



Well School Tech

Guide to Wellbeing Management in Schools

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Erasmus+

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Chapter One: Self-Evaluation Guide for Teachers

1.1 Introduction

The period of adolescence is defined in developmental psychology as the period of time between 10 and 20 years of age. During this time, there are intense physical changes which significantly affects other spheres - cognitive, social, emotional and moral, and the sphere of personality. Vocabulary increases, imagination and perception develop and thinking becomes logical and takes the form of formal operations. This period is full of numerous challenges (Oleszkowicz, Senejko, 2015). Both accelerated and delayed sexual development can cause adolescent problems. Physiological maturation of the body affects self-esteem - some changes may be a source of joy, others disapproval, as well as ambivalent feelings. Increases in excitability and emotional lability, frequent emotions of anxiety and embarrassment. The relationship with parents' changes, conflicts are more frequent. Youth activity is significantly influenced by the school environment, family and peer group.

This period is the time in a child's life is also a period of intense schooling. The role of the teacher and school environment for general wellbeing is not to be underestimated. But what exactly is "wellbeing"?

Concepts such as mental wellbeing, happiness, quality of life and life satisfaction can be considered as similar. According to the WHO concept, quality of life is a subjective perception of a person's position in life in relation to his or her goals, expectations, standards and interests. A new field of psychology emerged in the 1990's - 'positive psychology' - concerned in explaining what a "good life" means, or a life of optimum quality, for which the name "well-being" was adopted. The difficulty in defining the concept of "well-being" is due to the fact that 'a good life' means different things to different people. The reference to two philosophical concepts - hedonic and eudemonic - is considered to be helpful here. According to the first approach, wellbeing is a positive mental state manifested by a high level of life satisfaction, a predominance of positive feelings over negative and a generalized sense of happiness. The eudemonic stream concentrates instead on development, self-realization and commitment. Ryff's (1989) model, is useful here, the model includes aspects such as autonomy, a sense of purpose in life, a sense of control of the environment, personal development, positive relationships with others, and self-acceptance. According to Czapiński (2004) psychological well-being is multi-faceted. The 'Onion Theory of Happiness' created by the author points to three levels. The deepest level is the 'will of life' - the objective standard of individual mental well-being - independent of consciousness and genetically determined. The intermediate level is the general subjective well-being that corresponds to a sense of general life satisfaction and the subjective experience of the value of one's own life. The most external layer of the "Happiness Onion" refers to the current affective experiences and partial satisfaction with respect to specific aspects of life (e.g. school, family). Seligman (2012) on the other hand refers to wellbeing with a description of "Flourishing" consisting of a sense of engagement, positive emotions, meaning, achievements and relationships with others. This short overview indicates that there are many theories about wellbeing and how it can be measured.

1.2 Understanding Wellbeing

As discussed earlier, there are many and varied definitions of mental wellbeing. The World Health Organisation (WHO) emphasise the complexity of the psychological, social and environmental factors that all interplay and affect a person's sense of wellbeing. The theoretical model of psychological wellbeing established by Ryff (1989), presents it as positive psychological health, including positive evaluations of oneself and one's past life, a sense of continued growth and development as a person, the belief that one's life is purposeful and meaningful, as well as the possession of quality relationships with other people, the capacity to manage one's life and world, and a sense of self-determination. Ryff's definition will be the basis of our understanding for the purposes of this manual.

In accordance with Pyhältö, Soini and Pietarinen (2010, p.209): "learning for socio-psychological wellbeing within school can be seen as an active, collaborative, and situated process in which the relationship between individuals and their environment is constantly constructed and modified. In turn, socio-psychological wellbeing experienced by the members of the school community regulates their learning in many ways, for example, it can affect the ability to concentrate and observe the environment, perceive opportunities, and interpret received feedback (Bowen et al. 1998; Deci and Ryan 2002; Kristersson and Öhlund 2005; Morrison and Clift 2005; Deci & Ryan, 2001; Pallant and Lae 2002; Torsheim et al. 2001). Hence pupils' sense of engagement and empowerment in studying is regulated by their experienced relationships with peers and teachers, belonging to the class and school community, self-efficacy, and perceived control and agency over one's action. Learning for socio-psychological wellbeing is not only about acquisition of knowledge and skills, but about an ongoing, interactive process of sense making and development in which motives and emotions play an important part (e.g., Lasky 2005; Nonaka and Nishiguchi 2001; Paavola and Hakkarainen 2005; Wenger 1998).

Another **definition** is based on the 'School Well-being Model' conceptualization conducted by Konu and Rimpela (2002). In this model wellbeing is based on a narrower criteria, solely associated with the school environment and is defined as a four-dimensional phenomenon. Thus, wellbeing was associated with teaching and education, as well as with learning and achievements. School wellbeing was divided into 4 conditions: school conditions (connected with "having"), social relationships (connected with "loving"), means for self-fulfilment (connected with "being") and also health status. They explain "means for self-fulfilment" as pupils' possibilities to studying in accordance with their own resources. The "health status" is defined as symptoms of illnesses.

1.3 Links between wellbeing and the teaching and learning process

Teacher wellbeing

From an organizational perspective, employee wellbeing is an important factor in quality, performance and productivity. Wellbeing is strongly related to work stress, a key player in employee absence. Demotivated staff are often disengaged, do not enjoy their jobs and eventually leave. The higher teacher wellbeing, the less sick leave, and lower supply teacher costs. Teacher's happiness levels have a knock on effect for students. Emotionally exhausted teachers may use reactive and punitive responses that contribute to negative classroom climates and student-teacher relationships. For example, the Jennings and Greenberg (2009) prosocial classroom model highlights the importance of teachers' social and emotional competence and wellbeing in the development and maintenance of supportive teacher-

student relationships, effective classroom management, and successful social and emotional learning program implementation (Jennings, Greenberg, 2009). These factors contribute to creating a classroom climate that is more conducive to learning and that promotes positive developmental outcomes among students.

Traditionally, the role of teaching has been one of nurturing and developing students' potential. As Evers, Tomic and Brouwers (2004) report, teachers play a valuable role in helping children grow. In order to do this, they must remain physically and mentally well. Teacher well-being and competence has been related to job satisfaction. Singh and Billingsley (1996) found factors such as stress, burnout, work overload, and job dissatisfaction contribute to teacher attrition while factors such as, administrative support, reasonable role expectations, and decreased workplace stress contribute to teachers' intention to stay in teaching. When teacher satisfaction was examined by Scott and Dinham (2003), they found that it was also influenced by student achievement and personal efficacy.

It may be plausible to argue that teacher well-being is influenced by job satisfaction and competence and lack of well-being associated with work may lead to stress which in turn may affect job performance.

Wellbeing and teaching

Schools will always be focused on academic learning, but research suggests it is time to make wellbeing a regular part of teaching. Good teaching involves teaching students in ways that develop empathy, build positive relationships, enhance responsible decision-making, help students learn how to handle challenging situations and develop leadership skills. As teachers discover what aspects of the learning process boost student wellbeing and which aspects of learning can be used to build resilience, a clear link in the classroom between learning and wellbeing is developed. This allows teachers to teach their academic curriculum (e.g. maths or history) in ways that also boost student wellbeing.

Teachers can enhance wellbeing while also teaching academic content. For example, consider the maths teacher who strategically uses a challenging maths problem to help students understand their emotions (e.g. fear, uncertainty, excitement, curiosity), to help them bounce back when they make a mistake (e.g. resilience), and/or to encourage the student to understand how their mind-set (e.g. growth or fixed) determines whether they believe that they can work through the problem or give up. Instructional leadership, coaching and professional development help teachers improve their pedagogy and learn ways to evaluate the impact of their teaching practices on student wellbeing (Waters, 2017).

Wellbeing and learning

The relationship between social-emotional competencies and academic achievement has been under investigation for over 40 years (Purkey, 1970). A meta-analysis of over 200 school-based studies on the impact of universal interventions to enhance students' social-emotional learning found benefits in school achievement, among others (CASEL, 2007, 2008). Barbara Frederickson's (2001) Broaden and Build theory shows how positive emotions support many of the key cognitive processes a student needs to learn. Research has established a strong link between cognition (e.g., attention, memory, and decision-making) and emotion at the neural level. (Immordino-Yang, 2007). Slee et al. (2009) reported that 92% of teachers across 100 schools strongly agreed, that 'Students who are socially and emotionally competent learn more at school'.

1.4 Teacher Competencies and Psychological Wellbeing

There are varying risk and protective factors for wellbeing when determining a teacher's wellbeing.

Occupational stress and burnout can play an important role as a risk factor.

A good teacher appears as a person with a high level of personality maturity, multidisciplinary expertise, and an effective tutor. These requirements can be related to high stress levels.

Possible work stressors can be:

- work activities
- place in the hierarchy
- career path
- relations between employees,
- general organisation in the workplace (Kowal, 2002).

In addition, factors related to work-life balance and individual characteristics such as physical condition, personality, intelligence or temperament can be sources of stress (Potocka, 2010).

Stress is related to different work outcomes e.g.: workplace engagement, job satisfaction and attrition.

The personal consequences of teacher stress can include absence, burnout, physical and emotional distress, reduced self confidence and self-esteem, damaged personal relationships and even work related stress contributing to a suicide. A significant loss of skilled and experienced teachers through those choosing to leave the profession.

While stress has been an issue for teachers for some time it is only recently that burnout has increased (Rudlow, 1999). Burnout happens when individuals endure prolonged periods of high levels of stress. Thus, increasing burnout rates among teachers is indicative of them facing increased and prolonged levels of stress (Hamann & Gordon, 2000). Maslach (1999) also confirms that burnout is a long-term process that results from prolonged exposure to chronic job stressors. It can be seen as a psychological emotional exhaustion syndrome, depersonalization and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. Psychological wellbeing is negatively related to burnout.

Research shows that burnout significantly predicted negative consequences at various levels (physical, psychological, professional, family, and social), whereas psychological wellbeing, and more specifically emotional hardiness, reduced these negative consequences (Kareaga, Exeberria, Smith, 2008).

Among protective factors affecting wellbeing, particular significance has been attributed to the personality and strategies adopted for coping with stress. Resiliency, understood as a personal resource, represents the presence of a group of personality characteristics, allowing for effective coping during and after highly stressful events. Understood in this sense, resiliency promotes perseverance and flexible adaptation to the demands of life, enables the individual to mobilise and take remedial action in difficult situations, and increases the tolerance of negative emotions and failure. In addition, people characterized by a high level of resilience are more positively adjusted to life, and have higher self-esteem and effectiveness. A resilient individual is characterized by emotional stability, is more likely to regard difficulties as an opportunity to gain new experiences, and see himself as a person who has an impact on decision making (Ogińska-Bulik, Juczyński 2008).

Resiliency may significantly increase the effectiveness of coping with stress (Ogińska-Bulik, Zadworna-Cieślak, 2014). Having the ability to deal with stressors is vital in teacher retention. School teaching is

regarded as a stressful occupation, but the perception of the job as stressful may be influenced by coping responses and social support. Research with teachers show that coping and social support not only moderate the impact of stressors on well-being but influence the appraisal of environmental demands as stressful (Griffith et al., 1999).

One of the most neglected aspects of teacher training is thorough preparation in the interpersonal skills that are needed by good teachers in today's schools. Pre-professional teachers require a grounding in communication theory (Morgan, 1989). Interpersonal skills in the teaching profession include communication, positive motivation, effective and positive body language and humour. Communication is the method used to exchange or share information. Teachers have to communicate with students at the students' own level of understanding. That can be difficult if each student has a different level of learning and understanding. Effective and positive body language is non-verbal communications that will help leave a long lasting impression in the minds of the students. Body language will also draw a student into the discussion. Body language is a powerful tool and will maintain healthy interpersonal skills. Positive motivation in education typically produces positive learning. Not all students are on board with all subjects and sometimes it takes demonstrating applications of the less liked subjects in areas that interest students. That will provide the motivation the student needs to study that subject. Humour is the one area of skills that allow a teacher to keep the motivational train rolling along. Well placed and appropriate humour will provide additional motivation and the desire to learn. Maintaining the student's attention is critical to the learning process and humour will help keep that attention.

According to Jennings and Greenberg (after: Zakrzewski, 2013) one of the imperative social-emotional skills an effective teacher must possess is empathy. It is important not only for their personal well-being but also to improve student learning." Empathetic teachers have more positive self-concepts, are more self-disclosing to their students, respond more to students' feelings, give more praise, are more responsive to students ideas, and lecture less often" (Rogers, 1975). Thus, empathy as an ability to understand others' people diverse perspective or complex emotions can help improve teaching strategies work more effectively, which protects against burnout (Kliś, Kossewska, 1997).

Another important aspect of being a teacher is protecting your work-life balance (WLB). WLB means balancing the stability between your work life and private life. It is not the strict separation of the private and professional spheres, but rather their harmonious merging so that work, family and hobbies/interests create a coherent wholeness (Szymańska, Wolski, 2013).

The study results conducted by Nilsson, Blomqvist and Anderson (2017) highlights the importance of school management's support in reducing teachers' time pressures. The researchers paid attention to the need to address teachers' individual resources in relation to work-life balance. In order to support teachers' work-life balance, promote their well-being, and prevent teachers' attrition, we suggest that the school management would benefit from creating a work environment with strengthened resources

WLB is strictly connected with organisational skills, often known as 'time management'. Effective time management is the planning and action that is directed towards the effective realization of our most important goals. Scientific research shows that by consciously managing our time and energy, we can achieve more in less time. Effective time management has a positive effect on all aspects of our lives. The most important thing is that we can learn or improve time management skills if we have deficits in this area (Szaban 2003, pp. 224-230). Why is it so important for teachers? The lack of good time management in a teacher's work leads to a build-up of issues and obligations, resulting in lack of time to rest, decrease

in efficiency and further build-up of duties. The result is unnecessary stress, frustration and even failure to meet deadlines. Lack of effective time management leads to postponing activities, so we do not realize our passions and dreams. Effective time management is the control of such situations. It is the ability to plan and execute plans, prioritize and distinguish important things from urgent ones (Dawidziuk, 2013).

Among the variables influencing the psychological well-being of teachers, it is necessary to mention self-efficacy. Studies show that self-efficacy beliefs negatively correlate with psychological tension, burnout and depression, and positively with pro-health behaviours (Łuszczynska, 2004; Skaalvik, Skaalvik, 2007). Self-efficacy is defined most broadly as an individual's conviction about their personal ability to fulfill a variety of conditions leading to the achievement of the intended results (Bandura, 1994). Such understood self-efficacy is a proxy between goals and efforts to achieve these efforts (Pervin, John 2002). Self-efficacy can therefore be responsible for success or failure. If a teacher's sense of effectiveness is low and leads to failure, then it is a source of stress and is the next step of the burnout syndrome. It is important not to confuse the feeling of efficacy with the expected result. Chomczyńska-Rubacha & Rubacha (2006) emphasize that self-efficacy does not relate to the certainty that action will end with the achievement of a certain standard (i.e. "I know that my lecture will inspire cognitive curiosity of students"), it is a belief that 'as a teacher I can do this'.

1.5 Self-Evaluation of Teacher Competencies

Research has shown that life success depends on self-awareness. People who know themselves, their emotions, know how to direct themselves, actually read the feelings of others and respond accordingly, have an advantage in all walks of life (Powell 2000). The teachers' competencies described above are especially important in both fulfilling the professional role and maintaining good mental condition themselves. Developing these skills or acquiring the necessary skills requires awareness of one's own deficits. This section outlines some selected tools that can help teachers better understand themselves, their needs, and their abilities.

Teacher Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire (TSWQ)

The Teacher Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire (TSWQ) (Renshaw, Long & Cook, 2015) is an 8-item self-report behaviour rating scale for measuring teachers' job-specific wellbeing. It's comprised of two subscales: (1) School Connectedness and (2) Teaching Efficacy. Subscale scores can be used as standalone wellbeing indicators or they can be summed to create a Total Teacher Wellbeing Scale (see: Table No. 1).

Research shows that responses to all TSWQ scales have at least adequately internal reliability and that they have discriminant and convergent validity with indicators of teacher stress, emotional burnout, and perceived supports for teachers and students within the school environment.

The TSWQ is intended to be used for practical purposes as an outcome and progress-monitoring measure, and potentially as a screening instrument. Yet further research is needed to demonstrate its treatment utility for these purposes.

Table No. 1:

Title of Instrument	Teacher Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire (TSWQ)
Authors:	T.L. Renshaw, C.R. Long, & A. Cook.
Measures / Questions and rates	<p>Questionnaire statements - answer rating from 1 to 4 (from “almost never” to “almost always”)</p> <p>Instruction: Below are some questions about your experiences as a teacher. Read each item carefully and then circle the response that is most applicable to you.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I feel like I belong at this school. 2. I can really be myself at this school. 3. I’m a successful teacher. 4. I am good at helping students learn new things. 5. I feel like people at this school care about me. 6. I have accomplished a lot as a teacher. 7. I am treated with respect at this school. 8. I feel like my teaching is effective and helpful.
Calculating of results	<p>School Connectedness Scale: items 1, 3, 5, 7 Teaching Efficacy Scale: items 2, 4, 6, 8 No reverse-scoring necessary Higher scale scores represent greater levels of teacher wellbeing</p>
Source	<p>Measure available at http://tylerrenshaw.com/tswq Renshaw, T. L., Long, A. C. J., & Cook, C. R. (2015). Assessing adolescents’ positive psychological functioning at school: Development and validation of the Student Subjective Wellbeing Questionnaire. <i>School Psychology Quarterly</i>, 30, 534-552. doi:10.1037/spq0000088</p>

Brief COPE

Brief COPE is a tool designed for adults. The scale consists of 28 statements in 14 strategies (2 statements in each strategy): Self-distraction, Active coping, Denial, Substance use, Use of emotional support, Use of instrumental support, Behavioural disengagement, Venting, Positive reframing, Planning, Humour, Acceptance, Religion, and Self-blame. Most often, the method is used to measure disposable coping, i.e. the assessment of typical reaction and sensation in stressful stress situations (Carver, 1997) (see: Table No. 2).

Table No. 2:

<p><i>Title of Instrument</i></p>	<p>Brief COPE</p>
<p><i>Authors:</i></p>	<p>C. S. Carver</p>
<p><i>Measures / Questions and rates</i></p>	<p>Instruction:</p> <p>These items deal with ways you've been coping with the stress in your life since you found out you were going to have to have this operation. There are many ways to try to deal with problems. These items ask what you've been doing to cope with this one. Obviously, different people deal with things in different ways, but I'm interested in how you've tried to deal with it. Each item says something about a particular way of coping. I want to know to what extent you've been doing what the item says. How much or how frequently. Don't answer on the basis of whether it seems to be working or not – just whether or not you're doing it. Use these response choices. Try to rate each item separately in your mind from the others. Make your answers as true FOR YOU as you can.</p> <p>Answers: 1 = I haven't been doing this at all; 2 = I've been doing this a little bit; 3 = I've been doing this a medium amount ; 4 = I've been doing this a lot</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I've been turning to work or other activities to take my mind off things. 2. I've been concentrating my efforts on doing something about the situation I'm in. 3. I've been saying to myself "this isn't real." 4. I've been using alcohol or other drugs to make myself feel better. 5. I've been getting emotional support from others. 6. I've been giving up trying to deal with it. 7. I've been taking action to try to make the situation better. 8. I've been refusing to believe that it has happened. 9. I've been saying things to let my unpleasant feelings escape. 10. I've been getting help and advice from other people. 11. I've been using alcohol or other drugs to help me get through it. 12. I've been trying to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive. 13. I've been criticizing myself. 14. I've been trying to come up with a strategy about what to do. 15. I've been getting comfort and understanding from someone. 16. I've been giving up the attempt to cope. 17. I've been looking for something good in what is happening. 18. I've been making jokes about it. 19. I've been doing something to think about it less, such as going to movies, watching TV, reading, daydreaming, sleeping, or shopping. 20. I've been accepting the reality of the fact that it has happened. 21. I've been expressing my negative feelings. 22. I've been trying to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs. 23. I've been trying to get advice or help from other people about what to do. 24. I've been learning to live with it. 25. I've been thinking hard about what steps to take. 26. I've been blaming myself for things that happened. 27. I've been praying or meditating. 28. I've been making fun of the situation.

<i>Calculating of results</i>	Subscales items (with no reversals of coding): Self-distraction: 1, 19; Active coping: 2, 7; Denial: 3, 8; Substance use: 4, 11; Use of emotional support: 5, 15; Use of instrumental support: 10, 23; Behavioral disengagement: 6, 16; Venting: 9, 21; Positive reframing: 12, 17; Planning: 14, 25; Humor: 18, 28; Acceptance: 20, 24; Religion: 22, 27; Self-blame: 13, 26.
<i>Source</i>	Measure available at www.psy.miami.edu/faculty/ccarver/sclBrCOPE.html Carver, C. S. (1997). You want to measure coping but your protocol's too long: Consider the Brief COPE. <i>International Journal of Behavioral Medicine</i> , 4, 92-100

Time Management Questionnaire

Questionnaire for time management refers to different areas of difficulties associated with time managing skills i.e. time spending on planning, doing things in order of priority or spending too much time on trivial matters (Advance Corporate Training) (see: Table 3).

