

# Transforming Classrooms

## Building Emotional Resilience

### Week 1 of 4 Or Week 1 of 2

 [workshop@SILAskills.org](mailto:workshop@SILAskills.org)

   @SilaSkills

Before we begin today, please fill out this pre-workshop survey at  
<https://bit.ly/SILAPre-survey> (CASE SENSITIVE)

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group

## NOTE:

1. The content of this workshop is directed *solely* to the skill development of the teachers and is *in no way intended* to represent appropriate training to teach the skills to students within or outside the classroom setting.
2. SILA and SILA facilitators are not therapists. This workshop is in no way intended to supplement or replace any personal and/or professional therapy.
3. This workshop is in no way intended to supplement or replace any school safety procedures and protocols. Participants are expected to follow and prioritize their school's procedures and protocols.

## How is this workshop different?



- This is for ***you!***
- We show you how to ***apply*** skills not just give you information about them.
- Simple, Effective, ***Immediate***
- It ***won't add to*** or replace your workload.

***More skills to use anywhere, anytime with anyone.***

## Workshop Guidelines






- Confidentiality
- No judgement
- No blame
- Safe zone
- Share the space
- Participation + Practice = Results

# What to expect



## Our superhero powers

-  Relationship Mindfulness
-  Basic Assumptions
-  Validation

## Our own mental health

- Distress Tolerance Skills
- Emotion Regulation Skills for Self-Care and Mental Wellness

## Format:

Mindfulness practice, review weekly practice exercises, new skills, break about mid way through the workshop, assign new practice exercises

## Feel free to:

Stretch, walk around, eat, take a break...

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 5

# The SILA Skills Group



Formed in April 2019

Not-for-profit organization in August 2020

Workshops are delivered virtually in Canada

Our long term objective is to help people be more emotionally resilient

Teach emotion regulation skills based on DBT (Dialectical Behaviour Therapy) developed by Dr. Marsha Linehan

We also run workshops for first responders, police, social workers, etc - ***Transforming Connections***

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 6



**SKILLS** are transformational

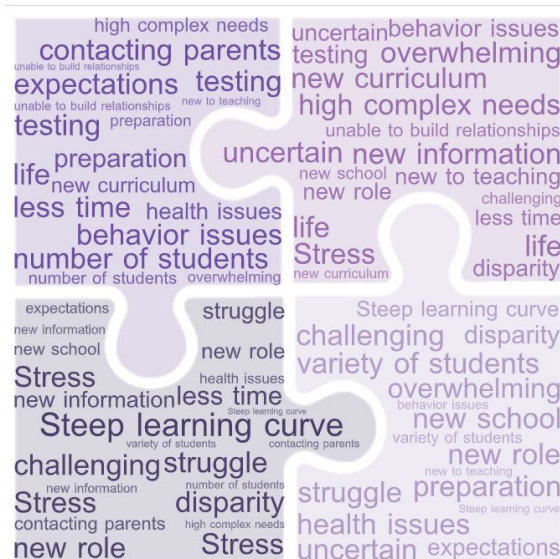
useful **IN** everyday situations

for any relationship in your **LIFE**

**ALL** can realize the benefits



## How we are feeling about things today?





# Mindfulness Practice

## DBT Skills Modules

*Practical*

*Immediately accessible*

*Transformative in calm and in upset*

*It's the **HOW** not just the **WHAT***

### Mindfulness

*Being aware of the present moment without judgement*

- Increase awareness of your emotional and mental state
- Make decisions understanding what is getting in the way of being effective
- Be a participant to your own life as you are experiencing it

### Distress Tolerance

*Managing a crisis without worsening the situation, accepting reality as it is*

- Survive crisis situations by reducing emotional intensity
- Be more effective for yourself and others in crisis situations
- Avoid making things worse for yourself and/or others

### Emotional Regulation

*Understanding and reducing vulnerability to emotions, changing emotions*

- Improve overall mental health and emotional well-being
- Being in control of your emotions rather than having your emotions be in control of you

### Interpersonal Effectiveness

*Getting needs met, maintaining relationships, increasing self-respect in relationships*

- Connect with those around you and emotional well-being
- Build and maintain positive relationships
- Avoid or minimize escalations

ACCEPTANCE – “it is what it is in this moment”

AND

CHANGE – “what am I going to do about it”

## Learn practical skills which will help you to:

- Recognize your own emotional vulnerability and reactivity in any given situation to position yourself to interact effectively.
- Reframe how you interpret a student's behaviour by approaching with curiosity, removing judgement and being in the moment to respond effectively to the current situation.
- Build trust, reduce intensity of emotions and open the door for problem solving.
- Find the path to bridge communication between teacher and student, student and student, teacher and parent, teacher and teacher.

