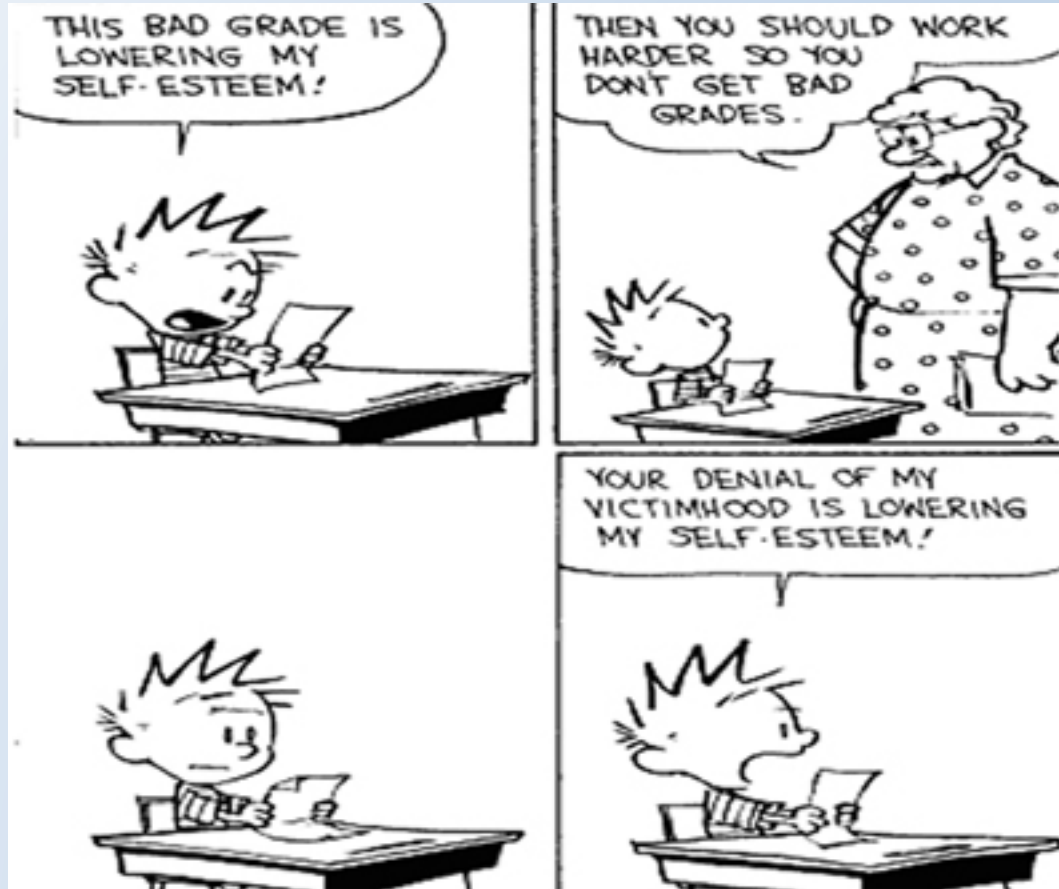
Self-esteem:

Global evaluation of self-worth



Self-esteem: I'm special and above average





Our true value lies in the core experience of being a conscious being who feels and perceives. (Neff, 2011)

3 Components of Self-Compassion

(Neff, 2011)

- **Self-Kindness** vs. Self-Judgment



- **Common Humanity** vs. Isolation



- **Mindfulness** vs. Over-identification



3 Practices of Self-Compassion

(Neff, 2011)

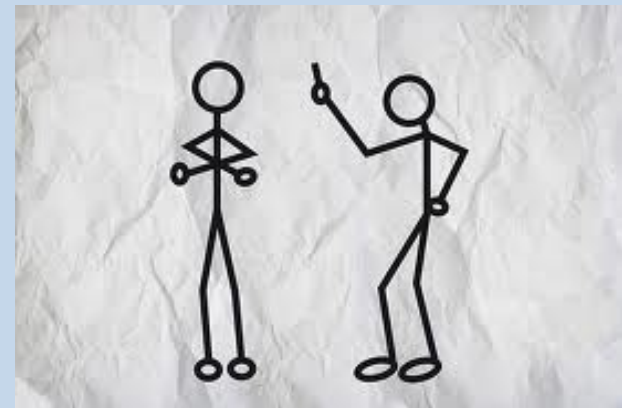
- Talk to yourself as you would a best friend



