

# RESILIENCE AS PRACTICE

Supporting Learning through Self-Care  
for Ourselves and Our Students

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# RESILIENCE

is the ability to mentally, physically, and emotionally renew ourselves during and after difficult or traumatic experiences.

is the ability to shift from an alert, on-guard response to a calmed, cohesive state.

is the capacity to transition from a perspective of immediate survival to a forward-thinking and positive imagination for the future.

Resilience allows for both safety and connection to be re-established.



How have your resilience practices changed six months into the pandemic response?

What longer-term coping strategies are working best for you?



# TODAY'S AGENDA



## 01

Begin with reflective questions to help you explore the emotions that you are feeling as you prepare to begin teaching in the new term

## 02

Explore a self-care framework to guide our actions in the classroom (and in life) that can benefit both ourselves and our students

## 03

Talk about some concrete tools and strategies that can be implemented into classrooms of any modality to support our own and our learners' self-care and resilience

# Let's Reflect (2 minutes each)



As you think about the upcoming term, what is your head telling you? What is your heart telling you? What is your gut telling you?



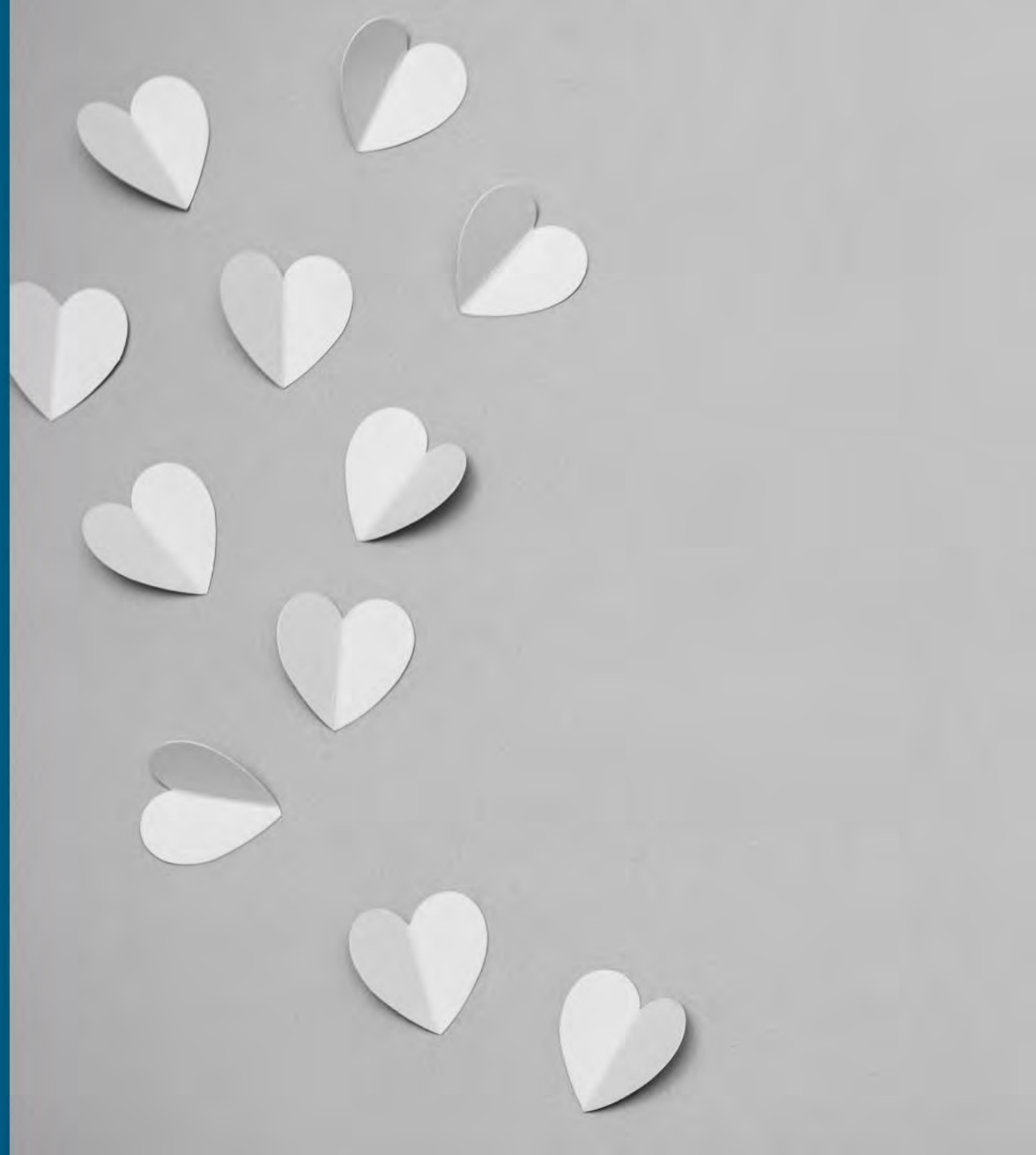
How do these messages compare and contrast with one another?