***...Best of all, you can use these skills right away!***

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 11



Blank beginner's mind;  
Never "I already know"  
Always "more to learn"

Dailyzenhaiku.com

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 12





We want it to look like this!



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 13



And sometimes it looks like this!



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 14

# What educators have shared that makes it difficult ...



| What is a challenging thing you had a student say or do?  | What has been challenging for you this year?  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>Refusing to:</b> acknowledge, comply, complete assignments, come to school, shutting down; "defiant", not showing up; why try?/giving up; listen; get help, waiting to be told the answers</p>  | <p><b>Time:</b> extra time needed for prep, working all the time, no time for self-care; new curriculum expectations, fewer subs, less prep time</p>  |
| <p><b>Using hurtful language to others:</b><br/>hate you, yelling, "thanks for nothing", threatening</p> <p><b>And to themselves:</b><br/>I want to hurt myself; I'm stupid, I'm going to try and just not get it anyway, I want to die, I don't care if I get bad marks</p>  | <p><b>Emotional/Mental Health needs:</b> my own and my students, extra stress and flexibility needed, parents who require a lot of support; mediating between parents and teachers; mediating between Head of School and teachers; trying not to get visually emotional when overwhelmed/tired/stressed &amp; unable to speak</p> |
| <p><b>Being physical:</b> biting, pinching, throwing, kicking, flipping desks, stabbing with a pencil, scissors</p>   | <p><b>Other:</b> New to teaching, recovering after the last few years, lack of impulse control, attitude, defiance, disrupting others' learning; changing roles, catching up on missed lessons, social media comments about teachers, extreme amount of staff turnover, interviewing, and hiring processes</p>                    |
| <p><b>Feelings:</b> isolation, lonely, frustration, severest anger, fear, anxiety, deepest sadness, feeling scattered, unhappiness (&amp; will always be unhappy); helplessness; no one loves me, I don't want to be here; crying all afternoon, afraid parents will die while they are at school; can't live up to parent expectations</p> | <p><b>Feelings:</b> frustration, anger, fear, anxiety, lack of control over the situation, can't teach curriculum and help those needing emotional support, expectations continue to be very high, not doing enough, overwhelmed, unwanted and difficult classroom assignment, under-prepared coming out of university;</p>       |
| <p><b>Behaviour:</b> disruptive, unpredictable, yelling, screaming, running out of room/school, breaking rules, over-reacting to "simple requests"; complex behaviours and needs; getting louder when asked to stop, continue to escalate</p>   | <p><b>Managing Expectations:</b> parent, kids, district testing, government, my own, doing it all; multiple needs in the classroom, extreme diversity, learning new ways to teach all subjects</p>  |

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 15

# HALTS

**H**ungry/hormones/hydration

**A**ngry

**L**onely or loss

**T**ired

**S**tressed/sick/substances/screen time



Watch this at: <https://youtu.be/GkAnLtoWDhc> By: Snickers - Betty White (Super Bowl 2010 Commercial) -[HD] [Video file].

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 16



# When our HALTS are off ...

## HOME

- More irritable
- More reactive
- Quick to anger
- Disconnected
- Strained relationships
- Run down
- Substance use
- Low energy

## WORK

- More sick days
- Feel more pressure
- Less connected
- “What’s the point”
- Decreased job satisfaction
- Less alert, running on empty
- Less motivated
- Less productive



← **Less: effective, empathetic, patient**    **More: burnout** →

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 17

# Mindfulness - A Superpower



# What is Mindfulness?



“Purposely paying attention, in the present moment, without judgment.” (Kabat-Zinn, 1994)

## The Practice:

Noticing your attention/thoughts wandering and bringing it back to the present moment/task/relationship at hand



## Relationship Mindfulness:

Being present in the relationship with awareness, empathy, and without **judgement**



*Relationship mindfulness fosters connection.*

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 19

# Mind Full, or Mindful?



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 20

# 10 Mechanisms of How Mindfulness Works



|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Shift in Perception</b>                          | Enables us to relate to thoughts, feelings and sensations as simply as observations.  |
| <b>Body and Situational Awareness</b>               | Helps us feel more in touch with our bodies and our physical environment which can help with posture, balance, decision making, risk evaluation and task performance.                 |
| <b>Non-attachment</b>                               | Helps us to detach from concepts, situations, experiences, etc. which can improve satisfaction with life and improve life effectiveness.  |
| <b>Changes in Brain Functioning</b>                 | Brain imaging shows neurological changes in the brain - how we process new information as well keeping our emotions in balance.   |
| <b>Acceptance</b>                                   | Improve ability to be content with our circumstances AND may still need to improve our situations.  |
| <b>Increase in Spirituality</b>                     | Increase levels of spiritual awareness decreasing feelings of loneliness and fostering resilience.  |
| <b>Emotion Regulation</b>                           | Accurately label and identify negative emotions and thinking patterns, making it easier to attend to unhelpful thought processes and help with interpersonal and relationship skills. |
| <b>Reduced Biological and Psychological Arousal</b> | Breath awareness helps reduce heart and breathing rate which helps foster calm, relaxation and ability to cope with stressful situations.   |
| <b>Attention Regulation</b>                         | Better task performance and stopping ruminating thought patterns  |
| <b>Letting go</b>                                   | Noticing the <i>coming and going</i> of thoughts and physical sensations, helps focus on their temporary nature. "This will pass."  |

