

California Social Emotional  
Learning Modules

# Professional Learning Toolkit

7.1 PURPOSE for Educators

8.1 PURPOSE for Students



Greater Good in Education



Topics 7 and 8: Mindfulness and Well-Being

# Topic and Module Overview

Caring for Ourselves: The Science of Emotional Resilience	MOD 1.1	Understanding Your Emotions
	MOD 1.2	Navigating Your Emotions
	MOD 1.3	How to Be Kind to Yourself
	MOD 1.4	How to Be Compassionate Without Suffering So Much
	MOD 1.5	Self-Awareness, Emotional Resilience, and Equity
Safety & Belonging in Classrooms and Schools	MOD 2.1	Why Belonging Matters
	MOD 2.2	Knowing Ourselves First: Surfacing Our Beliefs About Social and Emotional Well-Being and Belonging in Schools
	MOD 2.3	The Questions of Belonging: Interventions to Help Students Feel Like They Belong
	MOD 2.4	Meeting Students' Psychological Needs to Help Them Feel Like They Belong
	MOD 2.5	Cultivating Belonging Through Teacher-Student and Peer Relationships
	MOD 2.6	Building a Belonging School Through Trust and Psychological Safety
Teaching for Social, Emotional, and Academic Development	MOD 3.1	Preparing to Support SEL in Classrooms
	MOD 3.2	Explicit SEL Instruction
	MOD 3.3	Planning for Social-Emotional-Academic Development
	MOD 3.4	Integrating SEL into Learning
Committing to Racial Equity and Cultural Responsiveness	MOD 4.1	Unpacking Our Identities: Addressing Identity, Power, and Privilege
	MOD 4.2	Engaging in Meaningful Conversations about Race and Equity
	MOD 4.3	SEL Instruction Through a Culturally Responsive Lens
	MOD 4.4	Elevating Student Voices
	MOD 4.5	Evaluating Our Systems, Policies, and Procedures
Addressing Trauma and Adversity: Supporting Student Mental Health	MOD 5.1	Defining and Understanding Trauma and Adversity
	MOD 5.2	Recognizing the Signs of Childhood Trauma and Adversity
	MOD 5.3	Creating Healing-Centered Environments
	MOD 5.4	Developmental and Other Strategies for Healing
	MOD 5.5	Mental Health Crisis Intervention: Steps and Strategies
Supporting SEL through Family and Community Engagement	MOD 6.1	Exploring Family and Community Engagement with an SEL Lens
	MOD 6.2	Building Partnerships with and Honoring the Contributions of Diverse Families
	MOD 6.3	Listening and Communicating Effectively with Families
	MOD 6.4	Expanded Learning and SEL: Collaborating Across In-School and OST Contexts
	MOD 6.5	Aligning around SEL Through Community Partnerships




# Topic and Module Overview

Mindfulness and Well-Being for Educators	<b>MOD 7.1</b>	<b>Purpose for Educators</b>
	MOD 7.2	Self-Compassion for Educators
	MOD 7.3	Kindness and Compassion for Educators
	MOD 7.4	Gratitude for Educators
	MOD 7.5	Awe for Educators
	MOD 7.6	Courage for Educators
	MOD 7.7	Empathy for Educators
	MOD 7.8	Mindfulness for Educators
	MOD 7.9	Humility for Educators
	MOD 7.10	Forgiveness for Educators
	MOD 7.11	Hope for Educators
Mindfulness and Well-Being for Students	<b>MOD 8.1</b>	<b>Purpose for Students</b>
	MOD 8.2	Self-Compassion for Students
	MOD 8.3	Kindness and Compassion for Students
	MOD 8.4	Gratitude for Students
	MOD 8.5	Awe for Students
	MOD 8.6	Courage for Students
	MOD 8.7	Empathy for Students
	MOD 8.8	Mindfulness for Students
	MOD 8.9	Humility for Students
	MOD 8.10	Forgiveness for Students
	MOD 8.11	Hope for Students



