

Wellness and Resilience Strategies: Spirit

Section 9



INTRODUCTION

Spirit is one of the four sectors of the compass model for self-care. Each area contributes to and helps build our compassion resilience. Spirit encompasses connecting to our sense of purpose with intentionality, exposing ourselves to resilience in those we serve, and recreating ourselves through rest and play.



INFORMATION

Distribute this document to all participants to explore prior to the following application activities.



APPLICATIONS

Key Activity

Sharing Stories of Resilience (5-10 minutes)

Institute the regular practice of sharing stories about current and past students' resilience.

Wellness Practice

Developing Your Professional Mission Statement (15-30 minutes)

Circle Agenda

Staff Circle Agenda, Section Nine

Core Content Visual to Display in Common Staff Areas

Rest and Play Reflection – Use this Visual and Display in Staff Break Areas

Posting this visual in common staff areas will serve as a reminder of content covered to staff and perhaps serve as a future conversation started for deeper reflection among staff members.

Supplementary Activities/Handouts

Book study (30-60 minutes)



LINKS

For links specifically for leadership and additional resources, please visit the Toolkit online.

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INFORMATION

Our sense of purpose provides direction to where we focus our energy, passion and growth. When we live our life in alignment with our core values, we have a strong sense of purpose. Being able to articulate our core values and our sense of purpose helps guide the choices we make. If our sense of purpose is not clear to us we become more vulnerable to compassion fatigue.

How our sense of purpose affects our well-being.

One way to increase our understanding of our sense of purpose is by developing a professional mission statement. Mission statements help us to be aware of what we want to drive our thinking, decisions, and actions and support us to be intentional in our life and specifically, in our work.

Those in the education sector are considered to be in a “helping profession.” One aspect of a mission statement for people in helping professions is obviously that the outcomes of their work are beneficial to others. Compassion fatigue can occur when we do not feel like what we are doing is making a positive impact on those we seek to serve; this may feel like we are not serving our purpose. In order to support our spirit, we need to see evidence that we are making a difference in the lives of our students and to understand that they have a reservoir of resilience that, when combined with effective supports, can lead to successful and satisfying lives.

Rest and play are also key components to the spirit sector. Taking the time for rest and the time for play nourishes our ability to live out our sense of purpose. Our core values and sense of purpose can determine the types of activities or recreation that fulfill us.

In this section you will look at ways to articulate your sense of purpose, expose yourself to positive stories of the impact of your work and resilience of your students and their families, and reflect on your own rest and play. It also provides school leaders with suggestions for systematizing the celebration of school staff and exposure to stories of resilience.



WHAT'S NEXT

Wellness and Resilience Strategies – Strength

Developed in partnership with:



compassionresiliencetoolkit.org

Activity: Share Stories of Resilience

1. **Share staff success stories** (positive outcomes of their efforts with students, parents, or co-workers) regularly through internal communication tools already in place, at the start of staff meetings, etc.
2. **Share stories of past students** who presented challenges to staff and are currently doing well. When we run into these youth in our communities, ask them if you can share how they are doing with the school staff. They may love it, and your staff will love hearing it. Even if they did not know the student, they can transfer that hope to their current students. "I caught _____ doing well!"
3. **[Eliminatestigma.org](https://www.eliminatestigma.org) offers free, brief videos** of youth and adults talking about their mental health challenges and their path of recovery. Go to [Eliminatestigma.org](https://www.eliminatestigma.org) for youth, adult and parent stories.



[Understand Stigma](#) | [Recovery Stories](#) | [Blog](#) | [About WISE](#) | [Get Involved](#)



Recovery Stories

We work to reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness and addiction by illuminating the fact that recovery is possible. People can and do get better. Showing the positive impact of effective treatment on individuals' lives provides hope for others.

When those with mental health and substance use disorders choose to strategically share their experiences, it helps to bring mental illness out of the shadows of secrecy and reduces public and self-stigma.

Activity: Developing Your Professional Mission Statement

Contemplating and articulating our personal and professional mission can bring awareness to what drives us and allow for intentionality in our life and specifically, in our work. If our sense of purpose is an unconscious motivator of our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, it can complicate our ability to act competently, with self-awareness. Job satisfaction and compassion resilience are connected to being able to see that we are fulfilling our sense of purpose – our mission.

A good mission statement is clear and focused, has emotional appeal, and is built to last*.

Begin by answering what, why, who, and how

- **What** do you do?
- **Why** do you do it?
- **Who** do you want to help?
- **How** will you get your desired result?



My mission statement

Tips for your mission statement: use empowering and positive language. The goal is when you see your mission statement it renews your energy and sense of purpose in your work.

After you have written your mission statement, it takes intentionality to have this statement influence your daily work. Therefore, it may be helpful to select an object that you can associate with your mission statement. This could be simply your mission statement written out and placed on the wall, it could be a picture, a small desk figurine or toy-get creative! Make it personal and connect it to your mission statement. Then when you see that object, quote, or statement you will be reminded of why you are doing what you do and why it is worth it to continue.