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/contemplative-psychology/202102/10-mechanisms-how-mindfulness-works>

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 21



# Mindfulness Practice



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 22



# What other activities can you do mindfully?

## Goal of Mindfulness Practice



***Is just to PRACTICE!***

1. Identify what you will focus on
2. Bring your attention to the object of focus
3. If your attention wanders away:
  - Notice this has happened
  - Don't judge
  - Gently bring your attention back



# Wise Mind



## WISE MIND

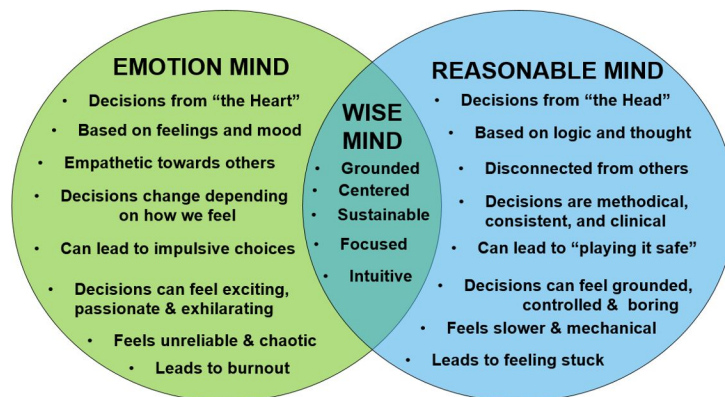


SILA Skills  
SKILLS IN LIFE FOR ALL

Watch this at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnwIDk5rKUB>  
By: Benuto, Lorraine (2017, October 19). *Wise Mind Video 2* [Video file].

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 25

# DBT States of Mind



### Emotion Mind

*Ruled by your moods, feelings and urges  
Emotions are in control at expense of reason*

### Wise Mind

*Synthesis of Emotion and Reasonable mind  
Inner wisdom  
The Middle Path*

### Reasonable Mind

*Ruled by facts, reason, logic  
Values and feelings are not important*

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 26

# A look at our minds

Using our Mindfulness skills:

1. Think of a regular day at work or at home.
2. Think of a stressful day at work or at home

For each: What state of mind do you primarily function in?

**Per our workshop guidelines:**

**NO BLAME ZONE**

**NO JUDGEMENT ZONE**



# DBT Mindfulness What & How Skills



# How to Practice Mindfulness



| What  | How  |
|---|--|
| <b>Observe:</b><br><i>Just notice how you feel, what you see/hear/etc.</i>                        | <b>Non-judgmentally:</b><br><i>Let go of 'shoulds' and right/wrong<br/>                     Don't evaluate, criticize, label</i> |
| <b>Describe:</b><br><i>Attach words to the experience; just the facts; don't explain or solve</i> | <b>One-mindfully:</b><br><i>Only pay attention to the task at hand or to the current relationship; with all your attention</i>   |
| <b>Participate:</b><br><i>Involve yourself fully in the moment; get lost in the experience</i>    | <b>Effectively:</b><br><i>Keep in mind your goals. Do what works.</i>  |

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 29

# Relationship Mindfulness



Watch this at: <https://youtu.be/n6fS73AFnnk>  
 By: Cathie Stenhouse (2019, September 19. *Disruptive Classroom 1* [Video file].

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 30

# Accurately Identifying Emotions

## Primary Emotions



**Anger**  
To fight against problems



**Fear**  
To protect us from danger



**Anticipation**  
To look forward and plan



**Surprise**  
To focus us on new situations



**Joy**  
To remind us what's important



**Sadness**  
To connect us with those we love



**Trust**  
To connect with people who help



**Disgust**  
To reject what is unhealthy

## Secondary Emotions

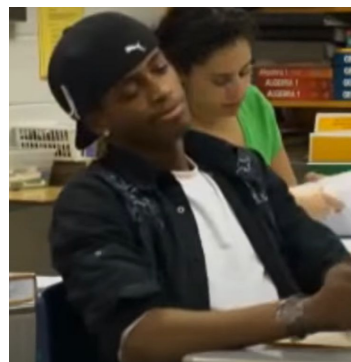
- Feeling **ANGRY** when **FEARFUL**
- Feeling **SAD** when **SHAMEFUL**
- Feeling **FEARFUL** when **ANGRY**

The **KEY** is to figure out what the **PRIMARY EMOTION** is!