Table No. 3:

<i>Title of Instrument</i>	Time Management Questionnaire
<i>Authors:</i>	Advance Corporate Training
<i>Measures / Questions and rates</i>	<p>Scoring: 2 = Always 1 = Sometimes 0 = Never</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I do things in order of priority _____ • I accomplish what needs to be done during the day _____ • I always get assignments done on time _____ • I feel I use my time effectively _____ • I tackle difficult or unpleasant tasks without procrastinating _____ • I force myself to make time for planning _____ • I spend enough time planning _____ • I prepare a daily or weekly "to do" list _____ • I prioritize my list in order of importance, not urgency _____ • I am able to meet deadlines without rushing at the last minute _____ • I keep up-to-date on my reading and research assignments _____ • I prevent interruptions from distracting me from high priority tasks _____ • I avoid spending too much time on trivial matters _____ • I spend enough time on work-related activities _____ • I plan time to relax and be with friends in my weekly schedule _____ • I have a weekly schedule on which I record fixed commitments such as work hours _____ • I try to do the most important tasks during my most energetic periods of the day _____ • I make constructive use of my commuting time _____ • I periodically re-assess my activities in relation to my goals _____ • I have discontinued any wasteful or unprofitable activities or routines _____ • I screen and group my telephone calls to allow for control over telephone interruptions _____ • I judge myself by accomplishments of tasks rather than by amount of activity _____ • My actions are determined primarily by me, not by circumstances or by other people's priorities _____ • I have a clear idea of what I want to accomplish during the forthcoming quarter _____ • I am satisfied with the way I use my time _____

<i>Calculating of results</i>	Results (you need to sum up): 45 to 50: You have outstanding time management skills 38 to 44: You have strong time management skills 30 to 37: You are managing your time fairly well, but sometimes feel overwhelmed 25 to 36: You work career is likely to be stressful and less than satisfying unless you take steps to begin to manage your time more effectively Less than 25: You need to work on your time management skills
<i>Source</i>	Measure available at: http://www.act.edu.pl/testy---sprawdz-sie

Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale- Short Form (TSES-SF)

Teachers' Sense of Efficacy is the beliefs in their capability to make a difference in student learning, to be able to get through even to students who are difficult or unmotivated. The Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale asks teachers to assess their capability concerning instructional strategies, student engagement, and classroom management (Tschannen-Moran, Hoy, A. (2001); (see: Table 4)

Table No. 4:

<i>Title of Instrument</i>	<u>Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale- Short Form (TSES-SF)</u>
<i>Authors:</i>	Tschannen-Moran, M., & Woolfolk Hoy, A.
<i>Measures / Questions and rates</i>	<p><i>Directions:</i> Please indicate your opinion about each of the questions below by marking any one of the nine responses in the columns on the right side, ranging from (1) "None at all" to (9) "A Great Deal" as each represents a degree on the continuum.</p> <p>Please respond to each of the questions by considering the combination of your <i>current</i> ability, resources, and opportunity to do each of the following in your present position.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How much can you do to control disruptive behaviour in the classroom? 2. How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work? 3. How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy? 4. How much can you do to help your student's value learning? 5. To what extent can you craft good questions for your students? 6. How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules? 7. How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work? 8. How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students? 9. To what extent can you use a variety of assessment strategies? 10. To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused? 11. How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school? 12. How well can you implement alternative teaching strategies in your classroom?
<i>Calculating of results</i>	<p>Subscale in Short Form</p> <p>Efficacy in Student Engagement: Items 2, 4, 7, 11</p> <p>Efficacy in Instructional Strategies: Items 5, 9, 10, 12</p> <p>Efficacy in Classroom Management: Items 1, 3, 6, 8</p> <p>Higher scale scores represent greater levels of teacher self-efficacy.</p>
<i>Source</i>	<p>Measure available at http://wmpeople.wm.edu/site/page/mxtsch/researchtools</p> <p>Tschannen-Moran, M., & Woolfolk Hoy, A. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. <i>Teaching and Teacher Education</i>, 17, 783-805.</p>

In addition, for those teachers who would like to learn more about their own functioning, we recommend visiting the Authentic Happiness website (<https://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/testcenter>).

This is a University of Pennsylvania website developed by the [Positive Psychology Center](#). [Dr. Martin E. P. Seligman](#) is the Director of the Center, and a Professor of Psychology at Penn. The purpose of this website is to provide free resources where people can learn about Positive Psychology through readings, videos, research, opportunities, conferences, questionnaires with feedback and more. You will find there are a variety of tools for self-evaluation on this website.

Monitoring student's wellbeing as an example of classroom management

In addition to monitoring the factors that condition one's own well-being and developing the ability to support one's own mental health, monitoring the mental well-being of students is an important aspect of a teacher's classroom management. Capturing potential difficulties (eg, poor peer relationships) at an early stage can help students get the suitable psychological help. Preliminary assessments of students' psychological well-being, also allows you to take action within the school setting, i.e. organising psycho-educational workshops about dealing with stress or improving self-esteem.

A teacher who knows the problems and weaknesses of their students is able to take actions that eliminate these difficulties and thus make teaching and learning easier and more effective. There are a variety of tools for diagnosing both school problems and difficulties areas. However, some of them may only be used by mental health professionals (psychologists, psychiatrists). To facilitate teacher's understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of students with regards to their mental wellbeing, a survey has been developed to identify functioning in various areas of their lives.

Students' well-being evaluation survey

The survey consists of two parts. The first part contains four statements relating to satisfaction with certain aspects of life (eg, "I am satisfied with my relationships with peers"), rated on a 10-point scale, where 1 signifies "strongly disagree" and 10 signifies "strongly agree ". Students can receive 4 to 40 points in this section. A higher overall score means a greater overall satisfaction with life. The second part of the questionnaire consists of seven statements about the assessment of your social functioning, including coping with difficult situations (eg, "I can always count on my parents", "When I get stressed out I can handle it."). Students assess the extent to which they agree with each other using the same scale. The higher the overall score, the better the declared level of social functioning. Students can receive 7 to 70 points in this section. In pilot studies involving Polish teenagers (Kossakowska, Zadworna-Cieślak, 2017), the Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients were calculated for each part of the survey which was satisfactory and amounted to 0.69 and 0.77 respectively.

The survey is not a diagnostic tool. It was designed to recognize potential problems affecting students. The statements relate to the skills previously described as essential to maintaining a high level of mental wellbeing (see: Table No. 5).

Table No. 5:

<p><i>Title of Instrument</i></p>	<p>STUDENTS WELL-BEING EVALUATION SURVEY (see: Attachment No.1)</p>
<p><i>Authors:</i></p>	<p><i>Zadworna-Cieślak, M.; Kossakowska, K.</i></p>
<p><i>Measures Questions and rates</i></p>	<p><i>A 11-item scale that measures students' life satisfaction and social functioning</i> <i>All items are answered from 1 to 10 points scale format ranging from definitely not to definitely yes (first 4 statements) as well as strongly agree to strongly disagree (next 7 statements)</i></p> <p>Please, circle the answer from 1 to 10 to assess how satisfied you are with the various aspects of your life by referring to the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I am generally happy with my life 2. I am happy with my situation at school 3. I am happy with my family situation 4. I am happy with my peer relationships <p>Using the same scale (1 to 10), please, try to evaluate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. There are people around me who listen to me when I need to talk 6. I can handle most of the problems that come my way 7. I rarely fall into conflict with the teachers 8. My peers accept me as I am 9. I can always count on the help of my parents 10. When I'm in a difficult situation I usually know what to do 11. When I get stressed I can deal with it
<p><i>Calculating of results</i></p>	<p>Students can receive from 4 to 40 points in first section and from 7 to 70 points in the second. A higher overall score means a greater overall satisfaction with life and better level of social functioning, respectively.</p>

How evaluation results can be used to foster improvements

Stress prevention and strengthening of well-being in the teaching profession should be multi-faceted, taking into account teacher's work environment. School stress management programmes should be a result of a detailed analysis of the current situation and individual organisation. Also, in the design of preventive interventions, it is important to focus on raising wellbeing, not just to eliminate the negative effects of stress. Employees should be involved in the creation, implementation and evaluation of the programme. The preventative steps may be complex. It can be assumed that any intervention should be implemented on at least three levels: formal, social and individual (Zadworna-Cieślak, Zbonikowski, 2016).

The 'formal level of prevention' should include actions directed at education authorities, head teachers and senior management teams. It should aim both to raise awareness and to promote projects that support teachers' personal resources in coping. It would also be worthwhile to implement a formal extension of the school's programmes around wellbeing to strengthen the personal resources not only of students but of teachers as well. What's more, the education and training of future teachers should be enriched with additional psychological content to equip them effectively for working in the school setting.

The 'social level of prevention' should include actions directed to the social environment impacting on teachers, pupils, parents, and other staff members. The goals of these activities should include developing factors that protect individuals from burnout and stress, such as; teamwork, the ability to communicate and support people in difficult situations, collective values and goals in the teaching/learning process, and the ability to work together in achieving them. It should be noted, that the prevention directed at pupils, oriented towards risk factors, indirectly also plays a specific role in preventing burnout of teachers themselves.

The third, 'individual level of prevention' should be concentrated on teachers. This area of activity is present in the contemporary school, and is most often delivered in the form of lectures. Thus, an informational preventive strategy is being implemented, which - as the research shows - is relatively ineffective, because beyond the awareness of the problem does not develop personal competencies or skills. Practice also shows that this strategy is often well evaluated by teachers, because it does not require participants to work hard in an active way. The active learner role is often difficult for emotionally exhausted teachers.

However, psychoeducational prevention should be promoted, allowing development of interpersonal skills and authentic personal development. The main goals of psychoeducation are:

- Self-awareness development of values, needs, stress reactions and personal resources
- Shaping the vision of a good teacher, adequate to the challenges, realities and personal predispositions
- Building motivation to change professional expectations, attitudes and behaviours
- Developing protective factors against the negative effects of occupational stress and burnout - self-esteem, self-efficacy, optimism, openness to experience, emotional intelligence, stress coping and resiliency.

An example of this approach towards positive teacher practice is 'Visible Wellbeing™' (VWB) - instructional leadership that integrates the three separate fields of positive education, visible thinking and visible learning. Visible Wellbeing™ is not a program or a set curriculum about wellbeing, rather, it

is a flexible approach for integrating student wellbeing into the learning process in any subject matter and at all year levels (early learning, elementary, middle and secondary). Visible Wellbeing™ provides a way for instructional leaders to help teachers adopt pedagogical practices that enhance student wellbeing (Walters, 2017).

Chapter Two: Setting the Learning Environment

2.1 Organisation of the Learning Space

The school environments, perhaps more than any other sort of environment, need to offer maximum flexibility and adaptability of internal space in order to support pupils' emotional wellbeing. The best teaching employs a mixture of group work, whole-class and individual learning. Space needs to be quickly configured and reconfigured according to the type of sessions required and subjects being offered. Flexibility of furniture arrangement, for example, is very important when addressing learners' ability to work individually or in groups without undue interference with one another. Collaborative learning, learning with partners and in groups, is and will continue to be a key issue.

How learning spaces should be organised

Below, a number of general recommendations about optimal learning environments in schools are presented, the recommendations have been extracted from the Child Friendly Schools Manual (UNICEF, 2009).

Classrooms:

- Light, air, sun, glare, reflection, humidity: Classrooms need good fresh-air circulation to avoid heat and excessive humidity. To ensure adequate daylight, a minimum of 20 per cent of the classroom wall area should be window area. Classrooms must be sufficiently shaded from direct sunlight, glare (direct light) and reflection (indirect light).
- Colour: Materials and finishes should be the light, natural colours of the materials themselves, selected in harmony with warm natural hues as accents (reds, oranges, maroons, ochres and linen/khaki/off whites) dictated by local and cultural preferences. For example, timber may be finished using clear varnish to preserve the natural beauty and warmth of the material. Or brighter accents can be used for play corners, decks, corridors and furniture. Learning spaces should be light and relaxed in colour, not gloomy, dull or dark.
- Size and space: Classrooms can vary in size and serve different functions, with children moving from one to another for different purposes. Instead of being single-purpose spaces, they should be used for a number of different activities, such as reading, research, group work and art.
- Flexible spaces: Flexible spaces increase child participation in class and allow teachers to provide a more dynamic environment for learning and teaching, including informal learning. Such spaces provide opportunities for group activities, areas for practical projects and easy access to open spaces. Outdoor classrooms, facilities and other open spaces give pupils a chance to be out-of-doors during breaks between classes. Classrooms should be accessible for all children; ramps and wide doorways should be provided for less mobile children.
- Access: Direct access to the outdoors from the classroom enables children to make better use of the outdoors as a learning resource, but there should be one or more intermediate space (e.g., corridors) that links the outdoors with the indoor learning environment. In that way, there will

be a range of learning spaces gradually changing in character – with multiple learning opportunities.

- Safety: Transparency in school design, so people can look inside the classroom and other school units, can safeguard children risks such as bullying and although very uncommon, abuse from teachers, particularly during after-school hours. Transparency protects everyone.
- Mobile furniture: In modern schools, mobile furniture replaces benches or desks that may have been bolted to the floor. When seats are movable, children can work alone or in groups. Chairs or stools are easier to be moved around rather than benches.
- Children's home base: Storage facilities in or near the classroom for children's class projects, artwork, bags and coats are necessary. Students should have a private, lockable storage areas to keep their belongings – even if just a tiny space.

Outdoor spaces:

- Informal learning space: Easy access to open spaces from classrooms allows children to be in close contact with the environment and to be engaged in physical activities as well as informal learning. Open spaces can be organised as playgrounds for sports, school fields and gardens, decks or verandas for outdoor learning activities, open performance spaces, wide corridors and courtyards, trellises, canopies, shaded pavilions, alcoves, play lofts and enclosed play spaces.
- Recreational space: Ideally, every school playground should contain enough space for popular sports, games and extra-curricular activities (drama, singing, dancing). Children should be involved in laying out the games area since they understand the requirements.
- Multifunction open-air stage: When possible, an outdoor stage can serve as a classroom and performance space for certain classes or school activities. Such a space can also function as a meeting place for community activities after school hours. Events may include graduation, opening of the school year and important holidays that parents, teachers and students celebrate at school.

The modern school perspective

A novel approach, seeking to best match physical environment in the classroom to the needs of pupils', in order to enhance learning performance and emotional wellbeing, reflects three dimensions, i.e. that we seek certain natural features as being healthy, such as daylight; that we respond to and adapt our surroundings to suit our individual preferences; and, lastly, that the level of stimulation provided for a space needs to be appropriate for the activity taking place. Thus, the model is structured in the following three parts (Barett, P. et al., 2015):

1. Naturalness: e.g., light, sound, temperature, air quality and links to nature;
2. Individualisation: e.g., ownership, flexibility and connection;
3. Stimulation (appropriate level of): e.g., complexity and colour.

Each of these three domains is discussed below in detail in terms of its desirable characteristics for a healthy classroom environment:

Naturalness

Light:

- *Glazing orientation and glazing area:* High levels of natural light via large windows to the classroom are optimum, moderated by a need to avoid glare from direct sunlight. Glare is now a greater issue because of the widespread use of interactive whiteboards and computer projection in classrooms.
- *Artificial lighting:* Both a good quality and quantity of electrical lighting are always needed to supplement classroom illumination at times and in areas where natural light is inevitably not sufficient.
- *Glare control:* Blinds (sufficiently opaque) that function effectively to control light levels are the best. They should be easy to use. Some types of blinds can cause excessive noise or air flow issues. External shading to sunlit windows can also provide protection.

Air quality:

- *User-controlled ventilation:* Windows with large opening sizes, ideally provided via multiple openings, allow users to ventilate the room effectively under different circumstances. Top openings that are high in the room, but easy to use, allow the hottest and stalest air to escape more efficiently. Roller blinds that block air flow through the top opening windows can cause poor air quality due to low ventilation rates.
- *Room volume:* In large rooms, excessive levels of carbon dioxide and poor air quality are less likely to occur due to dilution within the large volume of the room.
- *Mechanical ventilation:* In situations where natural ventilation is problematic, air quality can be improved with mechanical ventilation.

Temperature:

- *Central heating control:* Better temperature control is usually found when rooms have radiators with thermostatic controls. In contrast under-floor heating seems to be associated with poor heating control in individual classrooms.
- *Orientation and shading control:* The temperature is usually better controlled where the orientation ensures there is no direct sun heat into the room; however, direct sun heat can be eliminated using external shading devices. Sun-facing skylights with no external shading can add unwanted sun heat into the room.

Sound:

- *External noise:* Rooms that are situated away from busy areas such as the playground or reception areas have less external noise. Traffic noise being heard in the classroom can also be a problem where there is no acoustic buffer such as distance plus trees and shrubs.
- *Internal Noise:* Unwanted noise in the classroom can be reduced if chairs have rubber feet. Internal acoustics are also improved where the classroom has large carpeted areas.
- *Room Shape:* It is easier for teachers to be heard by pupils when the seating arrangement allows pupils to be closer to the teacher. A room where the length to width ratio is higher allows this type of seating arrangement.

Link to nature:

- *Views of nature:* Rooms allowing pupils to have a view to nature seem preferable. This includes natural elements such as grass, gardens, ponds and trees. The window must have window sills at or below the pupils' eye level.
- *Access to nature:* Classrooms with doors directly towards a play area outside are considered important.
- *Natural elements* in the classroom such as plants and wooden furniture can also be important.

Flexibility:

- *Breakout space:* Classrooms with clear breakout zones or breakout rooms attached are considered to impact positively on learning. Breakout zones within corridors and separated from the classroom do not appear to be effective.
- *Storage:* Good and accessible storage is important in classrooms but too many cupboards can take up useful learning space. Placing storage in corridor spaces is a good solution, e.g. cupboards, coat pegs, so long as it does not impede circulation.
- *Learning zones:* Younger pupils, who spend a lot of their time engaged in play-based learning, benefit from a larger number of different learning zones. For older pupils who spend more time engaged in individual formal learning or group work fewer learning premises are needed.
- *Room shape and area:* Rooms with varied floor plan shapes provide greater potential for creating different activity areas for younger pupils. For older pupils, squarer and larger rooms work better in facilitating their learning opportunities.
- *Wall area:* Large, accessible wall areas provide flexible opportunities for the display of information and of pupils' work.

Individualisation

Ownership:

- *Room design:* A classroom with a distinctive room design or particular characteristics making it instantly familiar is to be preferred.
- *Room display:* Pupils' work is displayed on the walls. Other elements such as shared display tables can also be used for the purpose.
- *Elements that are personalized by the pupils:* These might be coat pegs, lockers and/ or named drawers.
- *Furniture, fixtures and equipment:* Well-designed furniture that creates learning space which is child centred can be very important.
- *Chairs and desks:* Desks and chairs must be comfortable, interesting and ergonomic to the pupils' ages and sizes.

Connection:

- *Corridor width:* wider corridors allow ease of movement in crowded conditions and open up possibilities for relieving congestion in classrooms by providing auxiliary storage as has been discussed under "flexibility".

- *Orienting corridor:* Orientation around the school can be aided by large and visible pictures, landmarks and abundant daylight with plenty of outside views along the corridors.

Stimulation

Appropriate level of *Complexity*:

- *Visual diversity of the floor layout and ceiling:* Enough to stimulate the pupils' attention, but presenting a degree of order.
- *Visual diversity of displays:* The displays on walls must be well designed and organized, covering up to a maximum of 80% of the available wall area.

Appropriate level of *Colour*:

- *Wall colour and area:* This core aspect is curvilinear. Large, brightly coloured areas are not preferred, neither are white walls with few colour elements. The intermediate case with light walls, plus a feature wall in a brighter colour is generally considered to be most effective for learning.
- *Additional colour elements in the classroom:* They play a complementary, stimulating role. For example, relatively bright colours on the floor, blinds, desk and chairs will add extra highlights and flashes of colour to support mental wellbeing.

2.2 Arrangement and Design of Learning Spaces: Recommendations for school administration and teachers

Creating a warm and inclusive classroom environment

One of the first things teachers do at the beginning of the school year is to organise, arrange, and decorate classrooms. The physical environment of a classroom plays a part in the ownership pupils feel about their school and more specifically their class. The classroom environment should do as much to foster cooperation and acceptance as the instructional method the teacher uses. Children are sensitive to the atmosphere created in the classroom. Is the classroom warm and inviting? Are all areas of the classroom accessible to all children? Are the walls bleak and lacking in colour or do the decorations help to make pupils feel comfortable?

Decorating a classroom with some kind of warmth can help promote a sense of comfort and security. Classrooms tend to be rather cold, bare places until they are decorated. Adding a splash of colour can bring life to a sterile environment. Colour choice is important when decorating a classroom. Teachers should keep in mind that red and orange can make children feel nervous and unsettled while blue and green can help pupils feel calm. Furthermore, dark colours take natural sunlight out of a room and can even make people feel drowsy and listless. Plants, soft chairs, rugs, and pillows can help to add warmth and comfort to a class environment.

While decorations help to create a warm environment, *organisation* of the furniture in the room is also important. There should be enough space for all students to easily move throughout the classroom.

Teachers should consider the use of universal design. Universal design is designing products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for modification or specialized design. This approach began in the field of architectural design when architects started to engineer accessible buildings from the beginning rather than making renovations to those buildings later. Universal design for instruction is a set of principles that help in the process of designing the classroom environment and instruction so that they are contributing to the learning of all students.

An illustration of the above is the arrangement of pupils' desks in a classroom – desks arranged in neat, orderly rows may make movement throughout the class easier but this arrangement may not help to create a warm, friendly environment. Some teachers use a semicircle or cluster to arrange the desks in their classrooms (see Figure 1 below), as they feel that grouping desks offers several benefits including encouraging cooperative learning, building a sense of class community, and making the best use of the space. Ideal desk arrangements create opportunity for pupils to be actively engaged in learning and have the opportunity to work cooperatively, when appropriate, with their peers, while still allowing pupils to navigate the environment safely.

Figure 1. Alternative classroom arrangements



Source: <http://www.learnnc.org/>

Supporting pupils' emotional wellbeing in an online world of learning spaces

Learning spaces, both physical and virtual, are the planned environments in which learning takes place. 21st century learning requires new spaces that connect school, home and community learning, increasing flexibility and supporting learning outside the boundaries of school buildings and beyond the conventional school day. Until recently, the focus of school design has been on durability and longevity. Rapid changes to education practice and technologies however demands educators to constantly rethink the suitability of the space and its design in terms of assessing the value of the space against the needs of learners. Below, a number of recommendable features of the modern learning spaces in schools are given, which are considered to possess the potential to contribute to achieving and maintaining a high level of emotional wellbeing among pupils.