# Learning Objectives

## TOPICS 7.1 and 8.1: **PURPOSE** for Educators and Students

Module	7.1 Purpose for Educators	8.1 Purpose for Students
<b>Learning Objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is purpose, why is it important, and how can we uncover ours?</li> <li>• How does my purpose relate to my work as an educator?</li> <li>• What is the difference between passion, meaning, &amp; purpose— and how can I harness all three?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is purpose? Why is it important for young people?</li> <li>• How does purpose develop in students? When can you start talking about purpose with students?</li> <li>• How does identity relate to purpose?</li> </ul>
<b>California Standards for Teaching Profession (CSTPs)</b>  	<p><b>CSTP 1: Engaging and Supporting All Students in Learning</b>            1A: Focus on Students            1B: Knowledge of Students            1D: Diversity and Equity</p> <p><b>CSTP 2: Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning</b>            2A: Learning Environment            2D: Inclusive Environment</p> <p><b>CSTP 3: Understanding and Organizing Subject Matter for Students</b>            3A: Knowledge of Subject Matter and Pedagogy            3B: Connecting Subject Matter to Real-World Contexts            3D: Content and Skills across Subjects            3E: Curriculum Materials and Resources</p> <p><b>CSTP 4: Planning Instruction and Designing Learning Experiences for All Students</b>            4A: Planning Instruction for Student Learning            4B: Designing and Developing Instruction for Student Learning            4C: Facilitating Instruction for Student Learning            4D: Adapting Instruction for Student Learning</p> <p><b>CSTP 6: Developing as a Professional Educator</b>            6A: Reflection on Practice            6B: Focused Professional Learning            6F: Activating Access and Equity            6G: Personal Growth and Well-Being</p>	
<b>CA TSEL Guidelines</b>	<p>Link Objectives to Developmental Indicators in <a href="#">California Transformative SEL Competencies</a>. The <a href="#">California Department of Education (CDE)</a> aims to support and advance the efforts of educators across California who are working to fully integrate systemic SEL and equity by building on the promise of T-SEL as a concept. Sourced from CDE (July 2023)</p>	

## Additional Resources

### TOPICS 7.1 and 8.1: **PURPOSE** for Educators and Students

#### Articles (Adult-Oriented)

[Three Steps to a Purposeful Year](#) Before you set goals and resolutions, take some time to reflect on what makes you unique and what kind of life you aspire to.

[Seven Ways to Find Your Purpose in Life](#) Having a meaningful, long-term goal is good for your well-being. Here's how to find one.

[How Purpose Changes Across Your Lifetime](#) Purpose is not a destination, suggests research, but a journey and a practice.

[Three Ways to See Meaning in Your Life](#) Struggling to find a sense of meaning in life? Researchers have identified three different pathways to it.

[How Preschool Teachers Can Reclaim a Sense of Joy and Purpose](#) For preschool teachers having a tough time this year, focusing on small wins with students may help.

#### Articles (Student-Oriented)

[How to Talk With Teens About Purpose](#) A Q&A with Kendall Bronk about instilling purpose in teens— and the emerging research showing why it's so important.

[7 Ways to Help High Schoolers Find Their Purpose](#) Many students go through high school bored and unengaged. Patrick Cook-Deegan explains what a purpose-driven curriculum would look like.

[How to Help Teens Find Purpose](#) Teens are naturally driven to seek new experiences— and that may be the key to helping them develop a sense of purpose in life.

[5 Ways to Foster Purpose in Adolescents](#) Research suggests that young people rarely have a sense of purpose— but we can take steps to help them cultivate it.

[Can a Sense of Purpose Help Teens Through Hard Times?](#) A new study suggests that teens with purpose are more resilient and optimistic, even during a severe economic crisis.

[How Awe Can Help Students Develop Purpose](#) Research suggests that inducing awe in the classroom might inspire kids to find a sense of purpose in life.

[How to Help All Students Feel Safe to Be Themselves](#) Students suffer when they're bullied or feel like they don't belong— and Social Justice Humanitas Academy is doing something about it.

[Fostering Identity Safety in Your Classroom](#) Dissolve stereotype threat and increase identity safety by affirming all types of identity, modeling strategic vulnerability, inviting students into self-authorship, and creating identity safe classroom agreements.

[Why Achievement Culture Has Become So Toxic](#) The incessant pressure to perform takes a toll on children's mental health— but there are other ways to help them find their sense of worth.

[How Educators Can Help Make a Kinder World](#) By integrating character education, SEL, and mindfulness, schools can cultivate the inherent goodness in students.

#### Quiz

Take the [Greater Good Purpose Quiz](#) to discover how strong your purpose is.



## Additional Resources

### TOPICS 7.1 and 8.1: **PURPOSE** for Educators and Students

#### Customizable Slides for Students

[What is Purpose?](#) Download and customize these slides to teach students about purpose.

#### Podcasts and Happiness Breaks

[What's Your "Why" in Life?](#) (23:56) Adrian Michael Green asks big questions designed to help teens— and adults— find more meaning and purpose in their lives.

[How to Make Your Work More Satisfying](#) (16:22) Finding ways to bend tasks toward your strengths and passions can make you happier, more productive and find more meaning in your life— no matter your job.

[Are You Setting the Right Goals](#) (20:30) Setting goals can sometimes feel like setting ourselves up for failure. But journalist Monica Campbell finds there's something magical that happens with certain kinds of goals.

[Happiness Break: Visualizing Your Purpose](#) (9:02) Finding a greater sense of purpose can help us achieve our goals and strengthen our relationships. Dacher leads a meditation to find purpose by imagining a better world.

[Happiness Break: A Meditation to Inspire a Sense of Purpose](#) (7:37) Take a few minutes to reflect on someone who inspires you, and how you can embody the values you admire in them.

#### Videos

[TED talk: How to Find Your Purpose in School](#) (15:01) Jordan Davis gives an inspiring talk on how he discovered his purpose while in school.