<https://www.verywellmind.com/an-overview-of-the-types-of-emotions-4163976>

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 31

## WHAT I SHOW... IS THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG

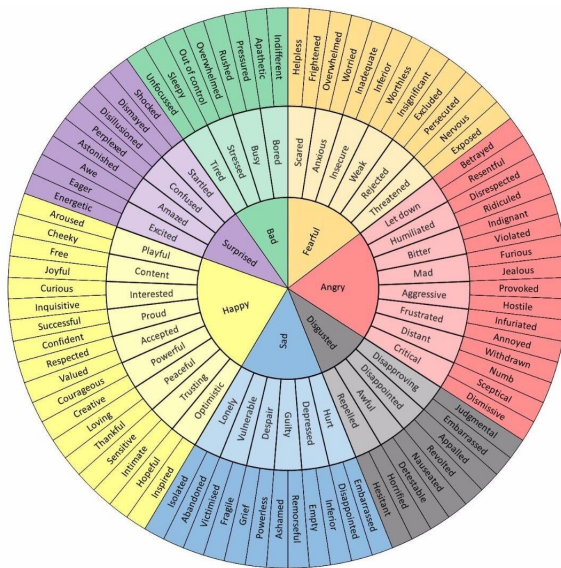


*What is their story?*





# Be Descriptive



## Emotion Wheel

<https://www.jennieleen.com/blog/the-wheel-of-emotions>

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 33

## To be effective...

We need  
to be at  
our best

**H**ungry, Hormones, Hydration

**A**ngry

**L**oss, Lonely

**T**ired

**S**tressed, Sick, Substances, Screentime

# The Foundation



## Basic Assumptions Transactional Model



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 35

## Basic Assumptions

1. There is no one or any absolute truth
2. Benign Interpretation
3. Everyone is doing the best they can in this moment
4. Keep trying, try differently



AND “do you want to be right or effective?”

Source: adaptation from NEABPD Family Connections™



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 36



# Basic Assumptions Practice



SILA Skills  
SKILLS IN LIFE FOR ALL

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 37

## Basic Assumptions Practice



**A teacher sits with a child in the hall, to discuss how they were behaving in class. “I hate gym! Everybody laughs at me and thinks I’m such a loser!”**

1. There is no one or any absolute truth.
2. Benign interpretation.
3. Everyone is doing the best they can, in this moment.
4. Keep trying, try differently.

**An EA is working with a student in the hall on missed assignments. They ask why the student is not getting their work done in class or at home. The student looks at them with tears, “I’m trying. It’s just so noisy in class and my sister is always yelling at me at home!”**

1. There is no one or any absolute truth.
2. Benign interpretation.
3. Everyone is doing the best they can, in this moment.
4. Keep trying, try differently.



SILA Skills  
SKILLS IN LIFE FOR ALL

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 38

# Basic Assumptions Practice

**Teacher hands out an assignment to the class. When he gives it to the student, the student looks at it, says “Forget this shit! This is stupid!” and throws it on the floor.**



1. There is no one or any absolute truth.
2. Benign interpretation.
3. Everyone is doing the best they can, in this moment.
4. Keep trying, try differently.

**The EA is assigned her students and classroom in September. The classroom teacher looks at her with exhaustion, “Oh, this is going to be a tough year! I taught her older brother and he was a handful and I hear she is worse!”**

1. There is no one or any absolute truth.
2. Benign Interpretation.
3. Everyone is doing the best they can, in this moment.
4. Keep trying, try differently.

# Basic Assumptions Practice

**A teacher and administrator have been emailing and calling a parent about how their child is doing at school. Neither of them have had any response. They meet together after school to discuss their next move.**



1. There is no one or any absolute truth.
2. Benign interpretation.
3. Everyone is doing the best they can, in this moment.
4. Keep trying, try differently.

**It's the end of the school year and you have just found out who is in your class next year. One of the students has a reputation of being a challenging student. The current teacher smiles at you and says, “Tag, you're it.”**

1. There is no one or any absolute truth.
2. Benign interpretation.
3. Everyone is doing the best they can, in this moment.
4. Keep trying, try differently.

# Basic Assumptions Practice



**A colleague down the hall always comes to your classroom before school to ‘talk’ about their students and parents. They are complaining and rehashing issues that happened months before. They just can’t seem to say anything positive.**

1. There is no one or any absolute truth.
2. Benign interpretation.
3. Everyone is doing the best they can, in this moment.
4. Keep trying, try differently.

**A parent calls your principal and complains that you favor other children and that their child is doing poorly because of it. They demand that their child be moved from your class and placed in another teacher’s class.**

1. There is no one or any absolute truth.
2. Benign interpretation.
3. Everyone is doing the best they can, in this moment.
4. Keep trying, try differently.