Design must consider learning physiology...

- i. Welcoming and stimulating learning spaces are:
 - comfortable, imaginative and fun
 - maximum use of natural light and ventilation
 - creative colours, textures, patterns
 - range of formal and informal furniture and fittings
 - social spaces, range of technologies.

- ii. Acoustics and lighting, which complement learning:
 - sound-absorbing materials on floors, walls and ceilings
 - full-spectrum lighting for general learning spaces, adjustable mood lighting
 - specialised lighting and sound (e.g. visual arts, performing arts, library, reading areas, social areas)
 - pre-programmed, remote and personal control.

Learning is not fixed by time or place...

- iii. Furniture can be re-configured for multiple users and use:
 - fit for purpose furniture
 - adjustable, modular and mobile
 - stackable and collapsible
 - ergonomic tables and chairs.

- iv. Technologies support seamless movement between learning spaces:
 - wireless connectivity, docking stations
 - touch screens
 - interactive work surfaces linked to mobile devices
 - connected outdoor learning.

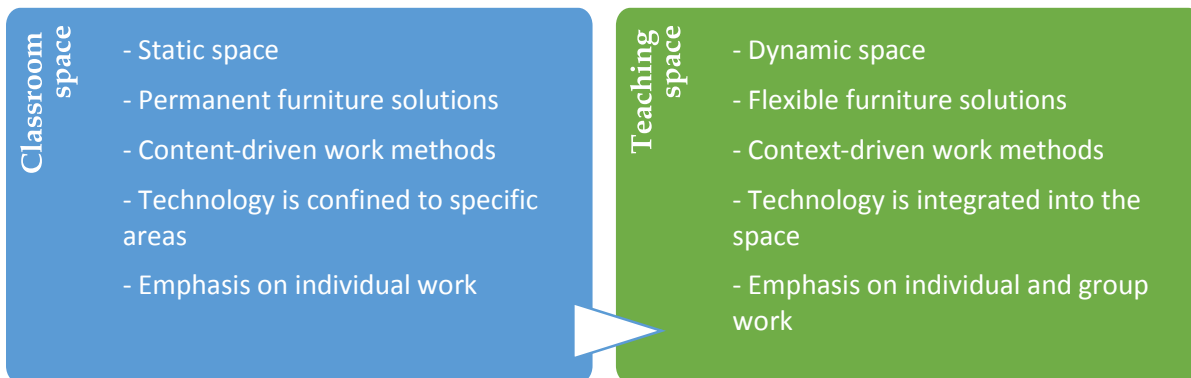
- v. Technologies support mixed ages, stages, abilities and learning needs:
 - tables suited to a range of technologies
 - flat screen monitors
 - notebooks and mobile computing devices
 - personalised lighting, sounds, pictures, videos.

The future of the physical learning environment – the dynamic teaching space

Studies indicate that there are several key factors related to a quality physical learning environment, namely the relevance for school users of the teaching space as a whole as well as their specific needs in relation to furniture and equipment (OECD, 2011). Furthermore, it is recognised that physical learning environment is pivotal to users' desire to develop the school's operational environment as well as their need to renew its operational culture. The more meaningful and challenging the operational environment is, the more willing the user is to improve the physical learning environment. The needs of teachers, head-teachers and pupils call for practical solutions, and these also have an impact on it.

When physical learning environments offer resources and possibilities that support new teaching methods and learning goals, schools are much more prompt to change their operational culture for the wellbeing of their pupils. Future technological advances and developments in social networks and media, as well as different teaching and learning methods, will undoubtedly require dynamic teaching spaces. Taking the above factors into account, it can be inferred that the carefully conceived flexible layout and furniture arrangement facilitates individual, pair and group work methods. The simultaneous enhanced interaction between the pupil and the teacher, on the one hand, and the physical environment, on the other, optimises new information flows. Often teachers and pupils perceive the traditional classroom as a passive area, which hinders the full use of space. On the other hand, they associate dynamic teaching spaces with flexibility and the possibility of creating different furniture configurations. The latter can be achieved by ensuring that furniture is mobile and that there is free and easy access to information technology (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2 A dynamic teaching space concept



Source: *The Future of the Physical Learning Environment: School Facilities that Support the User*, CELE Exchange 2011/11, OECD Centre for Effective Learning Environments, 2011

Pupils and teachers do not decry the traditional classroom as such, but they call for additional spaces of different sizes in optimal locations to support teaching and learning processes. The spaces should offer various possibilities for learning to take place: this can range from individual study to large group activities. They should also support teacher coaching and individual work. Such flexibility fosters new types of teaching and learning, which are determined by the demands of the subject or activity. In order to be successful, the sustainable physical learning environment needs to be equipped with both modular workstations and areas with comfortable seating, which contribute to support individual learning. It

should be possible to adapt the furniture to different configurations. Similarly, as teaching and information technology tools facilitate flexible teaching, it should be easy to displace equipment and wireless terminals according to different subjects and work methods.

In summary, children are better able to reach their potential, create and maintain positive interaction with their school peers and teachers through feeling welcomed and comfortable at school. The organisation of a school learning environment is of great importance in supporting and stimulating pupils' emotional wellbeing. The physical learning space should be maximised as a factor that offers resources and possibilities supporting the development of teaching methods, the achievement of learning goals and the emotional development of the pupils within it.

Chapter Three: Monitoring and Supporting Wellbeing in Schools

3.1 Introduction

This chapter is based on the best practice findings of Intellectual Output No. 2 (IO.2). IO2 research uncovered some of the best psychological well-being educational tools and strategies that can be used in school settings. It revealed many factors relating to psychological well-being and the most important related skills associated with the particular factors. For the purposes of this manual, the most important factors of psychological wellbeing have been defined as: family relationships; peer relationships; school factors; wellbeing at school; personal/individual resources; personal well-being; relational well-being; subjective wellbeing; autonomy; environmental mastery; personal growth; purpose in life; self-acceptance; social context; interaction; personality.

The most important skills and attributes relating to wellbeing have been defined as: parental competencies; teacher social-emotional competencies; empathy; communication and interpersonal skills; coping skills (with anger and aggressiveness); self-esteem; problem solving, team work; intimacy; resilience; emotional intelligence; negotiation and refusal skills; collaboration and teamwork skills; advocacy skills; self-awareness and reflection skills; independent learning and development skills; life skills; stress management skills; self-identity skills and self-acceptance skills.

Regarding the production of the manual and interactive resources, the following aspects of wellbeing management in the schools will be developed: the monitoring of psychological wellbeing, wellbeing education and the evaluation and assessment of wellbeing. The logic behind this chapter is based on educational methodology related to the necessity to monitor psychological wellbeing at school, making relevant interventions (based on monitoring results) and then measuring and evaluating the impact of the interventions made.

Monitoring wellbeing	Wellbeing education	Evaluation of wellbeing
<p>Wellbeing in school settings can be monitored through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Self-esteem monitoring ✓ Emotional intelligence monitoring ✓ Empathy monitoring; ✓ Stress management/ monitoring ✓ Knowledge of parental competencies ✓ Understanding of communication and interpersonal skills 	<p>Education around psychological well-being can be implemented using the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Parental guidance and support ✓ Guidance/support on emotional intelligence ✓ Guidance/support on stress management ✓ Guidance/support on empathy and coping ✓ Guidance/support on self-esteem ✓ Guidance/support on communicational and interpersonal skills 	<p>Evaluation of wellbeing can be implemented aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evaluation of self-esteem level ✓ Evaluation of Emotional intelligence ✓ Evaluation of stress management ✓ Evaluation of level coping ✓ Evaluation of parental competences ✓ Evaluation of communication and interpersonal competencies

3.2 Monitoring of psychological wellbeing at school

Definition

Monitoring psychological wellbeing in schools relates to 'checking' the general attitudes, skills, attributes, understanding and feelings associated with a pupil's and teacher's sense of subjective wellbeing. This type of monitoring will aid practitioners in supporting children and young people and teachers to reach their full potential.

Methodology

In order to monitor levels of psychological wellbeing in schools, it is necessary to measure general conditions relating to particular attitudes, skills and attributes linked with wellbeing. For this reason, quantitative research methods are usually applied to get basic insights of psychological wellbeing in the classroom. Questionnaires are the main measurement tool used in schools to gauge psychological wellbeing.

An example questionnaire will be provided for each of the significant attributes within the main chapter, further examples can be found in Annex 1.

3.3 Monitoring Tools

Monitoring Tools: Self-Esteem Questionnaire

Example No. 1

Title of Instrument: ROSENBERG SELF-ESTEEM SCALE

Resource: Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Measures/Questions and rates: A 10-item scale that measures global self-worth by measuring both positive and negative feelings about the self. The scale is believed to be uni-dimensional. All items are answered using a 4-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree).

Below is a list of statements dealing with your general feelings about yourself. Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

- 1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.*
- 2. At times I think I am no good at all.*
- 3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.*
- 4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.*
- 5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.*
- 6. I certainly feel useless at times.*
- 7. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.*
- 8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.*
- 9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.*

10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Calculating of results: Scoring: Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 are reverse scored. Give “Strongly Disagree” 1 point, “Disagree” 2 points, “Agree” 3 points, and “Strongly Agree” 4 points. Sum scores for all ten items. Keep scores on a continuous scale. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem.

Other resources: Gray-Little, B., Williams, V.S.L., & Hancock, T. D. (1997). An item response theory analysis of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 23, 443-451.

Monitoring Tools: Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire

Emotional intelligence incorporates the complexity of a person’s capability. While the earliest psychologist to explore this arena of “social intelligence” (Thorndike in the 20’s and 30’s, cf. Goleman, 1995) offered the idea as a single concept, more recent psychologists have appreciated its complexity and described it in terms of multiple capabilities (Bar-On, 1992, 1997; Goleman, 1998; Saarni, 1988). Gardner (1983) conceptualized this arena as constituting intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence. Salovey and Mayer (1990) first used the expression “emotional intelligence” and described it in terms of four domains: knowing and handling one’s own and others’ emotions. Other conceptualizations have used labels such as “practical intelligence” and “successful intelligence” (Sternberg, 1996), which often blend the capabilities described by the other psychologists with cognitive abilities and anchor the concepts around the consequence of the person’s behavior, notably success or effectiveness (http://www.eiconsortium.org/pdf/eci_acticle.pdf).

Example No. 2

Title of Instrument: QUESTIONNAIRE ON COMPETENCE IN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (ECI)

Resource: Reuven Bar-On and James D.A. Parker (editors)(2000) Handbook of Emotional Intelligence, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pages 343-362.; <https://weatherhead.case.edu/departments/organizational-behavior/workingPapers/WP%2099-6.pdf>; http://www.eiconsortium.org/pdf/eci_acticle.pdf

Measures / Questions and rates:

Self-Awareness

More like this	1	2	3	4	5	6	More like this
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<i>I am very much in touch with how I am affected by my feelings</i>							<i>I can be moody and often not sure what my moods are about</i>
<i>I can articulate the emotional impact situations are having on me</i>							<i>If someone asks me how I feel about something I am usually baffled and tongue-tied</i>
<i>I can be aware of, and work with, my feelings and the emotional impact without having to act them out</i>							<i>I tend to lose my temper or get very frustrated with others or to get tearful, frightened, or anxious and express these in my actions</i>
<i>I am aware of how my behaviour affects others; I am always aware of the responses of others to what I say and do</i>							<i>I have no idea really how I impact on others. I would be hard pushed to say how my behaviour during last week affected my partner/work colleagues</i>
<i>I know what my deepest values are and live by them. I would turn down work that conflicts with those values</i>							<i>I tend to make decisions on the hop; I see an opportunity and grab it. This does sometimes lead to me doing things that I don't want to do or feel trapped by</i>
<i>I know my weaknesses and areas for development and am able to own up to those without using them as an excuse</i>							<i>I tend to think that owning up to weaknesses makes me vulnerable and pathetic. I usually conceal my weakness in case others take advantage of me</i>
<i>I am realistic about what I can do well and am not able to do. I am true to myself in this way</i> <i>I know when to ask for help and willingly take it</i>							<i>I can take on things that are beyond me and/or I play down my strengths. I can be unassertive and over modest.</i>
<i>I know when to ask for help and willingly take it</i>							<i>I hate asking for help, if I do it is usually at the last minute and very reluctantly</i>
<i>Total Score = Average score (total score/8) =</i>							

Self-Regulation

<i>More like this</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<i>More like this</i>
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<i>The feedback I get is that people consider me trustworthy and that I have integrity. That is how I also see myself. My moods are predictable</i>							People have told me that I can be very unpredictable and I experience that for myself. My moods can be like a big dipper. I think it could be said that people might not be able to predict what mood I will be in
<i>I am able to keep calm even when I am aware of feeling angry or panicked by something</i>							I tend to act out my feelings. If I am anxious or frightened or angry people tend to know it before I do. I do hear myself explode quite often
<i>I am comfortable with ambiguity; I can tolerate things being unfinished or left open, all the answers not being available and things being a bit messy</i>							I like closure. I like things to be rounded off. I get very anxious if decisions are not made or are unclear. I need things to be unambiguous
<i>I am open to change; I know I have to change and welcome the opportunity to grow and develop</i>							<i>I really don't like change. I know it has to happen but I often think it just happens because other people like change for change's sake. I find the prospect of change very unsettling and frightening and am aware that I dig myself in</i>
<i>Total Score = Average score (total score/4) =</i>							

Motivation

<i>More like this</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<i>More like this</i>
<i>I feel really passionate about what I am doing. I feel totally engaged with the work and the people</i>							<i>I am not really interested or engaged in the work or the people. I tend to get my satisfaction from the non-work areas of my life. Actually, I can feel quite dissatisfied with life sometimes</i>

<i>I see self-growth and development as a never ending process. I still want to feel I am developing when I am older. I love self-development activities and am really looking forward to what I can get out of this questionnaire</i>							<i>I just feel I have been on so many courses and find I now try to avoid things that are about self-development as they usually don't tell me anything useful. I feel I am good at what I do and don't need any more development</i>
<i>I want to get better and better at what I do, not just for any external recognition but because I get satisfaction from aiming for and achieving high standards</i>							<i>I want to be OK; I don't want to be the best or have to push myself too hard. I want to plateau out</i>
Total Score = Average score (total score/3) =							

Empathy

<i>More like this</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<i>More like this</i>
<i>I think I am pretty astute about how other people tick and how different people like to operate and relate to me</i>							<i>I find other people baffling. I can't understand why some people are as they are or why they want to do things in particular ways. I can find their differences from mine very irritating</i>
<i>I am considerate of other people's feelings even when they might have done</i>							<i>I tend to think of my own feelings and position first. Others have told me they find me self centred and sometimes selfish in my attitude</i>

something that causes me problems							
I am able to gather a good team around me and we are able to reach consensus while being challenging and supportive							My team has quite a lot of conflict. I find the level of commitment very variable and often missing. People seem to be grumpy about our agreements
I am a good listener, I listen attentively and respectfully, aware of what is not being said. I can even do this when people put forward views that I profoundly disagree with							I know I am not a good listener. I like expressing my views and I can't resist butting in when I want to argue or out another pint of view or even agree with a story of my own. I have been told that I do interrupt others when they are talking.
I am known to be a good coach and mentor. People regularly come to me for this kind of support and direction							I am usually too busy to be able to give people this sort of time. I feel it is better for people to sort things out for themselves like I had to do
<i>Total Score = Average score (total score/5) =</i>							

Social Skills

<i>More like this</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	<i>More like this</i>
<i>Have a wide network of social and professional acquaintances. I know a lot of people in all kinds of areas</i>							<i>I keep my professional and social networks quite small</i>

<i>I find common ground with people of all sorts; I seem to get on with lots of different people</i>							<i>I only really like being with people who are like me; with whom I have things in common</i>
<i>I am told that people find me warm and accessible</i>							<i>I have been told that people can see me as remote and cool, even distant</i>
<i>I am a pretty good influencer; people are often persuaded by my approach</i>							<i>I am not a good influencer; I often fail to get what I want and end up doing what others want instead</i>
<i>I always know someone who knows someone; I can call in favours easily and regularly do favours for others</i>							<i>I would find it hard to call in favours and also realize that I rarely do favours for others. I would get stuck outside the normal channels for getting things done</i>
<i>I think people experience me as enthusiastic, outgoing and engaging</i>							<i>I am pretty cynical about a lot of things. I feel I have seen it all before and often just can't be bothered</i>
<i>Total Score = Average score (total score/6) =</i>							

Calculating of results: Goleman identified five aspects of emotional intelligence: Self-awareness: having a deep understanding of yourself; Self-regulation: being able to control your impulses; to know how you feel about something but being able to avoid acting it out; Motivation: self-motivation to achieve arising from an inner sense of commitment and engagement with the work/ task/ people; Empathy: ability to put yourself in the shoes of others, being sensitive and thoughtful about the feelings of others; Social skills: friendliness with a purpose, social grace, confidence and interest in others.

The lower your score, the higher your self-rated level of emotional intelligence. So, if you have lots of 1's and 2's, you are indicating that you consider yourself to be emotionally intelligent. The developmental task is to check that out with others and take action that enables you to maintain this level. If you have any outlying scores, you may need to pay attention to enhancing that particular quality.

If you have scores of 4, 5 and 6, you need to pay attention to enhancing your emotional intelligence. The element under each heading will give you clues as to what may need changing. You may find it helpful to get some coaching to help with your personal development. A low emotional intelligence can lead to a lack of awareness of your impact on others and a sense of dissatisfaction. It can also protect people from their own emotions and those of others.

For each quality, take your 'average' score (rounded appropriately) and tick the relevant column:

Dimension	6	5	4	3	2	1
Self-awareness						
Self-regulation						
Motivation						
Empathy						
Social Skill						

Other resources: Harms & Credé (2010) on Transformational Leadership and Emotional Intelligence. Then, complete the Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (below) and bring this with you to the first workshop.

Monitoring Tools: Empathy Questionnaire

Example No. 3

Title of Instrument: Computer Attitude Questionnaire (CAQ): Empathy

Resource: G. Knezek and other researchers at the Texas Center for Educational Technology (<http://www.tcet.unt.edu/pubs/studies/index.htm>)

Measures / Questions and rates:

Rating Scale:

0 = Strongly Disagree / 1 = Disagree / 2 = Undecided / 3 = Agree / 4 = Strongly Agree

Items:

1. I feel sad when I see a child crying.
2. I sometimes cry when I see a sad play or movie.
3. I get angry when I see a friend who is treated badly.
4. I feel sad when I see old people alone.

5. I worry when I see a sad friend.
6. I feel very happy when I listen to a song I like.
7. I do not like to see a child play alone, without a friend.
8. I feel sad when I see an animal hurt.
9. I feel happy when I see a friend smiling.
10. I am glad to do work that helps others.

Calculating of results:

Scoring: Sum all item ratings together. Higher scores indicate greater empathy.

Other resources:

Knezek, G., Christensen, R., and Miyashita, K. (1998). Instruments for Assessing Attitudes Toward Information Technology. Denton, TX: Texas Center for Educational Technology;

Knezek, G. and Miyashita, K (1994). A preliminary study of the Computer Attitude Questionnaire. In Knezek, G. (Ed.) Studies on children and computers: The 1993-94 Fulbright Series. Denton, TX: Texas Center for Educational Technology.

3.4. Wellbeing at School: Methods and Strategies

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence (EQ or EI) can be defined as the ability to understand, manage, and effectively express one's own feelings, as well as engage and navigate successfully with those of others. According to Talent Smart, 90% of high performers at the work place possess high EQ, while 80% of low performers have low EQ. Emotional Intelligence is absolutely essential in the formation, development, maintenance, and enhancement of close personal relationships (Shapiro L., 1998).

Methodical recommendation for education of Emotional Intelligence: Methodical recommendations for education of Emotional Intelligence are delivered in terms of educational tips for forming of Emotional intelligence related skills and attitudes. They are delivered in the following examples. Those recommendations should be taken into account as a general framework that should be supported with additional resources.

Example No. 4

Title of the method/strategy/techniques: 10 Ways to Enhance Your Emotional Intelligence

Educational procedures:

Here are 10 Ways to Enhance Your Emotional Intelligence:

1. Don't interrupt or change the subject. If feelings are uncomfortable, we may want to avoid them by interrupting or distracting ourselves. Sit down at least twice a day and ask, "How am I feeling?" It may take a little time for the feelings to arise. Allow yourself that small space of time, uninterrupted.
2. Don't judge or edit your feelings too quickly. Try not to dismiss your feelings before you have a chance to think them through. Healthy emotions often rise and fall in a wave, rising, peaking, and fading naturally. Your aim should be not to cut off the wave before it peaks.
3. See if you can find connections between your feelings and other times you have felt the same way. When a difficult feeling arises, ask yourself, "When have I felt this feeling before?" Doing this may help you to realize if your current emotional state is reflective of the current situation, or of another time in your past.
4. Connect your feelings with your thoughts. When you feel something that strikes you as out of the ordinary, it is always useful to ask, "What do I think about that?" Often times, one of our feelings will contradict others. That's normal. Listening to your feelings is like listening to all the witnesses in a court case. Only by admitting all the evidence will you be able to reach the best verdict.
5. Listen to your body. A knot in your stomach while driving to work may be a clue that your job is a source of stress. A flutter of the heart when you pick up a girl you have just started to date may be a clue that this could be "the real thing." Listening to these sensations and the underlying feelings that they signal will allow you to process with your powers of reason.
6. If you don't know how you're feeling, ask someone else. People seldom realize that others are able to judge how they are feeling. Ask someone who knows you (and whom you trust) how you are coming across. You may find the answer both surprising and illuminating.
7. Tune in to your unconscious feelings. How can you become more aware of your unconscious feelings? Try free association. While in a relaxed state, allow your thoughts to roam freely and watch where they go. Analyse your dreams. Keep a notebook and pen at the side of your bed and jot down your dreams as soon as you wake up. Pay special attention to dreams that repeat or are charged with powerful emotion.
8. Ask yourself: How do I feel today? Start by rating your overall sense of well-being on a scale of 0 and 100 and write the scores down in a daily log book. If your feelings seem extreme one day, take a minute or two to think about any ideas or associations that seem to be connected with the feeling.
9. Write thoughts and feelings down. Research has shown that writing down your thoughts and feelings can help profoundly. A simple exercise like this could take only a few hours per week.
10. Know when enough is enough. There comes a time to stop looking inward; learn when it's time to shift your focus outward. Studies have shown that encouraging people to dwell upon negative feelings can amplify these feelings. Emotional intelligence involves not only the ability to look within, but also to be present in the world around you.