*Adapted from [5 Elements of a Power Company Mission Statement](#)

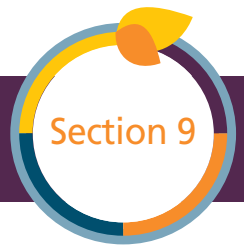
Staff Support



Circle Agenda

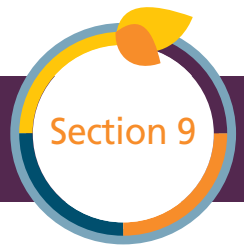
Circle Topic	CR Section 9: Wellness and Resilience Strategies: Spirit
<p>Planning</p>	<p>Send the introduction document from Section 9 in the online toolkit at least 4 days prior to the circle to all participants.</p> <p>Hold a meeting with leadership to prepare for this section and invite the leader(s) to consider the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This section begins the wellness practices portion of the toolkit. Your participation in the conversations as a peer-learner for personal wellbeing will provide opportunity for you to make authentic and personal connections with the group. 2. The wellness sessions should give you insight into potential wellbeing supports that you can offer to all staff. <p>For the full leadership preparation document, please visit this page.</p>
<p>Purpose of Circle/ Learning Objectives</p>	<p>We are learning to balance work, rest, and play and the value of connecting to our mission on a daily basis.</p>
<p>Materials/ Preparation/Time</p>	<p>Time: 45-50 minutes</p> <p>Materials:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Circle kit <input type="checkbox"/> Values and shared agreements created in first session <p>Set-up: Up to 15 chairs arranged in a circle without furniture in the middle.</p> <p>To consider: Understanding Your Social Location as a Facilitator – Active Bystander Intervention: Training and Facilitation Guide.</p>

Wellness and Resilience Strategies: Spirit



Circle Topic	CR Section 9: Wellness and Resilience Strategies: Spirit
Welcome/Check-In (5 minutes)	<p><i>"My mission in life is not merely to survive, but to thrive; and to do so with some passion, some compassion, some humor, and some style."</i> – Maya Angelou</p> <p>(Go-around) What word in the quote stood out to you and why?</p>
Grounding/Wellness Practice (5 minutes)	<p>Guided Meditation for Relaxation</p> <p>Guide participants through a grounding exercise. Ask them to sit with both feet on the floor, backs straight but relaxed and away from the back of the chair, palms on knees, and eyes either closed or softly open. If eyes are open, it is helpful to focus on the circle centerpiece.</p> <p>In a calm and soothing voice, guide them to relax their minds and bodies. Ask them to quiet their minds by simply noticing when thoughts come into their minds and allow them to leave without attention to them. Guide them to relax their bodies from head to toe, one area of their bodies at a time.</p> <p>If you would like to consider a different grounding practice, please review the mindfulness appendix for additional suggestions.</p>
Review (5 minutes)	<p>During our last circle, we covered the mind sector of the toolkit where we looked at mindful self-awareness, the role our sense of competency plays in our job satisfaction and shared some tips on organization. Today, we're going to move on to the spirit sector of the toolkit.</p>
Self-Care for CR, Part One and Guiding Questions (10 minutes)	<p>Balancing rest, play, and work is one area of the wellness compass's spirit sector. The grounding activity we did was a chance for us to practice restfulness and relaxation.</p> <p>(Go-around) What is a way you find joy or rest in your workday?</p>
Self-Care for CR, Part Two and Putting it into Practice (15 minutes)	<p>Explain: In the spirit sector of the toolkit we look at our core values and our ability to balance rest, play, and work. For many of us, our career selection was based on our core values and we find meaning when our values are evident in the outcomes of our work. For instance, if respect is a value and through my work people are learning to be more respectful, my value is evident in that result. Compassion fatigue can occur when we do not feel like what we are doing is making a positive impact on those we seek to serve according to our values. This may feel like we are not serving our purpose. In order to support our spirit, we need to see evidence that we are making a difference in the lives of those we serve and to understand that they have a reservoir of resilience that, when combined with effective supports, can lead to successful and satisfying lives.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (Go-around) What led you to your field of work? (Reflection) Reflect on a leader in your current or past experience who helped you make a clear connection between your work and the mission of the organization?

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Closing (10 minutes)	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. (Open mic or choose what number of participants have enough time to share out) Share a story with a beginning, middle, and end about a time when you saw the fruits of your labor and experienced a positive outcome from your efforts working with others.2. (Open mic) How might we consciously seek out more positive stories about the impact of our work? <p>Bonus Activity: Suggest that the participants focus between sessions on either seeking out and sharing a positive story of the impact of the work or selecting and bringing into their workspace a visual that reminds them of the link between their work and their personal and organizational mission.</p>

Rest and Play Reflection

Experiencing resilience in the spirit area of rest and play means engaging in activities that are truly re-creative of our bodies and our spirits.

**When do you feel most alive? What are you doing?
What or who are you surrounded with?**

When do you feel most like yourself?

**Where is the artist in you? Are you an artist in communication,
in cooking, in selecting fun activities, in finding interesting details about life, etc.?**