- Self-squeeze



- Breathe-in, breathe-out compassion

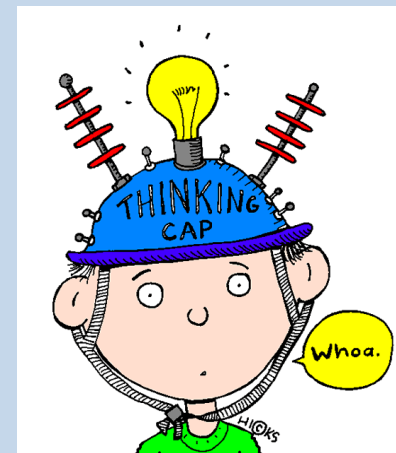


More Practices for Self-Compassion

Flexing Rigid Thoughts

What might you say to yourself if you:

- Have a bad class?
- Miss a deadline?
- Forget something?
- Make a mistake?
- Can't do something?
- Look in the mirror?
- Get on the scale?



More Practices for Self-Compassion

Rigid thoughts contain words that overgeneralize, such as:

- Always
- Never
- Can't
- No one

They can also involve certain kinds of self-statements:

- I'm hopeless
- I'm stupid
- I'm mean

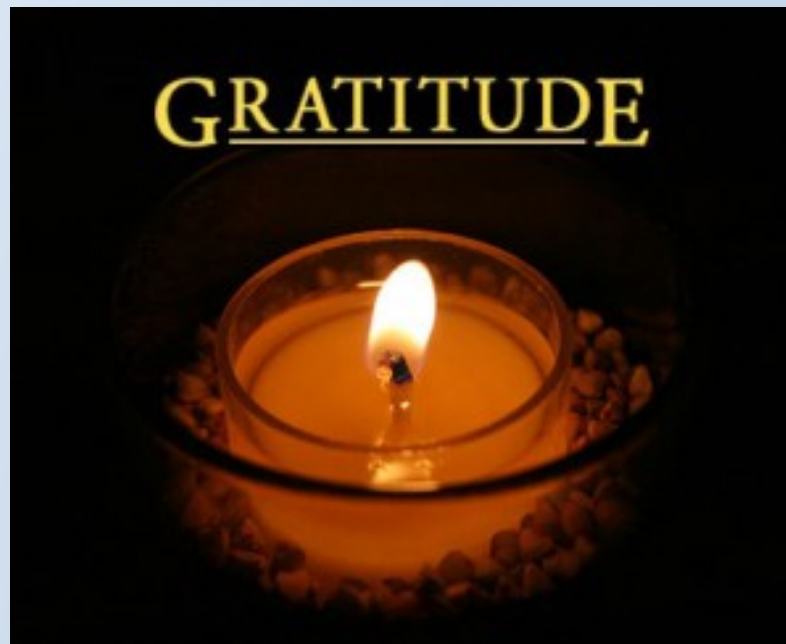
Rigid Thought...	...Rephrased as a Flexible Thought

Flexible thoughts:

- Sometimes
- Maybe
- Probably
- Most likely
- Though
- It's possible that

Gratitude (Emmons, 2007)

“...an affirmation of goodness -- that there are good things in the world, gifts and benefits we’ve received.”





(Source: <http://happierhuman.com/benefits-of-gratitude/>)

Why Gratitude is Good...

- 1) Strengthens social ties.
- 2) Increases self-worth.
- 3) Middle school students who practice gratitude (Froh, 2008):
 - Higher levels of optimism
 - Increased life satisfaction
 - Decreased negative feelings
 - Greater satisfaction with school



Gratitude Activities

Gratitude journals



Gratitude letters



Stream of Gratitude...



Act as if what you do makes a
difference. It does.

-William James

You are a part of the Greater Good...

Participate!

✓ 2015 Summer Institute for Educators – June 26 – July 1. Applications due January 1, 2015

✓ Science of Happiness MOOC – September 9, 2014. Sign up through edX.org

✓ Sign up on the site for our monthly education e-newsletter. It's FREE.

✓ Become a member to support our work and enjoy benefits! Educator discount: enter code GGSCEducator

✓ Follow us on Facebook and Twitter (@GreaterGoodSC)