Target groups: Pupils from 5th to 12th forms of the Secondary school.

References: Norman Rosenthal M.D. Your Mind, Your Body
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/your-mind-your-body/201201/10-ways-enhance-your-emotional-intelligence>

Stress Management

Stress may be considered as any physical, chemical, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental unrest and that may be a factor in causing disease. Physical and chemical factors that can cause stress include trauma, infections, toxins, illnesses, and injuries of any sort. Emotional causes of stress and tension are numerous and varied. While many people associate the term stress with psychological stress, scientists and physicians use this term to denote any force that impairs the stability and balance of bodily functions http://www.medicinenet.com/stress_management_techniques/article.htm

Methodical recommendation for education of Stress Management: Methodical recommendations for education of Stress Management are delivered in terms of educational tips for forming of Stress Management related skills and attitudes. They are delivered in the following tables. Those recommendations should be taken into account as a general framework that should be supported with additional resources. List of methods and tools for stress management can be found *in Annexes No 1*.

Example No. 5

Title of the method/strategy/techniques: 10 Relaxation Techniques That Zap Stress Fast

Educational procedures:

1. Meditate

A few minutes of practice per day can help ease anxiety. "Research suggests that daily meditation may alter the brain's neural pathways, making you more resilient to stress," says psychologist Robbie Maller Hartman, PhD, a Chicago health and wellness coach.

It's simple. Sit up straight with both feet on the floor. Close your eyes. Focus your attention on reciting - - out loud or silently -- a positive mantra such as "I feel at peace" or "I love myself." Place one hand on your belly to sync the mantra with your breaths. Let any distracting thoughts float by like clouds.

2. Breathe Deeply

Take a 5-minute break and focus on your breathing. Sit up straight, eyes closed, with a hand on your belly. Slowly inhale through your nose, feeling the breath start in your abdomen and work its way to the top of your head. Reverse the process as you exhale through your mouth.

"Deep breathing counters the effects of stress by slowing the heart rate and lowering blood pressure," psychologist Judith Tutin, PhD, says. She's a certified life coach in Rome, GA.

3. Be Present

Slow down.

“Take 5 minutes and focus on only one behaviour with awareness,” Tutin says. Notice how the air feels on your face when you’re walking and how your feet feel hitting the ground. Enjoy the texture and taste of each bite of food.

When you spend time in the moment and focus on your senses, you should feel less tense.

4. Reach Out

Your social network is one of your best tools for handling stress. Talk to others -- preferably face to face, or at least on the phone. Share what's going on. You can get a fresh perspective while keeping your connection strong.

5. Tune In to Your Body

Mentally scan your body to get a sense of how stress affects it each day. Lie on your back, or sit with your feet on the floor. Start at your toes and work your way up to your scalp, noticing how your body feels.

“Simply be aware of places you feel tight or loose without trying to change anything,” Tutin says. For 1 to 2 minutes, imagine each deep breath flowing to that body part. Repeat this process as you move your focus up your body, paying close attention to sensations you feel in each body part.

6. Decompress

Place a warm heat wrap around your neck and shoulders for 10 minutes. Close your eyes and relax your face, neck, upper chest, and back muscles. Remove the wrap, and use a tennis ball or foam roller to massage away tension.

“Place the ball between your back and the wall. Lean into the ball, and hold gentle pressure for up to 15 seconds. Then move the ball to another spot, and apply pressure,” says Cathy Benninger, a nurse practitioner and assistant professor at The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center in Columbus.

7. Laugh Out Loud

A good belly laugh doesn’t just lighten the load mentally. It lowers cortisol, your body’s stress hormone, and boosts brain chemicals called endorphins, which help your mood. Lighten up by tuning in to your favourite sitcom or video, reading the comics, or chatting with someone who makes you smile.

8. Crank up the Tunes

Research shows that listening to soothing music can lower blood pressure, heart rate, and anxiety. “Create a playlist of songs or nature sounds (the ocean, a bubbling brook, birds chirping), and allow your mind to focus on the different melodies, instruments, or singers in the piece,” Benninger says. You also can blow off steam by rocking out to more upbeat tunes -- or singing at the top of your lungs!

9. Get Moving

You don’t have to run in order to get a runner’s high. All forms of exercise, including yoga and walking, can ease depression and anxiety by helping the brain release feel-good chemicals and by giving your body a chance to practice dealing with stress. You can go for a quick walk around the block, take the stairs up and down a few flights, or do some stretching exercises like head rolls and shoulder shrugs.

10. Be Grateful

Keep a gratitude journal or several (one by your bed, one in your purse, and one at work) to help you remember all the things that are good in your life.

“Being grateful for your blessings cancels out negative thoughts and worries,” says Joni Emmerling, a wellness coach in Greenville, NC.

Use these journals to savour good experiences like a child’s smile, a sunshine-filled day, and good health. Don’t forget to celebrate accomplishments like mastering a new task at work or a new hobby.

When you start feeling stressed, spend a few minutes looking through your notes to remind yourself what really matters.

Target groups: Pupils from 5th to 12th forms of the Secondary school.

Source: <http://www.webmd.com/balance/guide/blissing-out-10-relaxation-techniques-reduce-stress-spot>

Empathy

Empathy is the skill to understand the emotions of people and to treat them according to their emotional reaction. This skill is closely linked with the emotional intelligence which is basically analysing, assessing and managing the emotion of oneself and others. So by developing and practicing this skill not only you resolve someone's problems but also win their hearts.

Methodical recommendation for education of Empathy: Methodical recommendations for education of empathy are delivered in terms of educational tips for forming of empathy related skills and attitudes. They are delivered in the following tables. Those recommendations should be taken into account as a general framework that should be supported with additional resources. List of tools to improve empathy, can be found in *in Annex No 1*.

Example No. 6

Title of the method/strategy/techniques: How to Show Empathy

Educational procedures:

1 Listen. Listening is one of the most effective ways you can demonstrate empathy to other people. When you are practicing active listening, you are listening with purpose. You aren't fiddling about on your phone, or thinking about what you're going to make for dinner tonight, you're really taking in what the other person is saying.

- If you're listening to someone and you get distracted by thinking about dinner or whatever it is you want to say next in the conversation, bring yourself back to the present by saying "I was just thinking about ___ (last thing you remember them saying) ___ and I was wondering if you could repeat what you just said so that I don't miss anything."
- Look the speaker in the eye (don't stare, but try to maintain eye contact), and sit facing the person. Don't let your gaze drift all over the place, because it will look as though you aren't paying attention and

that you don't care what this person has to say. (Eye contact is culturally based. Some people feel it's rude and many autistics feel literally threatened by it. If you aren't sure, ask what they would prefer.)

- Active listening requires three things. First, paraphrase what the person said to show that you understood the content. This is a general listening skill as well. Second, reflect back your emotional reaction. Reflecting back your emotions is a key part of empathy because it helps the person better understand and regulate their own emotions. This is a core reason why we require empathy from others. Their reactions help us regulate our own responses and make sense of it in the world. Third, indicate how your response makes you want to behave. Expressing your behaviour is another key element, because again you are demonstrating that you understand their emotional state and helping them figure out a behaviour to move forward with.

2. Open up. Just listening to someone isn't going to build a bridge between the two of you. Opening up emotionally is an incredibly difficult and brave thing to do but it will deepen the connection with another person.

- Empathy is a two-way street. It's about sharing vulnerabilities and an emotional connection. To truly practice empathy, you have to share your own inner landscape with someone else as they reciprocate

- This doesn't mean you have to spill your life story to every person that you meet. You get to decide who you're going to share yourself with, but, to practice empathy, you have to be open to the possibility and the opportunity of opening up, especially with the people you least expect.

- Once you find an individual with whom you'd like to be more open, try the following: rather than leaning on thoughts or opinions in conversation, attempt to express your feelings about a given topic. Try to start your sentences with "I", or in the first person. For example, "I am very glad we got to hang out today." Finally, refrain from answering a question with "I don't know" especially if it is a personal question. People often respond in this way to prevent from going deeper with another person. Try to come up with an answer that truly expresses how you feel.

3. Offer physical affection. Now, you can't do this for everyone and, obviously, you should ask before you give someone physical affection to make sure that it's okay (even if you've known them for a while). Showing physical affection, however, can boost oxytocin levels and make both of you feel better.

- If you know the person well, give them a hug, or put an arm around their shoulders, or a hand on their arm. Not only does this show that your attention is focused on them, but it creates a connection between the two of you.

- Oxytocin has been known to help people better interpret other people's emotions, so a consensual hug can build up your emotional intelligence as well as the emotional intelligence of the person with whom you're empathizing.

4. Focus your attention outwards. Pay attention to your surroundings and to the feelings, expressions, and actions of the people around you. Be mindful about how others you interact with might be feeling.

- Notice your surroundings, really notice them. Pay attention to sounds, smells, sights and register them consciously. People tend to register things unconsciously. For example, think how many times you've walked or driven somewhere and have no memory whatsoever of getting from A to B. Take in your surroundings mindfully.

- Research has shown that practicing mindfulness about your surroundings and the people around you makes you more likely to extend empathy towards them and to help when someone needs it.

5. Withhold judgment. This is an important step when practicing empathy and when practicing mindfulness. It can be really hard to withhold immediate judgment, especially when first meeting or interacting with someone. And yet, this is a crucial step towards being empathetic.

- Try to gain a deeper understanding of someone else's perspective without immediately saying that it is bad or good. In this way you're able to get to a deeper level of understanding. This does not necessarily mean that the other person is right or good, but taking the time to gain a deeper perspective will help you in developing empathy towards them.

- Of course, this is not to say that if someone is acting a reprehensible manner (saying racist or sexist things or behaving like a bully) that you shouldn't intervene or say something. Speaking up is an act of courage and compassion.

- Making snap judgments about others is a fundamental aspect of being human. We developed this ability from our ancestors in order to read potentially dangerous people and situations. However, this innate mechanism can be hard to override.

- The next time you find yourself making a snap judgment about another person, try to override this judgement by: 1) Looking deeper at the person for ways you can empathize with a situation the person is going through. 2) Noting a few things this person probably has in common with you (when we can uncover universal commonalities we are less likely to judge others). 3) Asking the person questions, so you can learn more about their unique story.

6. Offer help. This shows that you see what someone is going through and you want to make life easier for them. Offering help is a great act of empathy, because it shows that you're willing to take time out of your day to do something for someone else without asking anything in return.

- Offering help can be as simple as holding the door for a person who's entering the same building as you, or buying a coffee for the person behind you in line. It can be as big as helping your grandfather set up his computer and talking him through how it works. Or, it can be offering to take care of your sister's kids for the weekend so she can take a break.

- Even just offering the opportunity to help, can be an empathetic gesture. Tell a friend that if they need anything they can ask, opening up the way for providing help and support.

Building Up Your Empathy

1. Practice curiosity about strangers. Part of showing empathy is being interested in other people, especially people that you know nothing about and who are outside of your social circle. These can be the random people you meet on the bus, or who you're standing in line for coffee with.

- This sort of curiosity moves beyond simply talking about the weather - although that is always a great place to start. You want to understand a little of another person's world, especially a person that you might not normally talk to. It will also require opening up about yourself, because you can't have this type of conversation without giving of yourself, too.

- Having these types of conversations is also a great time to test your empathy, because some people don't want to talk, so you can learn to pick out these behaviours and leave these people alone. Check for

things like whether they reading a book, wearing headphones, facing away from everyone and not making eye contact.

- If a person makes eye contact with you, smile at the person encouragingly. Then, try to find something about their surroundings or personal characteristics in which you can use as an opening to engage in a conversation. Some examples may include: commenting on a book the person is reading or asking the person for help or an explanation about something in your environment. Continue to smile encouragingly and use the other person's name sporadically in conversation.

- Also, always make sure that you care for yourself in these situations. If you feel threatened or uncomfortable by the person you're talking to, end the conversation and get away. Trust your instincts.

2. Volunteer. Sometimes, people are only motivated to reach out and help others after they themselves have been in need. If you want to develop empathy for others, volunteer now. Volunteering promotes understanding of the needs of the community and allows you to connect with people you may not otherwise meet in your everyday life. Dedicating a portion of your time to those in need also has amazing mental health benefits.

- Do some research regarding your local community to determine which populations may be in need. You can volunteer with your local Habitat for Humanity, at a homeless shelter, the Red Cross, or even offer to tutor school children.

3. Challenge your own prejudice. It's hard sometimes to remember that just because you firmly believe in something doesn't mean that it's right. Take time to analyse your own prejudices. Learning to see individual people rather than "welfare moms" or "terrorists" or "gangsters" will help you practice your empathy.

- Search for things that you share in common with someone who you originally see as one specific label and use that commonality to forge a connection with that person.

- Also, challenge your biases and assumptions. Ask yourself why you think that all poor people are lazy, or all people with mental health issues are dangerous, or that all followers of a certain religion are terrorists. A lot of assumptions and prejudices are bases on erroneous information that has become widespread. Educate yourself and listen to the groups that are affected by this misinformation.

4. Use your imagination. A good imagination is one of the cornerstones of showing empathy towards something. You're not going to be able to experience every single thing that can happen to a person, but you can use your imagination to give you an inkling of how it might feel and use that understanding to empathize with them.

- Actively imagining what someone else might be suffering can help you empathize with them. So, instead of deciding that the old man on the street begging for money is automatically going to use what he gets on booze, try imagining what it would be like to live on the streets, on the mercy of unmerciful people, in a system that punishes people like veterans, the mentally ill, and the destitute.

- Research has found that people who read fiction tend to be better at understanding emotions, behaviours, and intentions. So read widely and try to branch out into the works of marginalized people.

5. Practice experiential empathy. This means getting a direct experience of another person's life, the "walk a mile in another person's shoes" adage. The writer, George Orwell, lived on the streets of London to

discover what it was like for those on the margins of society. Orwell made friends, changed his view on the destitute (deciding they were not "drunken scoundrels"), and changed his views on inequality.

- You don't have to go quite that far, but consider taking on all the things that your mother does in a day for an entire week. You'll discover how difficult it is to manage both the home and work, and you'll have a better appreciation for how much work she has to do. You may even decide to pitch in a bit more.

- Likewise, if you're religious (or atheist) consider attending the service of another faith, not to ridicule or to feel superior to, but to learn what it is like for them.

6. Treat people as being important. Start treating people as if they have as much importance as you do. Recognize that you aren't the only one living in this world and that you aren't some superior being.

- Take each person as they come. Don't lump them into stereotypical groups with erroneous one-size-fits-all labels. Each person is an individual and comes with a set of flaws and strengths.

7. Practice loving-kindness meditation. Meditating is a great way to help yourself deal with things like depression and anxiety and just the stresses of day to day existence. Practicing loving-kindness meditation, however, can help make you more empathetic.

- Start by doing regular meditation. Sit somewhere comfortable and focus on your breathing. When thoughts start to intrude, accept them and release them from your mind. Visualize yourself as an object of loving kindness. Don't start thinking about all your flaws and don't start thinking about all your strengths either. Simply see yourself as worthy of love.

- Once you've got the loving kindness to yourself down, start practicing it for 4 different types of people: someone you respect, like a teacher; a dearly beloved person, like a family member or friend; a neutral person, someone at a store, someone you saw outside that day; and a hostile person, someone with whom you are in conflict.

- To keep you on track it can be helpful to repeat a mantra to yourself, like "loving-kindness" to remind you when you get off track and to help keep you focused on holding the feelings of loving kindness, even towards the hostile person.

Target groups: Pupils from 5th to 10 class of the Secondary school.

Source: <http://www.dailytenminutes.com/2012/08/six-techniques-to-develop-empathic.html>

References: <http://www.wikihow.com/Show-Empathy>

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is how you feel about yourself and your abilities. Your self-esteem – whether it's high, low or somewhere in-between – can have a pretty huge effect on your life <https://au.reachout.com/articles/how-to-improve-your-self-esteem>

If you have low self-esteem, an important thing to do is try and figure out what's causing it. It could be related to:

- loneliness
- bullying
- poor academic performance
- neglect or abuse

- being unemployed
- something going on at a deeper level

Methodical recommendations for education of self-esteem are delivered in terms of educational tips for forming of self-esteem related skills and attitudes. They are delivered in the following examples. Those recommendations should be taken into account as a general framework that should be supported with additional resources. List of resources can be found in Annexes No 1.

Example No. 7

Title of the method/strategy/techniques: How to Improve Your Self-Esteem: 12 Powerful Tips

Educational procedures:

1. Say stop to your inner critic

A good place to start with raising your self-esteem is by learning how to handle and to replace the voice of your own inner critic.

We all have an inner critic.

It can spur you on to get things done or to do things to gain acceptance from the people in your life. But at the same time it will drag your self-esteem down.

This inner voice whispers or shouts destructive thoughts in your mind. Thoughts like for example:

- You are lazy and sloppy, now get to work.
- You aren't good at your job at all and someone will figure that out and throw you out.
- You are worse or uglier than your friend/co-worker/partner.

You don't have to accept this though. There are ways to minimize that critical voice and to replace it with more helpful thoughts. You can change how you view yourself.

One way to do so is simply to say stop whenever the critic pipes up in your mind.

You can do this by creating a stop-word or stop-phrase.

As the critic says something - in your mind - shout: STOP!

Or use my favourite: No, no, no, we are not going there!

Or come up with a phrase or word that you like that stops the train of the thought driven by the inner critic.

Then refocus your thoughts to something more constructive. Like planning what you want to eat for dinner or your tactic for the next soccer game.

In the long run it also helps a lot to find better ways to motivate yourself than listening to your inner critic. So let's move on to that...

2 Use healthier motivation habits

To make the inner critic less useful for yourself and that voice weaker and at the same time motivate yourself to take action and raise your self-esteem it certainly helps to have healthy motivation habits.

A few that I have used to replace and fill up much of the place that the inner critic once held in my mind are these:

- Remind yourself of the benefits. A simple but powerful way to motivate yourself and to keep that motivation up daily is to write down the deeply felt benefits you will get from following this new path or reaching a goal.

Like for example getting into better shape and having more energy for your kids and the people close to you. Or making more money and through that being able to travel with the love of your life and experience wonderful new things together.

When your list is done then save it and put it somewhere where you will see it every day. For instance, in your workspace or on your fridge.

- Refocus on doing what YOU really, really like to do. When you really, really like doing something then the motivation to do that thing tends to come pretty automatically. When you really want something in life then it also becomes easier to push through any inner resistance you feel.

So if you lose your motivation, ask yourself: Am I doing what I really want to do? If not and if possible, then refocus and start working on that very important thing instead.

After you have used your stop-word or phrase focus on one of these techniques. Over time it will become a habit and your inner critic will pop up a lot less often.

3 Take a 2-minute self-appreciation break

This is a very simple and fun habit. And if you spend just two minutes on it every day for a month then it can make huge difference.

Here's what you do:

Take a deep breath, slow down and ask yourself this question: what are 3 things I can appreciate about myself?

A few examples that have come up when I have used to this exercise are that I:

- Help quite a few people each day through what I write.
- Can make people laugh and forget about their troubles?
- Am very thoughtful and caring when it comes to our cats.

These things don't have to be big things.

Maybe just that you listened fully for a few minutes to someone who needed it today. That you took a healthy walk or bike ride after work. That you are a caring and kind person in many situations.

These short breaks do not only build self-esteem in the long run but can also turn a negative mood around and reload you with a lot of positive energy again.

4 Write down 3 things in the evening that you can appreciate about yourself

This is a variation of the habit above and combining the two of them can be extra powerful for two boosts in self-esteem a day.

Or you may simply prefer to use this variation at the end of your day when you have some free time for yourself to spare.

What you do is to ask yourself the question from the last section:

What are 3 things I can appreciate about myself?

Write down your answers every evening in a journal made out of paper or on your computer/smart phone.

A nice extra benefit of writing it down is that after a few weeks you can read through all the answers to get a good self-esteem boost and change in perspective on days when you may need it the most.

5 Do the right thing

When you do what you deep down think is the right thing to do then you raise and strengthen your self-esteem.

It might be a small thing like getting up from the couch and going to the gym. It could be to be understanding instead of judgmental in a situation. Or to stop feeling sorry for yourself and focus on the opportunities and gratitude for what you actually have.

It is not always easy to do. Or even to know what the right thing is. But keeping a focus on it and doing it as best you can make big difference both in the results you get and for how you think about yourself.

One tip that makes it easier to stay consistent with doing the right thing is to try to take a few such actions early in the day. Like for example giving someone a compliment, eating a healthy breakfast and working out.

This sets the tone for the rest of your day.

6 Replace the perfectionism

Few thought habits can be so destructive in daily life as perfectionism.

It can paralyze you from taking action because you become so afraid of not living up to some standard. And so you procrastinate and you do not get the results you want. This will make your self-esteem sink.

Or you take action but are never or very rarely satisfied with what you accomplished and your own performance. And so your opinion and feelings about yourself become more and more negative and your motivation to take action plummets.

How can you overcome perfectionism?