# Mindfulness Practice



## TRANSACTIONAL MODEL

Responses are reciprocal

Each initiating

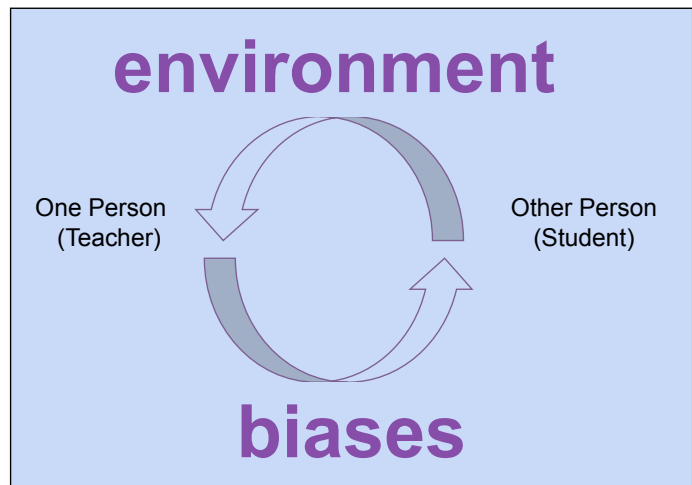
Each responding

Each influencing the other

All in the context of the environment and our own biases



SILA Skills  
SKILLS IN LIFE FOR ALL



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 43

## Myles and The Ninja Umbrella



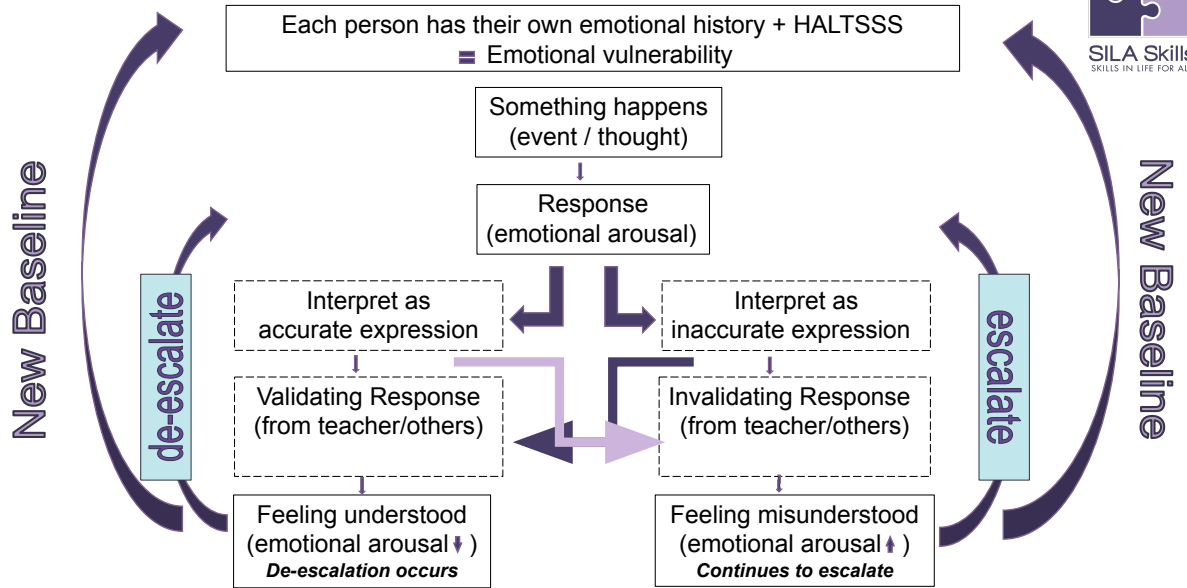
<https://www.walmart.com/ip/Umbrella-TMNT-Blue-Team-Kids-New-028465/690405976>



SILA Skills  
SKILLS IN LIFE FOR ALL

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 44

## Transactional Model (escalation and de-escalation)



Adapted from NEABPD, Family Connections™, 2002, 2012 National Education Alliance for Borderline Personality Disorder

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 45

“ When the **STORIES** about a student are saturated with negativity, have the **COURAGE** to not join in. Tell a **NEW STORY** - of their unique abilities & moments of kindness, **TELL THE STORY OF HOPE.**

- Trauma-Sensitive Teachers

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 46

# Week 1 Practice Exercises

1. One in one: Do 1 thing mindfully for 1 min each day.
2. Practice basic assumptions: how did outcomes change?
3. During the week notice transactions - share 1 transaction which could have had a different outcome?
4. Notice cues/habits, mental/physical, you have to help you be present with your student/co-worker/family.



