



**RONI HABIB**

## Wellness for Leaders -- and Everyone's a Leader

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A little bit about Roni

- Founder of EQ schools
- Positive Psychology Teacher @ Gunn HS
- Author of Joyful and Effective Teaching and Joyful and Effective Leadership (coming soon!)

### **Why aren't we teaching wellness to our kids?**

- We are worried about losing instructional minutes.
- We might be afraid that the kids won't like it or think it's lame.
- The skills that are taught in Roni's positive psychology class are not complex and can be taught in schools everywhere and with adults too.
- We can give kids hundreds of tools but if we don't walk the walk and prioritize wellness ourselves then it is going to ring hollow.

### **How do we handle secondary trauma?**

- As educators, we touch so many lives each and every day.
- Our students may be dealing with trauma that we don't know how to deal with.

*"As an educator, there is nothing stopping me from putting my students' wellbeing first."*

### **Why do we have such a hard time prioritizing wellness ourselves?**

- As educators, we give everything we have to our students.
- Our job is consuming physically, mentally and psychologically and it's easy for us to neglect ourselves.
- There is more and more pressure put on educators because there is more and more pressure put on students.
- If we give kids tools to be happier now and in the future then the academic learning in the classroom deepens.
- It's time to make wellness the centerpiece in the classroom because once we do everything else flows.

### **What role does wellness play for administrators and district leaders?**

- In order to make schools joyful places, you need three things.
  - The teachers need specific tools that they can use in the classroom.
  - You need teacher leaders who are willing to take on leadership roles.
  - You need to support the leaders of the school and districts.
    - Administrators are in such a vulnerable position and those jobs take a severe emotional toll.
    - Climate drives results and the leader drives the climate.

***Mindfulness is paying attention in the present moment on purpose and nonjudgmentally.***

### **Advice for educators who want to begin incorporating mindfulness and wellness into their classroom in meaningful ways.**

- Play improv games with your class.
  - Games put us in the present moment of our class.
  - Improv games allow kids to be fully engaged with one another and experience emotional resonance.
  - 123 game example:
    - Celebrate failure together because you are on a team and you're in it together.
  - Games help us experience positive emotions which may help us become more creative.
  - Students who just played a game together can then be put on a project together which will help them synergize and have a more positive working relationship.
- Practice mindfulness with your students.
  - Take mindfulness gradually with your students.
  - A 3-second mindfulness practice:

- Place your hand on your stomach and take a deep breath in and notice what's happening in your body.
      - This reminds you that you have a body and reminds you what a healthy breath looks like.
    - 21 Days of Wellness and Emotional Intelligence in the Classroom guide for teachers.
  - Use positive psychology interventions.
    - Simply ask your students what they are grateful for that day. They can journal and write down three things they are grateful for.
      - After adding to their gratitude journal students get in a circle and share one of their gratitudes and why they chose it.

**Research shows the importance of mindfulness yet in schools it often gets shoved to the side.**

- The vast majority of adults want their children to be well more than anything in the world.

**Five elements that contribute to anyone's wellbeing:**

- Positive Emotions
  - The people that thrive the most in the world experience a 3 to 1 ratio of positive to difficult emotions. Americans are usually about a 1 to 1 ratio.
  - It is totally ok to have difficult emotions.
  - Teams that thrive have a 5 to 1 ratio of positive to difficult emotions. It is healthy to experience conflict and to be able to deal with it in a healthy way.
  - Positive emotions are not just joy and laughter, it could just be feeling heard.
- Engagement
  - Experiencing a state of flow. When we are so absorbed in what we are doing we don't even notice the time passing.
  - Leaders who are observed to be positively engaged in what they are doing change the dynamics of a school.
- Relationships
  - Having supportive relationships in our lives and a healthy relationship with ourselves.
  - The most important variable of the five elements.
  - When we decide to put relationships first we typically see results.
- Meaning
  - Connection to our purpose on Earth.
  - Leaders who are connected to the "why" of what they do have a sense of steadfastness that others want to follow.

- Accomplishments
  - Intrinsic goals that we care about.
  - Leaders can be both realistic and idealistic in our goals.

### **How can PERMA help us in the classroom with instruction?**

- For some of our struggling students, they may be feeling like they don't belong.
- Focusing on relationships can help those struggling students feel like they are supposed to be there.
- If kids feel like they don't belong and don't feel safe they go into flight or fight and it won't matter how great your lesson is, they won't learn.
  - [Hand model of the brain by Dr. Daniel Seigel](#)

### **Resources:**

- Games for teachers to use in their classroom
  - [bit.ly/CLASSGAMES](http://bit.ly/CLASSGAMES) Fill out the first part of the form then check your email for the PDF.
- Games for administrators
  - [bit.ly/Staffgames](http://bit.ly/Staffgames) Fill out the first part of the form then check your email for the PDF.
- [EQschools.com](http://EQschools.com) New resources section coming soon!