A few things that really helped me are:

- Go for good enough. When you aim for perfection then that usually winds up in a project or a task never being finished. So simply go for good enough instead. Don't use it as an excuse to slack off. But simply realize that there is something called good enough and when you are there then you are finished.

- Remember that buying into myths of perfection will hurt you and the people in your life. This simple reminder that life is not like in a movie, a song or a book can be good reality check whenever you are daydreaming of perfection. Because reality can clash with your expectations when they are out of this world and harm or even possibly lead to the end of relationships, jobs, projects and so on.

7 Handle mistakes and failures in a more positive way

If you go outside of your comfort zone, if you try to accomplish anything that is truly meaningful then you will stumble and fall along the way.

And that is OK. It is normal. It is what people that did something that truly mattered have done throughout all ages. Even if we don't always hear about it as much as we hear about their successes.

So remember that. And when you stumble try this:

- Be your own best friend. Instead of beating yourself up, ask yourself: How would my friend/parent support me and help me in this situation? Then do things and talk to yourself like he or she would. It keeps you from falling into a pit of despair and helps you to be more constructive after the first initial pain of a mistake or failure starts to dissipate.
- Find the upside. Another way to be more constructive in this kind of situation is to focus on optimism and opportunities. So ask yourself: what is one thing I can learn from this? And what is one opportunity I can find in this situation? This will help you to change your viewpoint and hopefully not hit the same bump a little further down the road.

8 Be kinder towards other people

When you are kinder towards others you tend to treat and think of yourself in a kinder way too. And the way you treat other people is how they tend to treat you in the long run.

So focus on being kind in your daily life.

You can for example:

- Just be there and listen as you let someone vent
- Hold up the door for the next person
- Let someone into your lane while driving
- Encourage a friend or a family member when they are uncertain or unmotivated
- Take a few minutes help someone out in a practical way

9 Try something new

When you try something new, when you challenge yourself in a small or bigger way and go outside of your comfort zone then your opinion of yourself goes up.

You may not have done whatever you did in a spectacular or great way but you at least tried instead of sitting on your hands and doing nothing.

And that is something to appreciate about yourself and it can help you come alive as you get out of a rut.

So go outside of your comfort zone regularly. Don't expect anything, just tell yourself that you will try something out.

And then later on you can do the same thing a few more times and improve your own performance.

And as always, if it feels too scary or uncomfortable then don't beat yourself up. Take a smaller step forward instead by gently nudging yourself into motion.

10 Stop falling into the comparison trap

When you compare your life, yourself and what you have to other people's lives and what they have then you have destructive habit on your hands.

Because you can never win. There is always someone who has more or is better than you at something in the world. There are always people ahead of you.

So replace that habit with something better.

Look at how far you have come so far instead. Compare yourself to yourself. Focus on you. On your results. And on how you can and how you have improved your results. This will both motivate you and raise your self-esteem.

7 Spend more time with supportive people (and less time with destructive people)

Even if you focus on being kinder towards other people (and yourself) and on replacing a perfectionism habit it will be hard to keep your self-esteem up if the most important influences in your life drag it down on a daily or weekly basis.

So make changes in the input you get. Choose to spend less time with people who are nervous perfectionists, unkind or unsupportive of your dreams or goals. And spend more time with positive, uplifting people who have more human and kinder standards and ways of thinking about things.

And think about what you read, listen to and watch too. Spend less time on an internet forum, with reading a magazine or watching a TV-show if you feel it makes you unsure of yourself and if it makes you feel more negatively towards yourself.

Then spend the time you used to spend on this information source on for example reading books, blogs, websites and listening to podcasts that help you and that make you feel good about yourself.

8 Remember the whys of high self-esteem.

What is a simple way to stay consistent with doing something? As mentioned above: to remember the most important reasons why you are doing it.

So remind yourself of the whys at the start of this article to help yourself to stay motivated to work on your self-esteem and to make it an essential priority.

Doing this simple thing and keeping these powerful reasons in mind has done wonders for me. I hope it can do the same for you.

Target groups: Pupils from 5th to 10 class of the Secondary school.

References: HENRIK EDBERG on SEPTEMBER 11, 2013 <http://www.positivityblog.com/improve-self-esteem/>

Chapter Four: Strategies for Supporting Parental Participation

4.1 Parental influence on the wellbeing of children

When considering the wellbeing of children and young people in schools, we need to consider the wider factors outside the school gates to be able to understand and effectively help pupils to reach their full potential, not only academically, but socially and emotionally too.

‘Strong families give children love, identity, a personal history and a secure base from which to explore life as they grow up. Family is of lifelong importance but for children its significance cannot be overstated: what happens within the family has more impact on children’s wellbeing and development than any other single factor’.

DCSF (2010) ‘Support for All: The Families and Relationship Green Paper’

Family Relationships

As stated so powerfully above, families (primary care givers particularly) are the strongest influence on a child’s emotional and mental wellbeing. From the very outset, the types of relational experiences a child has in the first days, months and years of life impact on brain development, particularly the development of neural pathways. One of the key brain developments during the first 3 years of life is the body’s ‘stress response system’. This affects a child’s capacity to cope with life, to relate to others, to form loving relationships, to learn effectively and to manage the stress that they experience in healthy ways. With less than optimal experiences in early childhood, a child may struggle to cope with every day experiences at home, at school and in the wider community. The good news however, is the intrinsic plasticity of the brain means that it is possible to provide relational experiences and learning later in childhood that can effectively ‘plug’ the gaps, providing better coping mechanisms and the ability to emotionally regulate. This theory of neuroscience forms part of the basis for the ‘Thrive Approach’ which will be discussed as a programme later in the chapter.

The Children’s Society published research in 2012. They researched factors affecting children’s wellbeing with 30,000 children ranging from 8 – 16 year olds. They found overall that the ‘strongest driver of low subjective wellbeing is where children experience weak and uncaring relationships with their family or carer’ (The Children’s Society, 2012). What is important to note is that it was the quality of relationships that was the main influence on wellbeing, with the structure of the family only having a small affect.

Adult-adult relationships are also important when considering a child’s sense of wellbeing. There is extensive research showing that the quality of relationship between parents is linked to positive parenting, which in turn leads to better outcomes for children (Coleman & Glenn, 2009). It’s no surprise then, that with better parenting at home and better outcomes at school we can expect a greater sense of wellbeing for children and young people.

It’s also important to consider the parent/carer’s wellbeing when thinking about influences on their child’s development and personal wellbeing. Poor mental health in parents can have a negative impact

on a child. Although most of the time, parents with a mental illness can parent their children effectively (DoH, 2010). Parental mental health problems can affect development and can have a negative impact on adjustment into adulthood. Depression in mothers when a child is in infancy may impair cognitive as well as socio-emotional developments. Babies with mothers suffering from depressive illness also have a higher risk of developing depression themselves later in life (DoH, 2010).

Parental mental health, and the quality of relationships both with and between significant others impacts on a child's ability to cope with life. Sudden changes at home, significant life events and relationship changes, are likely to have a major impact on changes to a child's wellbeing (Children's Society, 2012). One of the main factors in a child's ability to cope with life is their resilience level. The more resilient a child is, the better able they are to 'bounce back' after such events.

Relationships are key to the development of resilience. It can be nurtured in all children as long as certain opportunities are available to them. Resilience is developed through at least one supportive relationship, exposure to people that care about them, learning it's brave to ask for help when they need it, being encouraged to take safe and considered risks, knowing that their capacity to cope is trusted, building problem solving skills by resisting solving all their problems for them, and facing their fears with support. But the overriding factor to developing strong resilience to life's challenges is to experience unconditional love, to know that when their world starts to feel unstable they have someone there to turn to. This is what family relationships have the potential to provide, but sadly, not all do, and wellbeing suffers.

Parenting Approaches

'First and foremost, a child's good mental health starts with how a parent perceives and responds to them' (Dr L. A Grisolano, 2013).

Approaches to parenting varying from family to family. What is normal to one family will not necessarily be normal to another. On the same note, what is considered good parenting in one family may not be considered as 'good enough' in another. However, there are some key elements of parenting that if adopted, can lead to numerous benefits for both children and their parents' wellbeing, as well as benefits to the school and the wider community.

Interest: A child's wellbeing benefits if a parent shows interest and actively participates in their learning and development. Through providing opportunities for parents to positively engage with school they are able to show an interest and support their child's learning. Showing an interest is equivalent to telling a child they are important. A sense of importance inevitably leads to greater self-esteem and growth in confidence and with that comes motivation and a desire to succeed and invariably better educational outcomes. The benefits of parental involvement in their children's learning and development cannot be underestimated. This can be achieved both formally between home and school and informally through activities within the home and out of school hours. Ways of achieving parental participation will be discussed later.

Experiences: Parents also have a crucial role to play in helping their children realise their talents and interests. They can be '...powerful catalysts in fostering self-acceptance and strong self-esteem' through encouraging their children to explore what they enjoy, what they are good at and providing them with a foundation from which to build their experience, knowledge and skills (Dr L. A Grisolano, 2013). When asked about activities that are linked to feelings of wellbeing, children respond with the importance of

spending time with others, being active and learning, both in and out of school (Children's Society, 2014). It's with these varied experiences of life that children build an understanding of self, who they are, what they are capable of and what they mean to others. Children that are able to see their peers outside of school also report higher levels of wellbeing in comparison to those who feel isolated from peers, with children who feel isolated from their friends four times more likely to experience low subjective wellbeing than those who do not.

Communication: Open communication which is honest and genuine (age appropriate) aids feelings of trust. Children who feel 'left in the dark' about circumstances concerning themselves or their family or home environment are likely to experience feelings of insecurity and anxiety. Children who feel listened to, who feel like they have a voice (both within the family home and in a wider context) and that they are taken seriously, that they are treated fairly and who have a sense of autonomy, report higher levels of subjective wellbeing (Children's Society, 2012). Involving children and young people in decisions which affect them creates feelings of empowerment and gives them a sense of autonomy. When much of a child's life is controlled by rules, timetables and adults in general, even the smallest of choices will impact positively on how a child feels about themselves.

Supervision: Supervising the activities of their children has always been a significant role of parents in keeping their children safe. One element of parenting, which is new to this generation of parents is supervising and managing the impact of social media and the internet in general. Children and young people now socialise in a virtual world of screens, apps and messages. Physical contact isn't necessary and face to face contact is less significant than it used to be. Communication via screens creates an emotional as well as physical distance that in turn creates a riskier way of interacting. Harm through inappropriate images, exposure to violence, cyber bullying, exploitation and grooming, plus a warped sense of reality pose risks to children and young people. Social media is widely recognised for its benefits, but it can have a real detrimental impact on mental health. Evidence around excessive use of social media and depression, as well as sleep deprivation, is now coming to light and parents play a key role in limiting screen time and preventing exposure to harmful online activity (House of Commons, 2017). Schools also have a role to play in raising awareness and offering guidance to parents, as well as pupils in their care in order to safeguard and promote wellbeing.

Home Environment

The environment at home is also of real significance to a child's wellbeing at school. If a child feels 'unsafe' at home, their wellbeing at school will be affected. Feeling 'unsafe' may be because the home is an unpredictable place due to major issues such as domestic violence, drug use within the home or an unsafe neighbourhood. It may also be of a less explicit nature, such as lack of routine or structure within the home, or difficult relationships between parents, or through a change in circumstances such as a new partner, or through a perceived lack of love and attention towards the child.

A lack of privacy at home can also affect wellbeing, for example, if an older child has to share a bedroom due to lack of space. When it comes to considering the importance of space, children with no garden or community outdoor space are three times more likely to report low subjective wellbeing (The Children's Society, 2012). As well as sense of physical stability, protection and safety that a home provides, children and young people need a sense of emotional stability, protection and security from their parents/carers and their home environment is often key to this.

It's clear that parents and family are key to children and young people's wellbeing. Therefore, a child's needs must not be considered in isolation of their family circumstances. It is vital that parent/carers are seen as partners at school and that all efforts are made to provide an inclusive environment for parents as well as children in order to give the best possible chances for pupils to thrive, experience high levels of wellbeing and achieve their full potential.

4.2 Strategies encouraging active participation of parents in wellbeing at school

'By working closely with schools to improve parental engagement, local authorities will see a positive impact on both attainment and wellbeing levels, as well as improved Ofsted inspection reports for its schools'

DCSF (2010) 'Parenting and Family Support: Guidance for Local Authorities in England'

Attitudes and Approaches

In order to create an environment where parents feel included, valued and welcome to participate within their child's school life, both teaching and non-teaching staff require an approach to seeing 'parents as partners'. This approach should be part of a whole school ethos, one that everyone understands and supports, through whole school training and on-going discussion and development. The same applies for embedding the importance of supporting children and young people's wellbeing in to every day teaching and learning. Effective practice across the school requires an investment of time, training, and resources in order to provide the necessary framework of support. The results of this investment will be far reaching and multifaceted.

Involving parents in children's wellbeing from within the school setting can be via subtle strategies as well as large scale interventions. A 'one size fits all approach' is not fit for purpose when working with parents. The modern realities of family structures, the diverse methods of parenting, cultural differences, along with each parents own personal experience of being parented themselves, means that working with parents requires a flexible approach, which is individualised where necessary and is non-judgemental in principle.

The rest of this section will outline possible methods already in existence within UK primary and secondary schools. It does not provide an exhaustive list, rather a selection of successful strategies to support the development of thinking and practice within your setting.

Initiatives and Interventions

- A fundamental starting point is effective communication methods with parents. Online live reporting on a child's progress/key moments has proven to be a successful tool in schools. Parents being equipped with individualised updates from school as it happens is a great way of enabling participation and at a minimum provides opportunities for meaningful conversations to take place between parents and children.

- Ensuring parents are consulted and involved with decisions will help create awareness and buy-in and creates a positive rapport between the school and parents. Involving them in the setup of interventions and services that they are at the heart of is a way of ensuring suitability for the intended audience.
- Creating a programme of 'awareness' sessions also supports parental involvement in their children's wellbeing. Introducing families to the aims and ethos of school, the importance of parental engagement, mental health and wellbeing awareness, managing transitions, supporting children through exams, supervision around internet and dangers of social media, diet and nutrition. The topics that would benefit wellbeing are endless and can be led by asking parents what support they want/need.
- Creating a space on site for parents to seek information and guidance encourages them in to the school building and shows them that the school is linked to other services and can signpost and offer support past the realms of academia. As a minimum, an area with a leaflet stand relating to family support, mental health, community engagement etc. and a couple of comfy chairs would offer value to parents.
- The addition of a specialist member of staff to work with parents is now a resource that many schools have invested in. Parent Support Advisors (various job titles exist) work with parents and teachers to support learning, improve behaviour and attendance and overcome barriers to learning (DCSF, 2010). They provide targeted preventative support and early intervention and part of their role is to increase the number of parents involved in their child's education. It is recognised that schools are the organisation that has the most contact with families and '...play a crucial role in identifying needs of families and ensuring these are addressed...' (DCSF, 2010). Parent Support Advisors are ideally placed to ensure this work takes place, they act as a consistent point of contact, someone who families can build a relationship with and learn to trust. They are invaluable when it comes to family support in schools.
- Parents who are supporting children with mental health problems report they have often felt 'left alone to cope, even when the services were in place for the child' (AYPH, 2016). Having an additional member of staff specialising in working with parents and families in a wider context, also means that other initiatives can be developed, such as 'Parent Support Groups' (or at least linking in and signposting to existing groups locally). Peer support works with adults just as it does with children; we learn best from those we can relate to and who we feel can understand us. Any forum for parents who are struggling with family life, in whatever context, would be of added value for all parties, particularly parents.
- With the right investment and management and some joined up working, schools may be able to act as a 'hub' of support, where specialist advisors can be located on the school site at specific times (CAMHS/Job Centre +/Housing/Health Workers/SMS workers/IDVAs). Drop-in sessions, organised workshops or parenting programmes can be delivered to raise awareness, improve knowledge and provide better support for parents in a place that is familiar and relevant to their lives. Through such interventions, parents will be better able to cope with the stresses of everyday life, and so too will their children.

- Family learning classes are now delivered in many schools across the UK and have proven to be of great benefit to both children and parents, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds (DCSF, 2010). The programme gives parents/carers the opportunity to find out how subjects are taught in their child's school, as well as develop their own skills and a chance to meet other parents. This collaborative approach, where children join their parents in the classroom, can impact on many levels. It can improve well-being, increase engagement and promotes positive attitudes to learning. It gives both adult and child a greater confidence, improving children and young people's development and attainment and even employability for adults (NLWI, 2016).

From starting with the fundamentals of effective communication, to information and guidance areas, to 'Parent Support Advisors', parenting support groups, support hubs and family learning programmes, there are a plethora of ways to encourage parents in to school to engage and participate in their child's schooling. All successful efforts will benefit the wellbeing of both parents and children as well as providing benefits to the school and wider community.

4.3 Parenting programmes to support positive wellbeing for parents and their children

There are a diverse range of programmes being delivered across the UK. The four selected for the purposes of this manual have been highlighted due to being evidence based with proven successful outcomes for children and families.

'Incredible Years' (0-12 years)

The Incredible Years programme is delivered worldwide and is an effective evidence based intervention in supporting parenting from infancy through to around 12 years of age. It is widely delivered across the UK.

The programme was originally developed by Dr. Carolyn Webster-Stratton in 1984. There are now two versions of the programme, one being specifically adapted for teachers. Incredible Years has a theoretical background based on the cognitive social learning theory, with particular emphasis on how negative reinforcement develops and maintains deviant behaviour, notions of modelling and self-efficacy and developmental interactive learning methods.

The programme aims to promote social competence, emotional regulation, positive attributions, academic readiness and problem solving in children. It aims to improve parent-child interactions, build positive relationships and attachment and improve parental functioning, as well as preventing antisocial behaviour in children and young people. In addition, the programme aims to support teacher classroom management skills and teacher-parent partnerships.

Incredible Years is made up of 3 interlocking training programmes for parents, children and teachers. The parenting programme spans the age range of 0-12 years. The child and teacher programme spans the age range of 3 – 8 years. The course is delivered to groups and runs for 9 to 20 sessions dependent on the specific focus, with varying content and length of programme being delivered dependent on age of children, basic to advanced levels, and whether delivering the parent or teacher aspects of the

programme. The teacher program includes; proactive strategies, building positive relationships with pupils and families, praise and encouragement, proactive discipline and teaching emotional literacy, social skills and problem solving.

Evidence of the impact on parents shows improvements in parenting techniques, improved parental self-confidence, a reduction in parental depression and an increase in family communication.

As for the impact on children, evidence tells us there are improvements in children's social and emotional competence with peers, an increase in problem solving skills, reductions in behaviour problems and an increased academic readiness. Evaluations of the impact on teachers indicate a reduction in behaviour problems in the classroom, with increased social and emotional competence with peers at school and increased proactive teacher classroom management skills.

With positive impact on social and emotional development, parenting, communication, academic achievement and the classroom environment, it is clear that the Incredible Years programme supports wellbeing of parents, children and teachers alike.

'Strengthening Families' (10-14yrs)

The Strengthening Families programme (SFP) is an internationally recognised intervention and is delivered across the UK. It is a research-based, cost-effective strategy which works to increase family strengths and enhance child development.

It was originally developed by Dr. Karol L. Kumpfer in the mid-1980s to support high risk families affected by drug misuse. It has since been adapted for a more universal audience and now has benefits for general population families. It is designed to increase resilience and reduce risk factors for behavioural, emotional, academic and social problems. The programme also builds on protective factors through improving family relationships, parenting skills, and improving children's social and life skills. It takes a holistic approach, involving not just parents or children alone, but in many cases, the whole family.

The Strengthening Families approach is based on 5 fundamental protective factors:

- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete support in times of need
- Knowledge of parenting and child development
- Social and emotional competence of children.

The programme can be standalone or integrated in to other interventions and initiatives. It can be delivered in a variety of settings and to individual families or groups of families. The course ranges from 7 to 14 sessions dependent on methods of delivery and is interactive, fun and a way of parents and children to spend meaningful time together, away from the day to day pressures of life.

Evidence of impact shows improvements in children's pro-social behaviours, mental health, and academic progress, combined with reductions in aggression and violent behaviours, and a reduction in substance use. Longitudinal research has found reductions in alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use after up to five years.

Research shows that the 5 key protective factors of the programme combine to build family strengths and a family environment that promotes optimal child and youth development, ultimately promoting optimal wellbeing for both parents and children.

‘Take 3’ (10-18yrs)

The Take 3 Programme is another comprehensive evidence-based parenting programme, but focuses on parents with children 10-18 year-olds, and especially parents of ‘at-risk’ or ‘vulnerable’ young people. It was originally created for use within the Youth Justice field and was then developed over a number of years to be used in a wider capacity. It is used throughout the UK by social services, health services and other professionals working with children and families.

The programme has two main aims; to improve relationships between young people and their families and to improve young people’s behaviour at home, school and in the wider community. The course aims to equip parents with strategies around nurturing their children, listening to them, creating structure and boundaries at home so that their children know what to expect and to take care of themselves as parents so they are able to carry out the role of being an effective parent successfully. It also to promote the importance of self-care to parents in order that these skills are modelled to their children. The programme works on the premise that children and young people behave better when they feel understood, when they have boundaries; and when their parents value themselves.

The programme is delivered in two parts, the first part being ten sessions on the basics. The second part is an extra ten sessions that can be ‘mixed and matched’ to suit the specific needs of families, allowing for an element of differentiation according to a families’ circumstances. The course is intended for group learning, but can be easily be adapted for one-to-one working where necessary.

Research and evaluation has demonstrated that the Take 3 parenting programme has a positive effect on parents, and on the behaviour of their children. It meets its aim of improving relationships between young people and their families, and of improving young people’s behaviour. The positive effects on parents and on children, directly and indirectly, will lead to improved wellbeing of parent and child.

