



**\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE: This is a corrected version of the newsletter sent on Friday, July 24, 2020. Specifically, the details regarding the Emotional Intelligence Online Conference on 8/11 and 8/12 have been updated.\*\*\***

We hope your week is off to a great start and that everyone is staying home and keeping safe!

With social distancing still at the helm of our daily routines, we must remind ourselves to maintain the precautionary physical distance, but not neglect the need for emotional closeness with others and with ourselves. Compassion is the thread that binds us all together as a society and by opening up ourselves and others towards meaningful and selfless interaction, we create the opportunity for a positive social-emotional climate to flourish in the classroom and in the workplace. In this week's feature, we explore the notion of compassion and its impact on SEL Academy founding member, Dr. Bill Trusheim; in addition to sharing valuable resources for integrating compassion in a seemingly in-compassionate climate.



Dr. Bill Trusheim is one of the founding members of the SEL Academy. He has infused the Academy with his wisdom from a lifelong path in education. Bill's crucial insight is that "relationship is the foundation for instruction." 50 years in education as a teacher, principal, superintendent of schools, and now president of New Jersey Alliance for Social, Emotional, and Character Development crystallized this truth for him.

Initially attending Rutgers in pursuit of a chemistry degree, he realized he would rather pursue a career in music and education. His deepest aim for all of his students is that they are able to apply what they learn throughout their life, impacting the world. He is perplexed by those in education who are loathed to consider SEL as part of student achievement, seeing standard test scores as "snapshots" of each student's potential. Bill has recognized how crucial the relevancy of classwork and problem-based learning is. With COVID-19 and Justice in scope, Bill reminds us to first physically distance but not to socially distance, and calls on our SEL capacities to meet the uncertainties and trials of life.

Reluctant at first in joining the SEL Academy, Bill's hesitation and greatest surprise was how well his online students communicated and collaborated creating a cohesive group identity. Happy to leave hunting for grants to Maurice and Trish, Bill teaches course 101 and helped to design course 201 and the practicum. His future wishes for the academy include enhancing the leadership aspect by including a couple of days workshop for face to face engagements and expanding the 101 section to create more robust bonds among and between the cohort and instructor.

Bill advises anyone pursuing a career in education to keep the counseling and relationship aspect of the vocation alive to prevent the other forces from grinding one down and to reaffirm one's aspiration toward the benefit of others.

### Reminder: SEL Virtual Learning Community

We are in the midst of research and evaluation efforts to learn more about your experiences in the Academy. We will reach out to everyone eventually, however, we have already learned that one term is somewhat of a mystery: VPLC.

So, what is the VPLC? The VPLC is the Virtual Professional Learning Community - and guess what - you're already a part of it! For those of you in the "thick of it" (i.e. still enrolled in classes), your VPLC is expansive. You have your course cohort as a source of consultation and feedback, your instructor(s) to reach out to, and you also have the option of reaching out to our community of experts at the Academy using the email: SELvplc@gmail.com.

For alumni, the VPLC brings continuous added value to your certificate. This, in turn, enhances your role in your school or after-school setting, including serving as a resource to other staff with regard to children's Social-Emotional and character competencies. We encourage alumni, who may or may not have contact with their cohorts or instructors to reach out to us at SELvplc@gmail.com.

These times remind us of the importance of creating and accessing our communities (especially the virtual ones!). Don't forget you have a support system built into the Academy!

### Resources

- CASEL, in collaboration with leading organizations, has released "[Reunite, Renew and Thrive: SEL Roadmap for Reopening School](#)." The guide aims to support educators as they plan for the transition back to schools by providing instructions on how to implement four SEL Critical Practices that can help students and adults thrive in the upcoming year.
- The Committee for Children, an SEL nonprofit, is raising signatures for a petition that would urge Congress to prioritize investments in SEL for the upcoming year through the FY2021 House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies bill. As the bill faces the House of Representatives, it is crucial that lawmakers hear the voices of SEL educators. To sign or for more information, please visit the [website here](#).
- The Academy's own, Dr. Maurice Elias, recently published a piece entitled "[How to Boost Students' Sense of Optimism](#)," which offers helpful skills and exercises through a trauma-informed approach to improve students' expectations.

### Upcoming Events

#### **2020 Emotional Intelligence Online Conference "Thriving in the New Normal"**

August 11th and 12th, 2020

The conference features keynote speaker Dr. Marc Brackett, leader of Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, as well as sessions with leading researchers on topics such as well-being, emotions, racism, and emotional cognition. Other speakers include: Dr. Sig Barsade, Dr. Heidi Brooks, Dr. Angela Duckworth, Dr. Dacher Keltner, and Dr. Robin Stern.

**Don't forget to follow us on social media!**



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