# Mindfulness Practice



# Empathy vs Sympathy



SILA Skills  
SKILLS IN LIFE FOR ALL

Watch this at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Ewqu369Jw&t=11s>  
By: The RSA (2013, December 10). *Brené Brown on Empathy* [Video file]

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 49

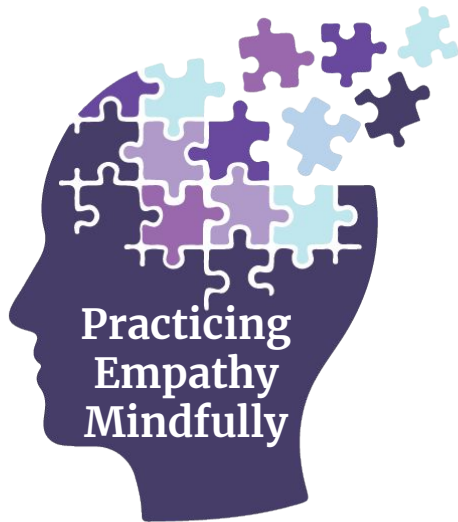
“ EMPATHY is walking a mile in somebody else’s moccasins.  
SYMPATHY is being sorry their feet hurt.

- Rebecca O'Donnell



SILA Skills  
SKILLS IN LIFE FOR ALL

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 50



**Without Judgement**

**Listen patiently,  
without interrupting**

**Be interested  
“Tell me more ...”**

**Express warmth with  
your body language**

**Approach with  
Compassionate Curiosity**



***Fuels Connection!***

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 51



**What makes it difficult to  
be a student these days?**

# It's not easy!



|   | HALTS   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time restraints</li> <li>• Expectations</li> <li>• Developing/lacking social skills</li> <li>• Lack of control</li> <li>• Inconsistent rules (school/home)</li> <li>• Learning disabilities</li> <li>• Chaotic/unstable family</li> <li>• Family illness</li> <li>• Malnutrition</li> <li>• Developmental age</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>H</b>ungry</li> <li><b>H</b>ormones</li> <li><b>H</b>ydration</li> <li><b>A</b>ngry</li> <li><b>L</b>onely</li> <li><b>T</b>ired</li> <li><b>S</b>tressed</li> <li><b>S</b>ick</li> <li><b>S</b>ubstance</li> <li><b>S</b>creen time</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hormones</li> <li>• Feeling like misfit</li> <li>• Anxiety/mental health</li> <li>• Peer pressure</li> <li>• Unstable sense of self</li> <li>• Developing identity</li> <li>• Increased independence</li> <li>• Social media</li> <li>• Transitions</li> <li>• Relationships</li> <li>• Pressure to succeed</li> </ul> |

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 53

# Dandelion and Orchid

THE CENTRE FOR RELATIONSHIP-BASED EDUCATION

RETHINKING RESILIENCE:

Ten Tips for Teaching  
Dandelion and Orchids



[www.relationshipbasedschools.com](http://www.relationshipbasedschools.com)



Dr. David Tranter, PhD



SILA Skills  
SKILLS IN LIFE FOR ALL

Watch this at:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLNdwSxi0Os&ab\\_channel=Dr.DavidTranter%2CPhD](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLNdwSxi0Os&ab_channel=Dr.DavidTranter%2CPhD)  
By: Dr. David Tranter, PhD (2019, April 19). Rethinking Resilience: Ten Tips for Teaching Orchids and Dandelions [Video file].

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 54



# Validation

*The power of feeling understood!*



## What is Validation?

- Finding the **kernel of truth** in another person's perspective or situation
- Recognizing the emotion behind the words and behaviours being expressed.
- **Acknowledging** and **communicating** that the other person's **feelings** and **perspective** makes sense, are understandable in their current situation or their past
- Validation is only validating if it's **validating to the other person!** You will know because the intensity of the emotion will start to decrease, or stops from escalating.
- Can be **verbal** and **non verbal**.

***The power of feeling understood. Connection.***

# What Validation is NOT



Approving

Agreeing

Liking

Condoning

Problem solving/trying to fix

Giving up

Justifying

Accepting

Being right

Complimenting

Coddling

Being soft

Admitting I'm wrong

Giving a "free pass"

Eliminating accountability

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 57

# Why Validate?



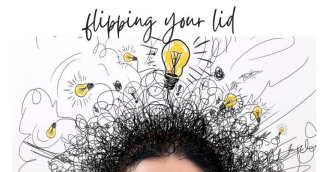
Preserves or improves relationships

Builds trust

Slows negative emotional reactivity, de-escalates situations

Decreases anger

Makes problem solving and support possible



<https://write.as/mommaleelee/flipping-your-lid>

*When done well, it's a superhero power!*



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 58

# What to Validate?

- Feelings or emotions
- True values
- Efforts made
- How difficult something is
- Suffering
- Things done for others or themselves