‘Thrive’

The ‘Thrive Approach’ is being adopted by a growing number of schools in the UK, both primary and secondary, and is relatively new in its development. Although the programme is not specifically a ‘parenting programme’, its approach is holistic, taking account of all adults involved in a child’s life. It is a whole school initiative that draws on insights from neuroscience, attachment theory and child development to provide a targeted way of working with children in supporting optimal social and emotional development. Thrive uses arts and creativity as a means of promoting resilience and focuses on trying to understand a child’s challenging or troubling behaviour as communication.

By providing experiences which may have been lacking in early childhood, the programme aims to ‘plug the gaps’ between neural pathways and build the ability to emotionally regulate for children that have struggled with difficult life experiences or where experiences and development have been less than optimal.

Thrive offers training to leadership teams, teachers and other school based staff. It has a comprehensive website with online tools, training and mentoring options and a specific area for parents online, providing information on child development, practical suggestions on how to support resilience, plus general ideas for how to engage and have fun with their children. Parents are involved in the process from the outset and an understanding of the child's experiences and general background is sought from them as part of the initial work. Once the school have completed their assessment work with the child, parents are advised of the focal points of the programme and given a number of potential activities to try at home to reinforce the support offered in school. The approach involves parents as partners in supporting children to overcome their struggles and their input is valued and recognised as significant in the child's overall wellbeing.

In summary, it is clear that the depth of influence parents/carers have on their children's wellbeing, and the impact that parental participation can have on a child's social, emotional and academic development, is something that cannot be overlooked when considering the management of children's wellbeing in the school setting. Parents matter greatly when it comes to the wellbeing of their children. Parents matter greatly when it comes education. Efforts to create involvement and offer support to parents should be prioritised and maximized to provide the best opportunities for children to thrive and reach their full potential.

A Case Study from Bulgaria: Creating a highly motivating learning environment – Best practices for effective communication with parents

The creation of successful and effective communication between parents, school teachers and school psychologists is essential for the mental health and wellbeing of pupils. Below are presented some good pedagogical practices from Bacho Kiro Secondary School in Pavlikeni, Bulgaria (Facebook page and website of the class, use of ICT tools, such as ClassDojo, etc.), which demonstrate various and effective forms of cooperation with the parent community, thus increasing parental competence and activity, and improving pupils' performance at school. In this way the use of new technologies increases the motivation of pupils and their parents for active involvement in school education.

Researchers from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology under the leadership of Prof. Gianni De Fraja (De Fraja, G. et al., 2005) came to the conclusion that parents' engagement in the learning process of their children is essential for the quality of their education. The devotion of parents is as important for the mental health and wellbeing of pupils as are the efforts of the teaching and administrative staff and the personal motivation of children. That is why creating successful communication and effective interaction between parents, school teachers and school psychologists is of utmost importance for pupils. The traditional practices and forms of communication between parents and school teachers/administration (such as collective parents' meetings, individual telephone calls, invitation to parents to visit the school for a conversation, etc.) however, are not effective enough and fail to achieve the desired result in Bulgarian schools. For this reason, Bacho Kiro Secondary School in Pavlikeni has turned to more modern and useful forms of communication with parents, as a result of which parents become more deeply involved in the learning process, whereas the performance and overall wellbeing of pupils in school is being improved.

The fast development of technologies has substantially changed people's lives. The Internet has become an integral part of our everyday life, while the emergence of social networks has made it possible to communicate with many people in an incredibly easy way. Statistical data show that almost one-third of

the population in Bulgaria has active profiles on Facebook. In this regard, making a Facebook group of the class is one of the most practical and effective forms of communication with modern parents. On the one hand, the access to the group's profile and the materials posted is restricted to its members (teachers, pupils, parents, relatives), while on the other, the group ensures fast, constant and up-to-date communication among its members (formal and informal announcements are posted, together with invitations, useful information – pedagogical publications on specific topics such as books, newspapers, magazines, resources on the Internet, results of competitions, etc.). Parents are also involved in the school life of their children and are active in expressing opinions, giving suggestions and providing assistance in various ways. Thus, they become more involved in and hence more responsible for the school life.

Another way to achieve effective communication with parents is the site of the class. The major distinction with the Facebook group is that materials published on the site of the class are there for everyone to access and thus wider publicity of class activities and pupils' accomplishments is achieved. Among the most popular free website platforms are: webnode.com and weebly.com. Each of these platforms can be used for creating a class site for relatively short time and no need of special IT skills. The only thing required is registration, as a first step, followed by: selecting a template; adding sub-pages and elements like text, video, audio, images; creating a contact form, survey questionnaires, etc.; domain selection; publishing.

The ClassDojo system allows teachers to more easily manage the discipline and behaviour of pupils in class by encouraging positive attitude and learning achievements as well as registering unacceptable behaviour. This is done as elements of pupils' behaviour such as "Never late", "Helping others", "Has a homework", "Not prepared", etc. are marked by the teacher with one mouse click or one touch on the tablet display. Every Friday, parents receive a report on their child's achievements in the classroom, while for the most involved parents' information is available in real time. The pupil may change his/her avatar and track what points she/he has earned for the day, week or month. As a whole, the Class Dojo site helps to master classroom discipline, and thus to encourage pupils' achievements and support their wellbeing, also allowing to keep closer contact with parents in order to encourage the development of pupils' strengths and abilities.

The effective communication and collaboration between school teachers/administration and parents is, on the one hand, directly linked to the quality of school education as well as the wellbeing of pupils and, on the other, is a form of support for the resources and capacity of the school. It is also a means for parents to be more informed and more demanding to teachers and to themselves. It gives them the knowledge and skills to understand children and the environment in which they grow and develop. It is also a role model for pupils for taking an active civic position and actively participating in school life, thus contributing to maintaining a high level of mental wellbeing among pupils.

Chapter Five: Innovative teaching through ICT

5.1 Why embrace ICT in school?

Our rapidly changing world has posed new challenges to education. Many learning environments have looked to technology in their efforts to redesign teaching and learning. While technology integration has long been a key area of concern in education, the intersection of technology with our rapidly transforming educational landscape is framing the nature of technology in education in deep, new ways. New and emerging technologies are provoking a re-conceptualisation of teaching and learning, while also serving as catalysts for transformation and innovation.

Successfully preparing learners with the skills for 21st century citizenship— global awareness, creativity, collaborative problem-solving, self-directed learning—is no small task, and many educational leaders are finding that the traditional forms of education that have evolved through the end of the last century are simply inadequate for achieving these goals.

At the same time, considerable progresses have been made in the learning sciences, forcing educators to reconsider how they approach learning, instruction, and the environments created to foster these. Finally, dramatic advances in educational technology have inspired powerful new ways for learners to engage with all kinds of content and activities in their own self-directed learning experiences. The juxtaposition of these three factors creates a very interesting challenge and opportunity—a space to reconsider, re-imagine, and re-invent learning environments able to prepare and excel each individual for effective life-long learning. If applied effectively, Information Communication Technology (ICT) can result in innovative teaching practices that foster high-quality learning.

Technologies have the capability of enhancing and amplifying human abilities. ICT in particular can support and increase the development of fundamental capabilities related to cognitive and mental processes, such as: remembering, communicating, learning and elaborating information. As a consequence, they can be considered as an effective tool to be used at school to improve the teaching-learning process. The school should therefore don't limit itself to "educate to the media" by providing students with those skills necessary to use them, but also "educate with the media", as they are able to offer a concrete support to the traditional teaching methods. At school, teachers need to find effective links between the growing familiarity of pupils with ICT and their daily didactic work.

ICT can offer significant opportunities to develop communication skills, collaboration attitudes, problem solving abilities; ICT adapts easily to the pupils' level of skills and knowledge, by promoting individualized and self-paced learning.

- Create a virtuous circle based around ICT and innovative teaching: remember that teachers who are more engaged with ICT in the classroom show greater use of innovative teaching methods, and teachers inclined towards innovative teaching methods use classroom ICT more effectively.
- Use ICT to link home and school effectively: ICT can do this by increased communication and transparency, as well as recreating a positive environment. Engaging parents will also increase student motivation and thus raise standards.

- Foster positive associations with computers: children associate positively with computers - they are therefore welcomed as a learning platform. Technology should be embraced and its appeal to students should be considered as positive.

From the early years of life, children interact with different kinds of electronic games. Led by curiosity, they explore their various areas of potential in a playful way and intuitively they become familiar with these resources. It is up to the school to give an added value - a cultural content, learning goals or orientation - connected to these technologies, without disregarding what the child already know.

ICT enables children's active participation in building knowledge and this leads to a new teaching-learning relationship. The teacher has the task of making students familiar with new technologies as they are becoming tools to create a new form of knowledge and a new organization of knowledge.

It is not really a question of teaching the technical use of specific programmes, but rather enabling students to acquire a technological *forma mentis*, aimed at understanding general functions and developing the ability to select and frame technologies in specific contexts of use.

In this context, students will be able to understand:

- how to carefully select materials and information from various resources
- how to develop and present their ideas, monitor and improve the quality of their work
- how to exchange and share information
- how to review, modify and evaluate their work by critically reflecting on its quality even while they are carrying it out.

By the end of lower secondary school, pupils need to be able to choose when and how to use ICT in different situations in order to:

- get the maximum benefits of accessing information
- express their ideas
- work collaboratively
- solve problems.

5.2 ICT and student wellbeing

As mentioned before, the use of technology in school settings has showed successful results in terms of learning processes, allowing a more individualized approach to learning, as well as the development of skills such as communication, problem solving and collaboration with peers. All these elements are the basis for fostering a positive learning environment and consequently promoting positive wellbeing amongst students.

Unfortunately, there are not enough studies investigating the relation between technologies and wellbeing to be able to draw firm conclusions. Institutions can incorporate these new technologies to engage with student users, forming another means of children accessing meaningful learning opportunities to support their health goals. It is widely acknowledged that school students either own or have access to computers and the Internet. In addition, they use a variety of Internet applications in their daily lives, especially those related to communication, particularly instant messages and e-mail and communication on social media. New technologies do not necessarily cause changes in behaviours despite all the information they provide. However, institutions can incentivize changing behaviours in ways that an individual cannot. There are numerous ways in which new technologies can engage students and encourage a healthy lifestyle.

There are some studies that have examined the social impacts of Internet use on wellbeing, although not specifically on young people. It is recognised that Internet use has negative impacts on wellbeing; however, Valkenburg and Peter (2007) show that this negative relationship disappears when interactions online is focused on friends and not strangers. They showed that the most adverse effects of Internet use on well-being occur for individuals who report being lonely. Other researchers have shown that excessive use of the Internet may result in Internet addiction. In a study that examined the impact of types of Internet use on self-esteem levels among college students at one university, Rohall, Cotten, and Morgan (2002) found that time spent on the Internet for surfing or other non-communicative purposes was negatively associated with self-esteem. In addition, IM and chatroom use had a small but positive effect on self-esteem and a strong effect on social support. Morgan and Cotton (2003) found that increased communication through e-mailing, chatting in chatrooms, and IM was associated with decreased depression among college students. However, higher levels of Internet use for gaming, shopping, or research were associated with higher levels of depressive symptoms.

Despite this data there is a lack of published studies investigating the social impact of ICT on the wellbeing of pupils, the majority investigates the negative effects more than the possible positive outcomes. Most studies focus on contact with social networks, social support, loneliness, and depression as outcomes.

There are some empirical studies that suggest that mattering and self-esteem are also important outcomes that may be directly and indirectly associated with technology use, but the field is still very much open to research.

ICT is a powerful communication tool to impart knowledge and allow more self confidence in managing the pupil's individual learning process. This is the reason why the Well-School-Tech project is using ICT as a communication means with pupils engaging them in the programme promoting wellbeing at school.

In order to give a perspective of ICT use in the classroom, the next paragraphs will focus on the way technology is applied in learning contexts as well as the important role of the teachers in mediating between technology and educational content.

5.3 ICT and teachers' pedagogy

Pedagogies and practices have changed with the introduction of ICT. Many writers have suggested that developments in ICT provide very different learning opportunities, and a need to design a new 'integrated pedagogy' has been identified. For example, the authors McLoughlin and Oliver (1999) define pedagogical roles for teachers in a technology-supported classroom as including setting joint tasks, rotating roles, promoting student self-management, supporting meta-cognition, fostering multiple perspectives and scaffolding learning. Their assumption is that the use of ICT is changing the pedagogical roles of teachers. According to Hawkrige (1990) a compelling rationale for using ICT in schools is its potentially catalytic effect in transforming the teaching and learning process.

The uses of ICT in education have been shown to influence the ways in which teachers' pedagogies might have to change. This is related to whether teachers are involved in teaching the subject of ICT, whether they are involved in using it within other subjects or whether they are mainly using it for administrative and personal purposes. Within these different uses, teachers' pedagogical practices are also influenced by the types of ICT being used as well as the resources available to them and the attitudes of the teachers towards ICT and its perceived value in education.

The pedagogical practices of teachers using ICT can range from only small enhancements of practices using what are essentially traditional methods, to more fundamental changes in their approach to teaching. For example, some teachers using an interactive whiteboard have displayed content and ideas for class discussions in a traditional way, while other teachers have allowed pupils to use the whiteboard to present dramas to the whole class that they had planned and filmed themselves. Studies show that the most effective uses of ICT are those in which the teacher and the software can challenge pupils' understanding and thinking, either through whole-class discussions using an interactive whiteboard or through individual or paired work on a computer. If the teacher has the skills to organise and stimulate the ICT-based activity, then both whole-class and individual work can be equally effective.

The study by Sara Hennessy (2003) showed that as teachers developed, evaluated and refined their pedagogic approaches in relation to ICT use, interactions with individual students and small groups were increased and reportedly successful. Different studies (Waxman & Huang, 1996; Pedretti et al, 1998; Ruthven & Hennessy, 2002; Hennessy et al, 2003; Kozma, 2003) suggest that the use of ICT is associated with a decrease in teacher direction and an increase in student control, self-regulation and collaboration. These opportunities and experiences will promote independence, autonomy and effective communication as long as they are supported effectively, ultimately improving feelings of wellbeing. Findings do suggest that the use of ICT is associated with changes in pedagogical practice in the classroom/lesson towards a more student-centred model involving collaborative learning. The teachers who used ICT in these studies were generally well motivated to do so and not necessarily representative of all teachers. Moseley et al (1999) in a study found that teachers who favoured ICT were likely to value collaborative working, enquiry and decision making by students. In other studies' (e.g. Jarvis et al, 1997) teachers have found difficulty in understanding their new role. Thus ICT may be enabling teachers who want to adopt a more student-centred model to make this change more easily but there is no suggestion that this effect is widespread or will automatically accompany increased use of ICT or enhanced learning. It will depend on teachers' beliefs as well as their knowledge of the affordances of ICT. ICTs foster collaborative work and insights into pupils' learning. Using ICT with pupils in pairs, groups or with a whole class, for example, the use of an interactive whiteboard, enables teachers to gather extensive feedback from pupils by listening to their explanations. From this, teachers are able to gain deeper insights into pupils' understanding and progress. Pupils collaborating in pairs or teams using subject-specific ICT resources are able to challenge each other's understanding and learn from such collaborations. There are different implications for teachers' pedagogical reasoning in utilizing ICT-based learning environments:

Teachers' values and beliefs: studies have shown that the adoption of ICT by teachers depends on their values and beliefs about the importance of ICT for learning. There is a need for teachers to make more explicit the underlying theories influencing their work as a first step to reviewing their beliefs in the light of new evidence as they explore the opportunities for learning provided by ICT.

Teachers' knowledge: In order to plan and select appropriate pedagogical practices, teachers need to understand the opportunities and a range of ICT resources and have the detailed knowledge of the concepts, processes and skills in their subject. Teachers need to use their knowledge of learners and their subject expertise to select appropriate ICT resources that will provide opportunities to enable students to meet the learning objectives. Teachers need knowledge of the opportunities of ICT resources provide, not only in terms of contributions to students' presentation skills but in terms of potential for challenging students' thinking and extending students' learning in a subject.

Students' values, beliefs and knowledge: There is evidence that the majority of secondary school students believe that collaboration and self-pacing were beneficial for their learning. However, there is a significant minority of students who prefer teacher directed learning.

Teachers' behaviours: Issues around the importance of classroom interactions, in particular those associated with collaborative learning and the control of the learning have been highlighted. Both of these issues are complex: there are benefits to be gained from increasing student collaboration and from increasing student autonomy but the role of the teacher in orchestrating the learning environment to promote collaborative learning and to scaffold students' learning is crucial.

Teachers need to develop their expertise and explore ways of organising students when using ICT resources within the class: when students should work on their own, when to intervene and direct the learning, how working in pairs and groups should be organised and when to use ICT for whole-class teaching. Teachers need to know what kind of classroom dynamics will be most effective for the learning tasks, e.g. as individual/pair/group work or as a whole class.

Using ICT is often associated with a decrease in teacher direction and exposition, with a corresponding increase in pupil control and self-regulation, and an increase in pupil collaboration. These changes in classroom practice mean that teachers feel they need to employ proactive and responsive strategies in order to support, guide and facilitate learning, to monitor progress and maintain focus on subject learning, to encourage pupil reflection and analysis, to structure activities carefully and provide more focused tasks, to pace lessons realistically, and to support learning and revision by making printed and other written resources available. Simultaneously, teachers strive to encourage and support pupils in taking a greater degree of responsibility for their own learning through increased participation. The increasing availability of computer-based tools and resources and the growing emphasis on using these in subject teaching and learning has a potentially significant impact upon established classroom practice. Although the process of pedagogic change associated with integrating use of educational technology seems to be evolutionary rather than revolutionary, a gradual shift is taking place in teachers' and pupils' roles and strategies in their efforts to make effective use of ICT.

The teacher subdivides tasks into manageable goals and gradually increases the child's participation and responsibility for activities. Support and guidance are given both in tacit and explicit forms, and provide both challenge and sensitive assistance. In the classroom, we can view the teacher as managing pupil participation through constraining or channelling learning activities, although ideally the support provided is more responsive to the learner than directive. Children take a significant, active role in structuring instruction through simultaneously adjusting their level of participation and requesting assistance, greater responsibility and involvement. Although less explicit than other forms of promoting wellbeing, ICT, in the right environment, and with the correct level of guidance, scaffolding and supervision can benefit wellbeing through promoting independence, autonomy, problem solving skills and a growing sense of confidence.

A Case Study from Italy: Examining the role of teachers in mediating interactions between children and technology

This case study has been retrieved from classroom-based projects in schools that formed part of a research programme with the University of Cambridge, Faculty of Education. The projects investigate a range of technology-integrated pedagogical strategies, to examine the role of teachers in mediating interactions between children and technology - supporting learning through interpreting processes, discussing and explaining meaning, and creating a classroom climate which fosters productive pupil talk and reasoning.

See more on <https://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/istl/TiPS031.pdf>.

The participants were 15 volunteer teacher-researchers from 5 secondary schools. The main phase of the programme took place over the 2000/01 school year.

Participants were organised into groups of between 3 and 5 members pursuing similarly themed projects across schools; these covered six curriculum areas and involved pupil groups from Years 7-13.

At an appropriate point, each participant was visited in school by a member of the university team who observed a lesson. Observations focused on teachers' and students' roles and ways of using ICT in the specific setting. The lesson was followed directly by a 2-minute interview - inviting teachers' immediate feedback on the lesson - and subsequently by an extended, semi-structured, post-lesson interview intended to stimulate a grounded account of teachers' thinking about their practice and specifically about the contribution of ICT use to success of the lesson.

Many facets of the teacher's usual role and extensive repertoire of pedagogic strategies were evident in lessons using ICT. These included: questioning, prompting, intervening, guiding, explaining, suggesting, eliciting reasoning, introducing, reviewing and summarising, motivating, encouraging and praising, giving feedback, keeping pupils on task, supporting individuals, pacing and monitoring progress, demonstrating procedures, facilitating discussion (with class/groups/individuals), challenging and adapting to different abilities. While these established strategies are not specifically related to ICT use and are consequently not elaborated in any detail, they clearly remain important in this context. However, there were some notable, explicit differences in teachers' and pupils' roles and interactions, teaching styles and mediating strategies compared with the teachers' reports of lessons without ICT.

The most significant change reported by some teachers - although anticipated by few - was a decrease in teacher direction through formal didactic teaching and knowledge giving. There was considerable evidence instead of more involvement and discussion between the teacher and individual or small groups of pupils, and of teachers facilitating rather than directing activity.

The most common rationale for this pedagogic shift was that the decreased emphasis on formal teaching and intervention when using ICT allows more time to be spent in productive interactions with students; it frees the teacher to offer more support, guidance and facilitation - the prominent mediating strategies associated with using ICT.

Some teachers described their role during the lesson in terms of introducing the task, then focusing the pupils. For example:

"I needed to instigate the ideas, I needed to prompt them firstly about what we were doing. I wouldn't say I was a teacher, in the conventional sense anyway, certainly once the lesson... was progressing, I was more looking just to try and focus them on particular aspects. There was certainly no formal teaching, never intended to be".

"I was there to keep them focused on the task and help out in terms of giving them information that they'd perhaps forgotten or clarifying details of the text, those kinds of things, but it was pretty much self-generating".

Using ICT for self-regulated learning was not considered to diminish the teacher's intervening role. In some ways, this remained the same, for example, reminding pupils to research their facts fully, as they must when they use textbooks. The findings reflected a general pupil desire for more interaction and teacher input when working with ICT.

One English teacher who saw his role as a 'guide and facilitator' described how 'independent learning' was fostered through allowing pupils to 'show off their knowledge in a way that isn't just teacher-led. The emerging teacher role here is evidently one of prompting pupils with the aim of encouraging them to think for themselves and find their own solutions rather than giving answers directly:

"M. asked me how to do something and I didn't tell him and he said "You're the teacher, you should know" and I said "No, you have to think it through yourself". So I was facilitating their learning because I was enabling them to experiment and the package obviously helped that process".