# PROCESSING RESPONSES

Head: intellectual, analytical,  
logic-based

Heart: empathetic, affective,  
emotion-based

Gut: instinctual, embodied,  
intuition-based



# Let's Debrief (7 minutes)



As you think about the upcoming term, what is your head telling you? What is your heart telling you? What is your gut telling you?



How do these messages compare and contrast with one another?



# GUIDING FRAMEWORK

Self-care as a practice of  
resilience and learning



# SELF-CARE

## 12 steps to self care

1. If it feels wrong, don't do it.
2. Say exactly what you mean.
3. Don't be a people pleaser.
4. Trust your instincts.
5. Never speak bad about yourself.
6. Never give up on your dreams.
7. Don't be afraid to say no.
8. Don't be afraid to say yes.
9. Be kind to yourself.
10. Let go of what you can't control.
11. Stay away from drama and negativity.
12. Love.





As we explore in more detail, consider:

What parts of this framework are you already using in your classroom and your life?

What parts of this framework would you like to incorporate more into your classroom and your life?

# Self-care as a practice of resilience

- don't be afraid to say no
- don't be afraid to say yes
- embrace flexibility
- be kind and practice care with yourself and others
- let go of what you cannot control
- do something that renews you each day
- engage in calming experiences
- stay curious and creative with what you need
- choose positivity and avoid drama when possible
- practice radical patience

# Self-care as a practice of learning

- trust your instincts
- if it feels wrong, consider why
- listen to your head, heart and gut
- ask yourself what you need to feel calm and safe each day
- ask your students what they need to feel calm and safe each day
- create space for necessary and unavoidable trauma responses
  - allow for margin in deadlines
  - prepare for emotion-infused responses
- consider how your values impact your actions
- allow for space and time to reflect on and acknowledge growth



Share:

What parts of these frameworks are you already using in your classroom?

What parts of these frameworks would you like to incorporate more?

**Tool # 1:  
Offer a  
Head,  
Heart, Gut  
Exercise**





We just did this!

Ask students to explore a question from their head, heart, and gut.

For example, what is each telling them about what they most want out of their learning experience this term?



**Tool # 2:  
Schedule a  
Synthesis  
Week**





Synthesis = the hardest cognitive effort

Synthesis brings all kinds of ideas, theories, concepts, and vocabulary together so that students can see connections and relationships.

Since this is one of the hardest cognitive tasks to do, consider setting aside time for students to engage in this work.



A "synthesis week" is a time in the term when:

- No new information is provided for students to learn.
- Students complete activities to process and make connections between what they have already learned throughout the previous weeks.

These weeks also work great as a "catch-up" period for students who may have fallen behind since they create more margin in the schedule.



Here are some sample activities that you might have students complete during a synthesis week:

- Complete a mind map of the terms and concepts learned thus far in term to draw connections between ideas.
- Write sample exam questions for the content covered over the previous weeks.
- Engage in a comprehensive discussion of ideas from across weeks that emphasizes relationships between the course material.



Synthesis activities can help students to:

- Identify relationships and connections across course materials
- Explore and reflect on what they have learned thus far in the course
- Catch-up on material if they have fallen behind
- Identify any areas that they are feeling less confident about as learners
- Ask more interesting and advanced questions about what they are learning

# Tool # 3: Play a Fast Forward Game





Part of remaining resilient is thinking forward to the future with a sense of positivity and anticipation.

Asking students to "fast forward" is a great way to help them think about the future and create an optimistic vision for how they will be able to use what they are learning after your course is completed.

There are several ways to help students play a "fast forward" game:

- ask students to share what interesting facts from your course they would talk about at a party or gathering after your course is over
- ask students to share what assignment from your course they would talk about at a job interview to provide evidence of their unique skills and abilities
- have students imagine how they will feel and what they will do on the day after the last day of the term - how will they celebrate their accomplishments?





"Fast forward" activities can help students to:

- Have hope for the future
- Think about how their current educational experience connects to their future plans
- Draw relationships between course content and real-world experiences
- Identify their areas of interest and skill in relation to course content
- See themselves in a positive future state



# What does this mean for our classrooms?

- Creating opportunities for students to explore their experiences through intellectual and affective modes
- Designing environments that emphasize margin and flexibility
- Offering students ways to connect their current educational experiences to a positive future state
- Sharing your self-care practices with students to model the impacts of your choices
- Providing opportunities for more personalized and deeper connections between your students and the course materials



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# Want to further explore these ideas?

I recommend checking out:

*When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times*  
by Pema Chodron

*Pause: Harnessing the Life-Changing Power of Giving Yourself a Break*  
by Rachael O'Meara

*Do Pause: You are Not a To-Do List*  
by Robert Poynton





QUESTIONS?