*The kernel of truth!*

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 59



# Let's share our validation experiences



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 60

# We feel validated when ...

what we get from the outside



aligns with what we feel on the inside

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 61

# How to Validate: 6 levels of Validation



1. Being present
2. Accurate Reflection
3. Mind Reading
4. Past History or biology
5. Normalizing
6. Radical Genuineness



<https://executivesupportmagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/xv-id1092018588.jpg>

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 62

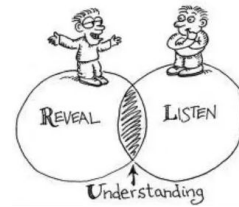
# 1. Be present:

Listening and attending with interest  
Stay focused

Example:

Non-verbal – making eye contact, respond with facial expressions, nodding, staying awake, not multitasking, acts of service

Verbal – making acknowledging sounds like “ah ha” “oh”  
“of course”



# 2. Accurate Reflection:

Showing that you understand through paraphrasing,  
summarizing the other’s feelings or thoughts

No judgement, with an open mind

Use a tone of voice that allows the person to correct you

“Sounds like you are pretty upset  
about your performance on the  
test.”



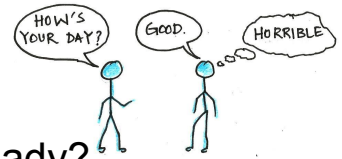
<https://www.justinyaros.com/mirroring-effective-couples-communication/>





### 3. Mind Read

Reading facial expression, body language, and articulating their thoughts or feelings that have not directly been expressed in words



What is happening?

What do you know about the person already?

Be open to correction

“I’m guessing you must have felt pretty hurt by his comment.”

### 4. Past History or biology:

Acknowledging that the other’s experience makes sense given their past history, current events or state of mind



“Given how chaotic it is at home right now, I can see how difficult it is for you to get to school on time.”



Sometimes when I say  
*“I’m okay!”*,  
I need someone  
to look at me in the eyes,  
hug me tight and say  
*“I know you are not!”*.



## 5. Normalize:

Communicating that the other's feelings makes sense given the current situation.

“Of course you're anxious.  
Speaking before an audience for the  
first time is scary for anyone.”



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 67

## 6. Radical Genuineness:

By speaking in a way that conveys your view of the other as an equal and capable of handling direct and honest feedback

Do not fragilize

“Wow, so hard. I've had similar feelings myself, it's not easy.”



Let's connect what we've learned  
with Caleb and his teacher.

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 68



# Cheerleading

...*CAN* be **hopeful** and **encouraging** ...



...*AND* sometimes it just doesn't seem to work.

Let's take a moment to think about the last time you had to cheerlead a student who was struggling with school or an activity:

What did you say?

How did that go?

# Cheerleading

...*IS* **hopeful** and **encouraging** ...



...*WHEN* we use our  **VALIDATION**

**AND** we **acknowledge** and **ARTICULATE** what we *believe* is different than what they are feeling inside

"I know you can do this even though ...



...you may not feel that way right now  
...you don't believe you can

# Sound familiar?

Yes, BUT ...

Oh don't worry about it

It's not such a big deal

Cool off, you're way too sensitive!

You shouldn't feel this way

Calm down, it's not so bad

You'll do better next time

If you JUST...

\*I'm sorry...

\*I know...



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 71

# Invalidation happens when we....

Blame: *"If you would just.... you could..."*

Minimize: *"Don't worry, it's not a big deal"*

Judge: *"You are overreacting"*

Deny: *"You're not angry"*

Try to fix: *"I'll give you a make up test"*

Tell them how they should feel: *"You should be happy"*

Make it about us: *"I hated it when that happened to me."*

Non verbal: *roll eyes, huff, drum fingers, cut eye, check our watch, multi-task, tone, sarcasm!*



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 72

# How about these?



One-up the person.

*"Oh, you think you have it bad..."*

Give advice.

*"What you really should do is..."*

Make "life" statements.

*"Well, life's not fair..."*

Make "revisionist" statements.

*"If you had only..."*

Make it about you.

*"How do you think that makes me feel?"*

Make "character" statements.

*"You're too sensitive..."*

Make "character" statements.

*"You're too sensitive..."*

Rationalize behavior.

*"I bet they were just..."*

Use reason or the "facts."

*"That's not what happened..."*

Use "always" or "never".

*"You always get yourself into these situations..."*

Distract: *"Come on, let's go play"*

Call names. *"Don't be a baby."*

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 73

# Validating Statements



So frustrating to go from winning to losing, no one likes to lose.

I noticed how hard you were working.

It's so difficult to... *[then articulate what is difficult]*...not have the toy you want. I know how much you like ...

It's so sad when... our friend doesn't want to play with us.

It must be so frustrating to stop doing an activity you love doing.

I can see how important it is to you.

It sounds like you feel that it's really unfair!