Likewise, another teacher described her role during the lesson in terms of: introducer, summariser, confidence builder and 'interferer'. She was prompting students to think more deeply, but most of all offering them the opportunity to develop independence and learn how to search quickly and effectively, using both computer and textbook resources.

The role of the pupils in ICT-supported lessons maintained some aspects of their typical role in non-ICT lessons (e.g. responding to the teacher during class discussion, soliciting and responding to help and feedback, discussion with peers, individual work) but two significant changes were apparent. First, linked to less teacher direction and greater involvement and interaction was the theme of self-regulation, comprising the interlinked themes of pupil control, choice, independence and active learning. The increase in pupil control was linked to greater independence and was valued by teachers, particularly where students were confident enough to select their own resources and utilise ICT to develop their own ideas, as in this English example:

"Although I gave them a rough idea of what we were going to do, I didn't tell them to do Internet research, but immediately some of them did, and some of them went off and got CD-ROMs and started playing around...That's my ideal for teaching, that you give them a spark of an idea, something to research and then they go off and get stuck in. Felt confident using the computers and the software to learn for themselves, to find out for themselves the issues of formatting and purpose".

The second key change in the pupil's role was towards that of collaborative learner. Although it is not unusual to use collaboration in some subjects such as English and Science when working without ICT, the typical secondary school working style is predominantly individual in nature. It was therefore surprising to find all or the majority of pupils engaged in genuinely collaborative activity in 10/17 ICT-supported lessons (spanning all subjects involved except Design and Technology and Classics). These pupils worked together in pairs on purposefully designed tasks at a single computer towards joint outcomes; they were observed to be discussing and checking suggestions with each other. In six further lessons pupils worked individually (and at their own machines), although they often discussed the tasks

or shared technical expertise with each other; in the final lesson there was a mixture of collaborative and individual work.

Another purpose has been to observe the impact of using ICT upon teacher-researchers' pedagogical thinking. For one Science teacher, it was 'business as usual' in the sense that aspects of effective practice remained pertinent:

"I feel one of the key things about using any form of ICT is that the ICT itself is just a tool; all of your other teaching practices should still come into play so there should still be some kind of differentiation, looking at the learning styles and trying to apply thinking skills."

This is convincing although it does not address the specific pedagogic demands which may arise when using ICT. For another individual, ICT-supported lessons were described as having enabled – indeed provoked – a more reflective, reactive approach to the design of learning activities than can normally be employed in classroom teaching:

"There has been a sense that I've been going from lesson to lesson, reflecting on what they've done and developing, rather than sitting down at the beginning and saying, 'Well they're going to do this, this, this and this.' Which I could do if we were just working in the classroom".

It is notable that there was evidence for several teachers choosing to develop new forms of pedagogy. About half of the teachers devised deliberate strategies aimed at focusing on subject content; while 'focusing' describes how teachers draw attention to critical features of a task more generally, using ICT can evidently add an extra layer of obliqueness or distraction. However, as well as these hindering effects, it offers unique and exploitable opportunities such as creative manipulation of text or graphic images or electronic annotation. The teaching of generic search skills is another example of evolving pedagogy associated with ICT use – directed in this case towards supporting effective navigation of digital pathways that lead far beyond classroom-based resource provision. Similarly, awareness of the teacher's role in actively supporting collaborative working is beginning to grow. The use of ICT can act as a catalyst in stimulating teachers and pupils to work in new ways, some of which clearly draw on established practice but successfully extend and adapt it to this new context. For example, responding to the physical features of the setting – in particular, the shift in focus of attention away from the teacher and towards the screens of individual or shared machines – and to the increased scope, easier accessibility and greater interactivity of electronic resources, seems to encourage more student-regulated learning as teachers' role as 'knowledge provider' diminishes.

The decrease in formal teaching and greater pupil control in turn mean that teachers employ additional pedagogic strategies for supporting, guiding and facilitating learning and ICT-supported research activity. The latter condenses the processes of exploration and information finding, requiring teachers to devise ways of effectively managing and mediating pupils' interactions with electronic resources.

Other factors such as the desire of reflective practitioners to introduce innovation and to prepare their pupils for future use of technology may also play a role. Other documented examples of how teachers are successfully responding to the unanticipated events which arise when using ICT (particularly related to its expedition and enhancement of work production) included making available printed records and other resources, and learning to adjust the pace, approach and balance of lesson activities. Holding onto other successful subject practices was not deemed to be incompatible with using new tools. For instance, one teacher found that the most focused research-based lessons were where students used electronic and

non-electronic sources in conjunction. It was found that integrating computers with use of exercise books was productive and helped pupils to focus the points they recorded:

“The idea of using the exercise books in conjunction with their work on the screen, I thought that worked. I didn't want them to actually type that much, I didn't want them to deal with too much information on screen and then print it, save it to file, I wanted them to transfer it to their exercise book and I felt that the stuff that was going into the exercise book did reflect quite a good amount of work being done just through manipulating text on screen. So I was very pleased with that”.

In conclusion, the pedagogical role is not diminished through using technology but that its nature changes; teachers intuitively draw on and modify many aspects of established practice in their continuing concern with providing motivating learning activities. As pupils' roles become more autonomous, teachers need to encourage and support pupils in acting and thinking independently. This means strategically balancing freedom of choice, pupil responsibility and self-regulated learning (in conjunction with responsive teacher assistance) with structured activity, focused enquiry and proactive teacher guidance. Similarly, the peer group plays a strong mediating role in the context of technology-based learning, where there consequently appears to be more demand for organising and managing peer collaboration. The teacher's critical role in shaping classroom discourse and establishing norms for active student participation may in this context include developing a stronger culture of sharing ideas and reflections, with working partners and during whole class discussion.

Teachers' evolving roles in the context of incorporating ICT use into subject teaching and learning are highly complex and demanding. They require a balance of proactive and responsive strategies for mediating interactions between pupils and technology, and these in turn involve increased levels of interaction with smaller groups of students. Pupils accordingly need to act more independently, take more responsibility for managing and pacing their own learning and work at developing new skills for peer collaboration, critical selection and interpretation of electronically derived information.

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Annex 1: Examples of Monitoring Tools

Emotional Intelligence

Example No. 8

Title of the method/strategy/techniques: 7 Practical Ways to Improve Your Emotional Intelligence

Educational procedures:

➤ Practice Observing How You Feel

In the process of rushing from one commitment to the next, meeting deadlines, and responding to external demands, many of us lose touch with our emotions. When we do this, we're far more likely to act unconsciously, and we miss out on the valuable information that our emotions contain.

Whenever we have an emotional reaction to something, we're receiving information about a particular situation, person or event. The reaction we experience might be due to the current situation, or it could be that the current situation is reminding us of a painful, unprocessed memory.

When we pay attention to how we're feeling, we learn to trust our emotions, and we become far more adept at managing them. If you're feeling out of practice, try the following exercise:

Set a timer for various points during the day. When the timer goes off, take a few deep breaths and notice how you're feeling emotionally. Pay attention to where that emotion is showing up as a physical feeling in your body and what the sensation feels like. The more you can practice this, the more it will become second nature.

➤ Pay Attention to How You Behave

As I mentioned above, a key part of improving our EI is learning to manage our emotions, which is something we can only do if we're consciously aware of them.

While you're practicing your emotional awareness, pay attention to your behaviour too. Notice how you act when you're experiencing certain emotions, and how that affects your day-to-day life. Does it impact your communication with others, your productivity, or your overall sense of well-being?

Once we become more conscious of how we're reacting to our emotions, it's easy to slip into judgement mode and start attaching labels to our behaviour. Try to refrain from doing that right now, as you'll be far more likely to be honest with yourself if you're not judging yourself at the same time.

➤ Take Responsibility for Your Feelings and Behaviour

This is probably the most challenging step, and it's also the most helpful. Your emotions and behaviour come from you—they don't come from anyone else—therefore, you're the one who's responsible for them.

If you feel hurt in response to something someone says or does, and you lash out at them, you're responsible for that. They didn't "make" you lash out (they're not controlling you with puppet strings, after all!), your reaction is your responsibility.

Equally, your feelings can provide you with valuable information about your experience of the other person, as well as your own needs and preferences, but your feelings aren't another person's responsibility.

Once you start accepting responsibility for how you feel and how you behave, this will have a positive impact on all areas of your life.

➤ **Practice Responding, Rather than Reacting**

There's a subtle but important difference between responding and reacting.

Reacting is an unconscious process where we experience an emotional trigger, and behave in an unconscious way that expresses or relieves that emotion (for example, feeling irritated and snapping at the person who has just interrupted you).

Responding is a conscious process that involves noticing how you feel, then deciding how you want to behave (for example, feeling irritated, explaining to the person how you feel, why this isn't a good time to be interrupting you, and when would be better).

➤ **Practice Empathizing with Yourself and Others**

Empathy is about understanding why someone feels or behaves in a certain way and being able to communicate that understanding to them. It applies to ourselves and other people, and practicing this ability will improve your EI.

Start by practicing with yourself. When you notice yourself feeling or behaving in a certain way, ask "Why do I think I'm feeling like this/doing this?" At first, your response might be "I don't know," but keep paying attention to your feelings and behaviour, and you'll start to notice different answers coming through.

➤ **Create a Positive Environment**

As well as practicing the skills I've mentioned so far (self-awareness, self-responsibility, and empathy), make time to notice what is going well and where you feel grateful in your life.

Creating a positive environment not only improves your quality of life, but it can be contagious to people around you too.

➤ **Remember EI is a Lifetime Process**

EI isn't something you develop once then drop. It's a lifetime practice, and it is possible to keep improving. Even when you feel like you've mastered these steps, remember to keep practicing, and you'll reap the benefits of EI for the rest of your life.

Target groups: Pupils from 5th to 12th forms of the Secondary school.

References: Hannah Braime is a coach who believes the world is a richer place when we have the courage to be fully self-expressed <http://www.lifehack.org/articles/communication/7-practical-ways-improve-your-emotional-intelligence.html>

Example No. 9

Title of the method / strategy /techniques: 'How Can I Build Emotional Intelligence?' Try These 7 Essential Techniques

Educational procedures:

Emotional intelligence is your ability to identify emotions (in both yourself and others), to recognize the powerful effects of those emotions, and to use that information to inform and guide behaviour.

It begins with learning how emotions work, but it goes much further. Specifically, how do you start putting that knowledge into practice? In other words, how do you make emotions work for you, instead of against you?

The thing is, you can't control your instinctive feelings, and you don't really want to.

For example, if you see something that makes you angry, you should get angry; that anger can protect you or move you to positive action. But you also have to be careful, because your anger can get you into trouble--if you give into uncontrollable rage.

The key, then, is to control the reactions to your feelings--to make sure you're acting in a way that you won't later regret. As you can imagine, this skill takes practice.

And it all begins with focusing on your thoughts.

Every action begins with a thought. If you can learn to control your thoughts, you'll learn to manage your emotional reactions as well.

Your ability to manage thoughts could be compared to the control centre of a media player. Consider how each of the following techniques can help you focus both thinking and actions:

1. The pause button.

The pause could be as simple as taking a moment to stop and think before you speak or act. It can help you resist feeding internet trolls (which only gets you more upset) and keep you from making inappropriate jokes at work. The pause is especially helpful when we're in an emotional state, because it helps us to think things through, rather than acting purely on how we feel.

But remember: The pause is easy in theory, difficult to practice. Added stress or unusual circumstances can surprise you, and easily override your ability to use the pause.

Practice consistently, though, and you'll turn the pause into a useful habit.

2. Volume control.

Self-awareness is the ability to recognize when emotions are beginning to run high. Volume control is the ability to dial those feelings back, or get them under control.

For example, let's say you're in the middle of a disagreement with a friend or family member. As the discussion gets heated, it's natural for you to raise your voice, and your partner will respond in like.

But if you learn to recognize that your emotions are running high, or your voice is getting louder, you can dial it back, so to speak and keep the discussion calmer.

1. The tuning dial.

Have you ever spoken to someone who isn't really paying attention? How did it make you feel?

Exactly.

Yet, we often do the same thing, unintentionally. Maybe we're scrolling through our phone while they're trying to tell us something. Or, we're thinking of what we want to say next, instead of truly listening.

Instead, tune into others as they speak to you, with the goal of understanding and empathy. Doing so will help you build stronger relationships.

4. Mute.

In addition to tuning in, you should also practice hitting the mute button (on yourself). Resist the urge to interrupt, and give others the chance to fully express themselves.

5. Record and erase.

If your conversation partner says something that's new to you, it will take time to process and fully understand the meaning behind their words. Therefore, it's helpful to mentally record what they've said so you can think about it later.

This doesn't mean you should replay hurtful words over and over, or bring back things that were said in the heat of the moment. In these cases, you should use your erase button--realize the person probably didn't mean what he or she said, and be willing to leave it behind.

Erasing hurtful words or actions may not be easy, but it's essential to learning to forgive, forget, and move on.

6. Playback.

While taking a pause can help you and others calm down, serious problems won't just go away.

It's important, therefore, to use playback--by returning to the topic at a later time. With a little forethought, you can pick an ideal time and location to speak, providing the best chance for calmer and reasonable discussion.

7. Fast forward.

In certain situations, we may be tempted to act against our own values. Caught up in the moment, we let emotion get the best of us and do something we know we'll probably regret.

If you find yourself in this predicament, take a moment to fast forward.

Forget about how you feel right now.

Instead, ask yourself:

- How will I feel about this decision in a month? A year? Five years?
- How will it affect my family, friends, or others who care about me?

As the saying goes: Never make a permanent decision based on a temporary emotion.

If your feelings are starting to take over, press fast forward to help you regain clarity--and resist making a decision that will haunt your future.

Emotions are part of what make us human. You shouldn't suppress them, or try to "remove" them from the equation. Instead, you should embrace your emotions and learn from them--so that you gain more control over your thoughts and actions, and avoid becoming a slave to your feelings.

Target groups: Pupils from 5th to 12th forms of the Secondary school.

References: By Justin Bariso <https://www.inc.com/justin-bariso/how-can-i-build-emotional-intelligence-try-these-7.html>

Stress Management

Example No. 10

Title of the method / strategy / techniques: Eight Immediate Stress-Busters

Educational procedures:

- What can I do to better manage stress?

In general, stress is related to both external and internal factors. External factors include your physical environment, your job, relationships with others, your home, and all the situations, challenges, difficulties, and expectations you're confronted with on a daily basis. Internal factors determine your body's ability to respond to, and deal with, the external stress-inducing factors. Internal factors which influence your ability to handle stress include your nutritional status, overall health and fitness levels, emotional well-being, your ability to control stress through relaxation techniques or other strategies, and the amount of sleep and rest you get.

Managing stress, therefore, can involve learning tips to change the external factors which confront you or the internal factors which strengthen your ability to deal with what comes your way.

- Exercise

Exercise can be a key, central method to compensate for stressors. Physical exercise not only promotes overall fitness, but it helps you to manage emotional stress and tension as well. Exercise can also aid in relaxation and improve sleep. For one thing, exercise can emotionally remove one temporarily from a stressful environment or situation. Being fit and healthy also increases your ability to deal with stress as it arises.

Relaxation techniques and meditation

- Share Your Story

There are many ways to use structured relaxation techniques to help control stress and improve your physical and mental well-being. While some types of meditation and relaxation therapies are best learned in a class, it's also possible to learn meditation techniques on your own. There are literally hundreds of different types of relaxation methods ranging from audio CDs to group martial arts and fitness classes. The following are only examples of the types of structured programs available that can increase our capacity for relaxation:

- Autogenic training

Developed in the early 20th century, this technique is based upon passive concentration and awareness of body sensations. Through repetition of so-called autogenic "formulas" one focuses upon different sensations, such as warmth or heaviness, in different regions of the body. Autogenic training has been used by physicians as a part of therapy for many conditions. Popular in Europe (where it is even covered by some insurance plans), this method is currently gaining acceptance in the United States. No particular physical skills or exercises are involved; however, people desiring to learn this technique must be prepared to invest time and patience. Since this technique is slightly more complex than some relaxation methods, a course is generally the best way to learn the method.

- Biofeedback:

Biofeedback is one method of learning to achieve relaxation, control stress responses, or modify the body's reactions through the use of monitoring equipment that provides information from the body which would normally not be available. This method is based upon the principle first advanced in the early 1960s that the autonomic nervous system (the part we don't consciously use) is trainable. For example, instruments can be used to measure heart rate, blood pressure, brain activity, stomach acidity, muscle tension, or other parameters while people experiment with postural changes, breathing techniques, or thinking patterns. By receiving this feedback, one can learn to identify the processes that achieve the desired result, such as reduction in heart rate and blood pressure. Biofeedback is used by many practitioners for a variety of psychological and physical conditions. Because the technique involves the use of measuring devices, it can only be performed by a professional.

- Imagery

Imagery, sometimes referred to as guided imagery, is the use of pleasant or relaxing images to calm the mind and body. By controlling breathing and visualizing a soothing image, a state of deep relaxation can occur. This method can be learned by anyone and is relatively easy to try out.

- Meditation techniques

Ranging from practices associated with specific religions or beliefs to methods focusing purely on physical relaxation, meditation is one of the most popular techniques to achieve physical and mental relaxation. There are thousands of different types of meditation, and many can be learned on your own. The meditative state is one in which there is a deep centering and focusing upon the core of one's being; there is a quieting of the mind, emotions, and body. The meditative state can be achieved through structured (as in a daily practice of a routine) or unstructured (for example, while being alone outdoors) activities. While teachers of meditative arts are readily available, some techniques can be learned through books or online tutorials. A form of meditation popularized for several decades is transcendental meditation (TM). TM has the goal of achieving transcendental consciousness (the simplest form of awareness). It is practiced for 15-20 minutes in the mornings and evenings and is relatively easy to learn. Numerous classes and teaching materials are available for beginners. Another variant of a meditation technique has gained popularity in the U.S. since its description in the 1970s by Harvard physician Herbert Benson. This technique involves generation of the so-called relaxation response through the repetition of a word or phrase while quietly seated, 10-20 minutes per day. Designed to evoke the opposite bodily reaction to the stress response (or "fight or flight" reaction), this method carries no religious or spiritual overtones. Its value has been documented in the reduction of blood pressure and other bodily stress responses. Like other forms of meditation, it can be learned on one's own, but time and practice are required to elicit the desired relaxation state.

- Progressive muscle relaxation

Progressive muscle relaxation is a method developed in the 1930s in which muscle groups are tightened and then relaxed in succession. This method is based upon the idea that mental relaxation will be a natural outcome of physical relaxation. Although muscle activity is involved, this technique requires no special skills or conditioning, and it can be learned by almost anyone. Progressive muscle relaxation is generally practiced for 10-20 minutes a day. As with the relaxation response, practice and patience are required for maximum benefits.

- Qigong

The martial art qigong is an ancient Chinese health-care system that combines physical training (such as isometrics, isotonic, and aerobic conditioning) with Eastern philosophy and relaxation techniques. There are many different kinds of qigong, including medical qigong. Some forms are practiced while standing, sitting, or lying down; others involve structured movements or massage. Over 70 million Chinese practice some form of qigong daily. Qigong has been used for centuries in China for the treatment of a variety of medical conditions. Learning qigong involves time, commitment, patience, and determination, and learning from a master or group is advisable. Since this technique involves physical exertion, check with your doctor before beginning, particularly if you have a chronic medical condition or are over 40 years old.

- Tai chi

Like qigong, tai chi is a Chinese martial art. It has been termed a kind of "meditation in motion" and is characterized by soft, flowing movements that stress precision and force. Also known as tai chi chuan, this method is thousands of years old. As with qigong, training from a master is necessary to learn the art of tai chi. Again, since motion and force are required, check with your doctor before beginning training.

- Yoga

There are many forms of yoga, an ancient Indian form of exercise based upon the premise that the body and breathing are connected with the mind. The practice of yoga is thought to be over 5,000 years old. One goal of yoga is to restore balance and harmony to the body and emotions through numerous postural and breathing exercises. Yoga, which means "joining" or "union" in Sanskrit, has been called the "search for the soul" and the "union between the individual and the divine." Among the benefits of yoga are increased flexibility and capability for relaxation. No special level of conditioning is required; yoga can be learned by nearly anyone. Classes, books, and videos are widely available. Those with special or chronic physical conditions will want to get clearance from their doctor before beginning.

Other stress-management strategies; Time management

- Share Your Story

Good time-management skills are critical for effective stress control. In particular, learning to prioritize tasks and avoid over-commitment are critical measures to make sure that you're not overscheduled. Always using a calendar or planner and checking it faithfully before committing to anything is one way to develop time-management skills. You can also learn to identify time-wasting tasks by keeping a diary for a few days and noticing where you may be losing time.

For example, productivity experts recommend setting aside a specific time (or multiple times) each day to check and respond to email and messages rather than being a continual slave to incoming information. Banishing procrastination is another time-management skill that can be learned or perfected.

- Organisational skills

If your physical surroundings (office, desk, kitchen, closet, car) are well organized, you won't be faced with the stress of misplaced objects and clutter. Make it a habit to periodically clean out and sort through the messes of paperwork and clutter that accumulate over time.

- Support systems

People with strong social support systems experience fewer physical and emotional symptoms of stress than their less-connected counterparts. Loved ones, friends, business associates, neighbours, and even pets are all part of our social networks. Cultivating and developing a social support network is healthy for both body and mind.

- How can I get help with stress management?

If you feel you can't cope with or manage stress on your own or you are faced with unbearable stress, remember that there are resources to help.

1. Check in with your doctor. Stress can take its toll on your body, increasing your susceptibility to infections and worsening the symptoms of practically any chronic condition. Stress alone can also be a cause of numerous physical symptoms. Your physician will be able to assess the effects that stress may be having on your physical functioning and can recommend ways to combat these negative influences. Remember to be honest about the extent of stress you are experiencing. In severe cases of short-term life stress, your doctor can talk with you about the possibility of medications to help alleviate the short-term symptoms. He or she can also suggest relaxation techniques and provide advice on stress-reduction strategies that are most appropriate for you. Your doctor is also an excellent referral source should you decide to seek a counsellor or therapist.

2. Consider counselling. Stress-management counselling is offered by various types of mental-health professionals. Stress counselling and group-discussion therapy have proven benefits in reduction of stress symptoms and improvement in overall health and attitude. Counselling doesn't have to be a long-term commitment, but some people will benefit from a series of stress-counselling sessions from a qualified therapist. He/she can help you identify the problem areas in your life and work on strategies to control your most stressful moments or situations. The very act of talking to an impartial and supportive observer can also be a great way to unleash tension and worry.

3. Spend time with those you love. Countless studies show that people with a balanced, happy social support structure (consisting of friends, family, loved ones, or even pets) experience fewer stress-related symptoms and are better stress managers than people without social support. Your loved ones are also in an excellent position to observe your lifestyle and offer suggestions and help when you need it.

4. Take a course. Many relaxation programs, meditation techniques, and methods for emotional and physical relaxation are actually learned processes that can be acquired most quickly through a class or course with a competent instructor. An added benefit is that you will meet others with similar goals and interests.

Medically reviewed by Avrom Simon, MD; Board Certified Preventative Medicine with Subspecialty in Occupational Medicine

Target groups: Pupils from 5th to 12th forms of the Secondary school.

References: Kasper, D.L., et al., eds. Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine, 19th Ed. United States: McGraw-Hill Education, 2015 Medical Author: Melissa Conrad Stöppler, MD; Medical Editor: Jay W. Marks, MD

Example No. 11

Title of the method / strategy / techniques: Stress Management - Using Self-Help Techniques for Dealing with Stress

Educational procedures:

➤ **Tip 1: Identify the sources of stress in your life**

Stress management starts with identifying the sources of stress in your life. This isn't as straightforward as it sounds. While it's easy to identify major stressors such as changing jobs, moving, or a going through a divorce, pinpointing the sources of chronic stress can be more complicated. It's all too easy to overlook how your own thoughts, feelings, and behaviours contribute to your everyday stress levels. Sure, you may know that you're constantly worried about work deadlines, but maybe it's your procrastination, rather than the actual job demands, that is causing the stress.

To identify your true sources of stress, look closely at your habits, attitude, and excuses:

- Do you explain away stress as temporary ("I just have a million things going on right now") even though you can't remember the last time you took a breather?
- Do you define stress as an integral part of your work or home life ("Things are always crazy around here") or as a part of your personality ("I have a lot of nervous energy, that's all")?
- Do you blame your stress on other people or outside events, or view it as entirely normal and unexceptional?

Until you accept responsibility for the role you play in creating or maintaining it, your stress level will remain outside your control.

Start a stress journal

A stress journal can help you identify the regular stressors in your life and the way you deal with them. Each time you feel stressed, keep track of it in your journal. As you keep a daily log, you will begin to see patterns and common themes. Write down:

- What caused your stress (make a guess if you're unsure?)
- How you felt, both physically and emotionally
- How you acted in response
- What you did to make yourself feel better

➤ **Tip 2: Replace unhealthy coping strategies with healthy ones**

Think about the ways you currently manage and cope with stress in your life. Your stress journal can help you identify them. Are your coping strategies healthy or unhealthy, helpful or unproductive? Unfortunately, many people cope with stress in ways that compound the problem.

Unhealthy ways of coping with stress

- Smoking
- Using pills or drugs to relax
- Drinking too much
- Withdrawing from friends, family, and activities
- Bingeing on junk or comfort food
- Procrastinating
- Zoning out for hours looking at your phone
- Filling up every minute of the day to avoid facing problems
- Sleeping too much
- Taking out your stress on others

If your methods of coping with stress aren't contributing to your greater emotional and physical health, it's time to find healthier ones. No single method works for everyone or in every situation, so experiment with different techniques and strategies. Focus on what makes you feel calm and in control.

➤ **Tip 3: Practice the 4 A's of stress management**

While stress is an automatic response from your nervous system, some stressors arise at predictable times—your commute to work, a meeting with your boss, or family gatherings, for example. When handling such predictable stressors, you can either change the situation or change your reaction. When deciding which option to choose in any given scenario, it's helpful to think of the four A's: avoid, alter, adapt, or accept.

➤ **The four A's - Avoid, Alter, Adapt & Accept**

Avoid unnecessary stress

It's not healthy to avoid a stressful situation that needs to be addressed, but you may be surprised by the number of stressors in your life that you can eliminate.

Learn how to say "no." Know your limits and stick to them. Whether in your personal or professional life, taking on more than you can handle is a sure-fire recipe for stress. Distinguish between the "shoulds" and the "musts" and, when possible, say "no" to taking on too much.

Avoid people who stress you out. If someone consistently causes stress in your life, limit the amount of time you spend with that person, or end the relationship.

Take control of your environment. If the evening news makes you anxious, turn off the TV. If traffic makes you tense, take a longer but less-travelled route. If going to the market is an unpleasant chore do your grocery shopping online.

Pare down your to-do list. Analyse your schedule, responsibilities, and daily tasks. If you've got too much on your plate, drop tasks that aren't truly necessary to the bottom of the list or eliminate them entirely.

Alter the situation

If you can't avoid a stressful situation, try to alter it. Often, this involves changing the way you communicate and operate in your daily life.

Express your feelings instead of bottling them up. If something or someone is bothering you, be more assertive and communicate your concerns in an open and respectful way. If you've got an exam to study for and your chatty roommate just got home, say up front that you only have five minutes to talk. If you don't voice your feelings, resentment will build and the stress will increase.

Be willing to compromise. When you ask someone to change their behaviour, be willing to do the same. If you both are willing to bend at least a little, you'll have a good chance of finding a happy middle ground.

Create a balanced schedule. All work and no play is a recipe for burnout. Try to find a balance between work and family life, social activities and solitary pursuits, daily responsibilities and downtime.

Adapt to the stressor

If you can't change the stressor, change yourself. You can adapt to stressful situations and regain your sense of control by changing your expectations and attitude.

Reframe problems. Try to view stressful situations from a more positive perspective. Rather than fuming about a traffic jam, look at it as an opportunity to pause and regroup, listen to your favourite radio station, or enjoy some alone time.

Look at the big picture. Take perspective of the stressful situation. Ask yourself how important it will be in the long run. Will it matter in a month? A year? Is it really worth getting upset over? If the answer is no, focus your time and energy elsewhere.

Adjust your standards. Perfectionism is a major source of avoidable stress. Stop setting yourself up for failure by demanding perfection. Set reasonable standards for yourself and others, and learn to be okay with "good enough."

Practice gratitude. When stress is getting you down, take a moment to reflect on all the things you appreciate in your life, including your own positive qualities and gifts. This simple strategy can help you keep things in perspective.

Accept the things you can't change

Some sources of stress are unavoidable. You can't prevent or change stressors such as the death of a loved one, a serious illness, or a national recession. In such cases, the best way to cope with stress is to accept things as they are. Acceptance may be difficult, but in the long run, it's easier than railing against a situation you can't change.

Don't try to control the uncontrollable. Many things in life are beyond our control—particularly the behaviour of other people. Rather than stressing out over them, focus on the things you can control such as the way you choose to react to problems.

Look for the upside. When facing major challenges, try to look at them as opportunities for personal growth. If your own poor choices contributed to a stressful situation, reflect on them and learn from your mistakes.

Learn to forgive. Accept the fact that we live in an imperfect world and that people make mistakes. Let go of anger and resentments. Free yourself from negative energy by forgiving and moving on.

Share your feelings. Expressing what you're going through can be very cathartic, even if there's nothing you can do to alter the stressful situation. Talk to a trusted friend or make an appointment with a therapist.

➤ **Tip 4: Get moving**

When you're stressed, the last thing you probably feel like doing is getting up and exercising. But physical activity is a huge stress reliever—and you don't have to be an athlete or spend hours in a gym to experience the benefits. Exercise releases endorphins that make you feel good, and it can also serve as a valuable distraction from your daily worries.

While you'll get the most benefit from regularly exercising for 30 minutes or more, it's okay to build up your fitness level gradually. Even very small activities can add up over the course of a day. The first step is to get yourself up and moving. Here are some easy ways to incorporate exercise into your daily schedule:

- Put on some music and dance around
- Take your dog for a walk
- Walk or cycle to the grocery store
- Use the stairs at home or work rather than an elevator
- Park your car in the farthest spot in the lot and walk the rest of the way
- Pair up with an exercise partner and encourage each other as you work out
- Play ping-pong or an activity-based video game with your kids

The stress-busting magic of mindful rhythmic exercise

While just about any form of physical activity can help burn away tension and stress, rhythmic activities are especially effective. Good choices include walking, running, swimming, dancing, cycling, tai chi, and aerobics. But whatever you choose, make sure it's something you enjoy so you're more likely to stick with it.

While you're exercising, make a conscious effort to pay attention to your body and the physical (and sometimes emotional) sensations you experience as you're moving. Focus on coordinating your breathing with your movements, for example, or notice how the air or sunlight feels on your skin. Adding this mindfulness element will help you break out of the cycle of negative thoughts that often accompanies overwhelming stress.

➤ **Tip 5: Connect to others**

There is nothing more calming than spending quality time with another human being who makes you feel safe and understood. In fact, face-to-face interaction triggers a cascade of hormones that counteracts the body's defensive "fight-or-flight" response. It's nature's natural stress reliever (as an added bonus, it also helps stave off depression and anxiety). So make it a point to connect regularly—and in person—with family and friends.

Keep in mind that the people you talk to don't have to be able to fix your stress. They simply need to be good listeners. And try not to let worries about looking weak or being a burden keep you from opening up. The people who care about you will be flattered by your trust. It will only strengthen your bond.

Of course, it's not always realistic to have a pal close by to lean on when you feel overwhelmed by stress, but by building and maintaining a network of close friends you can improve your resiliency to life's stressors.

Tips for building relationships

1. Reach out to a colleague at work
2. Help someone else by volunteering
3. Have lunch or coffee with a friend
4. Ask a loved one to check in with you regularly
5. Accompany someone to the movies or a concert
6. Call or email an old friend
7. Go for a walk with a workout buddy
8. Schedule a weekly dinner date
9. Meet new people by taking a class or joining a club
10. Confide in a clergy member, teacher, or sports coach

Tip 6: Make time for fun and relaxation

Beyond a take-charge approach and a positive attitude, you can reduce stress in your life by carving out "me" time. Don't get so caught up in the hustle and bustle of life that you forget to take care of your own needs. Nurturing yourself is a necessity, not a luxury. If you regularly make time for fun and relaxation, you'll be in a better place to handle life's stressors.

Set aside leisure time. Include rest and relaxation in your daily schedule. Don't allow other obligations to encroach. This is your time to take a break from all responsibilities and recharge your batteries.

Do something you enjoy every day. Make time for leisure activities that bring you joy, whether it be stargazing, playing the piano, or working on your bike.

Keep your sense of humour. This includes the ability to laugh at yourself. The act of laughing helps your body fight stress in a number of ways.

Consider taking up a relaxation practice

Relaxation techniques such as yoga, meditation, and deep breathing activate the body's relaxation response, a state of restfulness that is the opposite of the fight or flight or mobilization stress response. As you learn and practice these techniques, your stress levels will decrease and your mind and body will become calm and centred.

Develop a "stress relief toolbox"

Come up with a list of healthy ways to relax and recharge. Try to implement one or more of these ideas each day, even if you're feeling good.

- Go for a walk
- Spend time in nature
- Call a good friend
- Sweat out tension with a workout
- Write in your journal
- Take a long bath
- Light scented candles
- Savour a warm cup of coffee or tea
- Play with a pet
- Work in your garden
- Get a massage
- Curl up with a good book
- Listen to music
- Watch a comedy

➤ **Tip 7: Manage your time better**

Poor time management can cause a lot of stress. When you're stretched too thin and running behind, it's hard to stay calm and focused. Plus, you'll be tempted to avoid or cut back on all the healthy things you should be doing to keep stress in check, like socializing and getting enough sleep. The good news: there are things you can do to achieve a healthier work-life balance.

Don't over-commit yourself. Avoid scheduling things back-to-back or trying to fit too much into one day. All too often, we underestimate how long things will take.

Prioritize tasks. Make a list of tasks you have to do, and tackle them in order of importance. Do the high-priority items first. If you have something particularly unpleasant or stressful to do, get it over with early. The rest of your day will be more pleasant as a result.

Break projects into small steps. If a large project seems overwhelming, make a step-by-step plan. Focus on one manageable step at a time, rather than taking on everything at once.

Delegate responsibility. You don't have to do it all yourself, whether at home, school, or on the job. If other people can take care of the task, why not let them? Let go of the desire to control or oversee every little step. You'll be letting go of unnecessary stress in the process.

➤ **Tip 8: Maintain balance with a healthy lifestyle**

In addition to regular exercise, there are other healthy lifestyle choices that can increase your resistance to stress.

Eat a healthy diet. Well-nourished bodies are better prepared to cope with stress, so be mindful of what you eat. Start your day right with breakfast, and keep your energy up and your mind clear with balanced, nutritious meals throughout the day.

Reduce caffeine and sugar. The temporary "highs" caffeine and sugar provide often end in with a crash in mood and energy. By reducing the amount of coffee, soft drinks, chocolate, and sugar snacks in your diet, you'll feel more relaxed and you'll sleep better.

Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and drugs. Self-medicating with alcohol or drugs may provide an easy escape from stress, but the relief is only temporary. Don't avoid or mask the issue at hand; deal with problems head on and with a clear mind.

Get enough sleep. Adequate sleep fuels your mind, as well as your body. Feeling tired will increase your stress because it may cause you to think irrationally.

Target groups: Pupils from 5th to 12th forms of the Secondary school.

References: Authors: Lawrence Robinson, Melinda Smith, M.A., and Robert Segal, M.A. Last updated: June 2017.

<https://www.helpguide.org/articles/stress/stress-management.htm>

Empathy

Example No. 12

Title of the method/strategy/techniques: Techniques to develop Empathic Skills

Educational procedures:

1. Put yourself in their shoes. Involve yourself deeply in the situation in which the person is trapped. Try to evaluate/quantify the level of stress the person is in. Ask questions to understand more but remember not to bombard the person with so many questions as you might cause more stress adding fuel to the fire. Learn the concept "Seek First to understand then to be understood"® by Stephen R Covey
2. Develop Strong Observatory Skills: Observing behaviours is the most important expertise while developing empathic skills. During the conversations try to read the person's mind however avoid instant judgment and conclusion. Be fair and slow in judging people. Avoid being reactive or explosive. Constantly observe the person during your conversation and try to find the most important 'point of concern' which matters the most to the person. This will help understand the problem deeply and might also help you reaching the root of the issue.
3. Develop Analytical Skills: Analysis means to consider the situation from different angles and reaching to the root of the problem. This involves considering financial, technical, emotional, professional, logical and mental aspects of the situation. Also sometimes analytical skills require you to breakdown the given problem into smaller problems and then focus on the solution to each problem separately.
4. Handling the situation: Think what would you and how would you do if trapped in such tragic situation. Think if the person can follow the same methodology to fix the problem? Remember, every soul is unique so you must examine it according to the nature of the person and the circumstance the

person is in. For example, you would handle a rich person trapped in the debt differently as compared to a poor person and differently for educated and less educated persons.

5. **Effective Communication:** Nearly all other skills are dependent on your Effective Communication skills. No matter how genius you are, you won't add value if you fail to express yourself properly and effectively. You can read my article on how to improve your Communication skills.

6. **Follow up:** Don't leave the person alone once you have helped by either giving advice or by fixing the problem. Follow up after adequate amount of time as the situation might have aroused again.

Target groups: Pupils from 5th to 10 class of the Secondary school.

References: <http://www.dailytenminutes.com/2012/08/six-techniques-to-develop-empathic.html>

Self Esteem

Example No. 13

Title of the method / strategy / techniques: 6 Tips to Improve Your Self-Esteem

Educational procedures:

1. Take a Self-Esteem Inventory

You can't fix what you don't know. This is one of the core components of cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT). Before you get to work on putting CBT to work, you have to spend a fair amount of time identifying irrational thoughts and what-not.

The same is true for your self-esteem. To simply generalize and say, "I suck. I'm a bad person. I can't do anything." is to tell yourself a simple but often convincing lie. I'm here to tell you that it's not true. We all suck from time to time. The solution isn't to wallow in suck-age as the core of your identity, but to acknowledge it and move on.

Get a piece of paper. Draw a line down the middle of it. On the right-hand side, write: "Strengths" and on the left-hand side, write: "Weaknesses." List 10 of each. Yes, 10. That may seem like a lot of the Strengths side if you suffer from poor self-esteem, but force yourself to find all 10.

If you're having difficulty coming up with a whole 10, think about what others have said to you over the years. "Thanks for listening to me the other night when all I did was talk your ear off!" "You did a great job at work with that project, thanks for pitching in." "I've never seen someone who enjoyed housework as much as you do." "You seem to have a real knack for telling a story." Even if you think the Strength is stupid or too small to list, list it anyway. You may be surprised at how easy it is to come up with all 10 when you approach it from this perspective.

This is your Self-Esteem Inventory. It lets you know all the things you already tell yourself about how much you suck, as well as showing you that there are just as many things you don't suck at. Some of the weaknesses you may also be able to change, if only you worked at them, one at a time, over the course of a month or even a year. Remember, nobody changes things overnight, so don't set an unrealistic expectation that you can change anything in just a week's time.

2. Set Realistic Expectations

Nothing can kill our self-esteem more than setting unrealistic expectations. I remember when I was in my 20s, I had thought, "I need to be a millionaire by the time I'm 30 or I'm going to be a failure." (Don't even get me started about how many things are wrong with that statement.) Needless to say, 30 came and I was nowhere close to being a millionaire. I was more in debt than ever, and owning a home was still a distant dream. My expectation was unrealistic, and my self-esteem took a blow when I turned 30 and saw how far away such a goal was.

Sometimes our expectations are so much smaller, but still unrealistic. For instance, "I wish my mom (or dad) would stop criticizing me." Guess what? They never will! But that's no reason to let their criticism affect your own view of yourself, or your own self-worth. Check your expectations if they keep disappointing you. Your self-esteem will thank you.

This may also help you to stop the cycle of negative thinking about yourself that reinforce our negative self-esteem. When we make set realistic expectations in our life, we can stop berating ourselves for not meeting some idealistic goal.

3. Set Aside Perfection and Grab a Hold of Accomplishments... and Mistakes.

Perfection is simply unattainable for any of us. Let it go. You're never going to be perfect. You're never going to have the perfect body, the perfect life, the perfect relationship, the perfect children, or the perfect home. We revel in the idea of perfection, because we see so much of it in the media. But that is simply an artificial creation of society. It doesn't exist.

Instead, grab a hold of your accomplishments as you achieve them. Acknowledge them to yourself for their actual value (don't de-value them by saying, "Oh, that? That's just so easy for me, no big deal."). It may even help to keep a little journal or list of things you accomplish. Some people might even do this on a day-by-day basis, while others might feel more comfortable just noting them once a week or even once a month. The key is to get to your smaller goals and move on from each one, like a connect-the-dots game of life.

It's just as important to take something away from the mistakes you make in life. It doesn't mean you're a bad person, it simply means you made a mistake (like everyone does). Mistakes are an opportunity for learning and for growth, if only we push ourselves out of the self-pity or negative self-talk we wallow in after one, and try and see it from someone else's eyes.

4. Explore Yourself.

"Know thyself" is an old saying passed down through the ages, to encourage us to engage in self-exploration. Usually the most well-adjusted and happiest people I meet are people who have gone through this exercise. It isn't just about knowing your strengths and weaknesses, but also opening yourself up to new opportunities, new thoughts, trying out something new, new viewpoints, and new friendships.

Sometimes when we're down on ourselves and our self-esteem has taken a big hit, we feel like we have nothing to offer the world or others. It may be that we simply haven't found everything that we do have to offer — things we haven't even considered or thought of yet. Learning what these are is simply a matter of trial and error. It's how people become the people they've always wanted to become, by taking risks and trying things they wouldn't ordinarily do.

5. Be Willing to Adjust Your Own Self-Image.

Self-esteem is useless if it's based upon an older version of you that no longer exists. I used to be good at many things I'm no longer good at. I excelled in math while in high school, but couldn't do a calculus problem today to save my life. I used to think I was pretty smart, until I learned just how little I knew. I could play trombone pretty well at one point, but no longer.

But all of that's okay. I've adjusted my own beliefs about myself and my strengths as I go along. I've become a better writer, and learned more about business than I ever knew before. I don't sit around and say, "Geez, I really wish I could play trombone like I used to!" (And if I cared enough to really think that, I would go and take some lessons to get good at it again.) Instead, I evaluate myself based upon what's going on in my life right now, not some distant past version of me.

Keep adjusting your self-image and self-esteem to match your current abilities and skills, not those of your past.

6. Stop Comparing Yourself to Others.

Nothing can hurt our self-esteem more than unfair comparisons. Joe has 3,000 Facebook friends while I only have 300. Mary can outrun me on the field when we play ball. Elizabeth has a bigger house and a nice car than I do. You can see how this might impact our feelings about ourselves, the more we do this sort of thing.

I know it's tough, but you need to stop comparing yourself to others. The only person you should be competing against is yourself. These comparisons are unfair because you don't know as much as you think you do about these other people's lives, or what it's really like to be them. You think it's better, but it may be 100 times worse than you can imagine. (For instance, Joe paid for that many friends; Mary's parents have had her in sports training since she was 3; and Elizabeth is in a loveless marriage that only appears to be ideal.)

Target groups: Pupils from 5th to 10 class of the Secondary school.

References: John M. Grohol, Psy.D. <https://psychcentral.com/blog/archives/2011/10/30/6-tips-to-improve-your-self-esteem/>

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