**Remember:** These statements are validating only if they resonate or land with the person!

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 74

# Don't know what to say....

Say nothing .....engage, be present

“Wow, I don't even know what to say” ...be genuine

“That sucks”

“Of course”

“What happened”

“Makes sense”

“Mmmm, tell me more...”

“That must have been so hard to share.”



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 75



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 76

# Week 2 Practice Exercises

Continue to:

- 1 in 1: do 1 thing mindfully for 1 min each day.
- Practice basic assumptions: how did outcomes change?
- Notice transactions and your thoughts.
- Notice cues/habits, mental/physical, you have to help you be present with your student/co-worker/family.

Build on your skills practice:

1. Notice empathy. Notice sympathy.
2. Notice when you felt validated AND when you didn't.



# Mindfulness Practice

# Validation Tips

## HALTSSS

Be empathetic

Mindful of the other's emotions, desires, goals

Be in Wise Mind

Express understanding and acceptance

Replace "BUT" with "AND"

It's ok to get it wrong

3 validating statements in row will change conversation for the better or will stop from escalating

Match level of intensity minus 1

***Look for the kernel of truth!***

Why  
Am  
I  
Talking



# What gets in the way of validation?

Not accepting what we hear

Trivializing the problem

Justifying ourselves

Quick to problem solve

Wanting to be right

Focusing on the secondary emotion or behaviour

Thinking "They are just looking for attention."

"It's not fair"

Thinking we are approving





## Self-validation - How

Use mindfulness skills to *perceive* and *label* your own feelings, thoughts and actions as *accurate*

Accept our own internal experience, thoughts, feelings without judgement - It's OK!

Respond to yourself as you would if another felt this way

Encourage and accept validation from others

## Self-validation - Why

Helps reduce emotional and physical arousal. It's calming!

Reduces vulnerability to Emotion Mind

Moves you closer to Wise Mind

Positions us for more effective problem solving



## Self-invalidation happens when we ...

Don't know what we are feeling

Ignore what we are feeling

Judge our feelings

Discount what we are feeling

Have negative self-talk

## Self-invalidation will ...

Increase vulnerability to Emotion Mind

Move you further away from Wise Mind

Increase emotional reactivity

Decrease possibility for effective problem solving



# Keep in mind:



## When Validating:

Less is more  
Address the emotion  
Verbal and Non verbal  
Be Mindful/present

## Non Validating if:

Addressing the situation or problem solving  
Stating facts/explaining/justifying  
It's about you

## **AND ALWAYS:**

Safety first  
Follow school protocols

Teacher



Student

***The purpose of validation is just to VALIDATE!! To CONNECT!***

Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 83

# Validation Case



Think of a situation where you found it extremely difficult to validate - in fact - maybe even impossible:

1. Describe the situation (provide context)
2. What was going on for you
3. What was going on for the other person

# Week 3 Practice Exercises

1. Continue to practice the all skills shared in previous weeks' exercises.  
Previous weeks:
  - One in one: Do 1 thing mindfully for 1 min each day.
  - Practice basic assumptions: how did outcomes change?
  - During the week notice transactions - share 1 transaction which could have had a different outcome?
  - Notice empathy. Notice sympathy.
  - Notice when you felt validated AND when you didn't.
  - Notice cues/habits, mental/physical, you have to help you be present with your student/ co-worker/ family.
2. Pick one missed opportunity for validation. Share what you could have done differently.
3. How did validation opportunities change?



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 85

## Skills In Action registration open:

**FREE: Skills in Action - virtual Real-time Coaching and Refresher session** (open to all past participants)



Each month you will receive an email invitation to register for a Skills In Action session, register for any/all that appear.

\*A Zoom link will be included in your confirmation email after you register. Be sure to check spam folder and accept emails from us.

This Coaching/refresher session is intended to provide an opportunity for past participants of Transforming Classrooms workshops to receive coaching on:

- scenarios where skills:
  - didn't quite work
  - how and what skills could have been used in specific situations
- refresher on specific skills of interest to you
- share how you have used skills to transform your relationships with clients and co-workers and/or personal life

Click this button to

[Register Here](#)



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 86

# Thoughts/Questions

## Questions between sessions:

 [workshop@SILASkills.org](mailto:workshop@SILASkills.org)

[www.SILASkills.org](http://www.SILASkills.org)

Follow us:

   @SilaSkills



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 88

## References

DBT Skills Manual for Adolescents; Jill H. Rathus and Alec L. Miller, 2015 Guilford Press

Linehan, Marsha M. (2015). DBT<sup>®</sup> Skills Training Manual. Guilford Publications, 2015 Guilford Press

NEABPD, Family Connections<sup>™</sup>, 2002, 2012 National Education Alliance for Borderline Personality Disorder



Workshop created by The SILA Skills Group 89