[American Graduate: Native American Charter Academy](#) (11:34) How one school helps cultivate positive identity in students from Indigenous backgrounds.

[How Humanity Makes Its Meaning](#) (excerpt 0:00—5:25) In this excerpt, Jane Goodall shares how she discovered a sense of meaning and purpose in life, and Dr. Dan McAdams shares how we use story to craft our lives.





## Additional Resources

### TOPICS 7.1 and 8.1: **PURPOSE** for Educators and Students

#### **PRACTICES**

##### **Lower Elementary/Upper Elementary**

[Notes to Self: An SEL Kernels Practice](#) for [K](#), [1st](#), [2nd](#), [3rd](#), [4th](#), [5th](#), or [6th](#) grade Students take time to reflect on positive experiences, attributes, and/or aspirations by writing or drawing about themselves. (less than 15 minutes)

[Encouraging Moral Character Through Language](#) Teachers review their lesson plans and classroom decor to identify opportunities for strategic use of language that encourages moral character. (less than 30 minutes)

[Art on Purpose](#) Students learn about and explore what is meaningful to them through art. (one class session)

##### **Middle School/High School**

*Purpose Challenge Practices* (in order as suggested by research— can also be done as single practices; these practices also help with identity development)

[Discovering Your Strengths and Talents](#) (adaptable to all ages) Students send emails to five trusted adults, asking them what they think are students' strengths, talents, unique contribution to the world, and how to go about achieving their goals. (45 minutes + 30 minute follow-up; can be done as homework)

[Magic Wand for Students](#) (adaptable to all ages) Students write a description of their ideal world and how they might contribute to creating that world. (15–30 minutes)

[Man's Search for Meaning](#) Students watch a short video of a celebrity describing his life purpose, and then reflect on a Viktor Frankl quote about why meaning in life is important. (30 minutes)

[Exploring Your Personal Values](#) Students sort value statements in order of importance, and then reflect on the ones that mean the most to them. (30–45 minutes)

[Best Possible Self for Students](#) Students write answers to questions about what they want their lives to be at age 40. (15–30 minutes)

[Create a Purpose Tattoo](#) Students design a tattoo that symbolizes the things that matter most to them. (30 minutes)

[Purpose Quotes Reflection](#) Students choose a quote about purpose and reflect on why it resonates with them. (15–30 minutes)

[Setting Long Term Goals](#) Students write about how they can make their long-term goals a reality. (30 minutes)



## Additional Resources

### TOPICS 7.1 and 8.1: **PURPOSE** for Educators and Students

#### **PRACTICES**

##### **More Purpose Practices for middle and high school students**

[Meaningful Photos for Students](#) Students spend 15 minutes a day for one week taking photos of or sketching things that bring meaning to their lives, and then finish with a written reflection that asks them what each photo or drawing represents and why it's meaningful. (multiple sessions—can be done as homework)

[Purpose Compass](#) Students generate purposeful projects ideas by personally identifying (1) a need in the world that moves them, (2) their skills and abilities, and (3) something they find joy and value in. (60 minutes)

[Transforming Challenges Into Meaningful Pursuits](#) Students reflect on a community challenge, and then think of solutions after experiencing an "awe" moment. (1 hour)

[What is a Flourishing Life](#) Students explore and write about what makes a good life, using Aristotle as a guide. (multiple sessions)

[People Who Made a Difference](#) Students research, present to the class, and express gratitude to an historical figure whose actions have benefited society. (multiple sessions)

##### **Practices to support adults**

[Eight Inner Strengths for Leaders](#) School and teacher leaders use reflective questions to assess leadership strengths individually, with each other, or as a whole group, and then develop a plan for improvement. (less than 15 minutes)

[Energizing School Leadership](#) School leaders reflect on three qualities that make them good leaders— to reconnect with personal goals and values and to renew their energy and effectiveness at work. (less than 15 minutes)

[My Story of Meaning](#) Create a timeline of the turning points of your life. Next, reflect on who you want to become moving forward and set a personally meaningful goal that contributes to the world. Close by pondering your awe-inspiring life journey so far. (less than one hour)

[Self Check-In Journal](#) Use a values-informed reflective process to make ethical decisions with open-mindedness, integrity, equity, and justice in order to respond in a meaningful and responsible manner. (15 minutes)

[Use Your Strengths](#) Choose a personal strength, write how you're going to use the strength today, and then carry out your plan. (15 minutes)





## Additional Resources

### TOPICS 7.1 and 8.1: **PURPOSE** for Educators and Students

#### **Compassionate Community Building Practices**

[Crooked Circle: A Game for Building Trust](#) (PreK—Middle school) While holding hands in a circle, students work together to maintain balance as alternate players lean forward and back. (5—10 minutes)

[Feelings Circle: An SEL Kernels Practice](#) ([K](#), [1st](#), [2nd](#), [3rd](#), [4th](#), [5th](#), or [6th grade](#)) In a group meeting, students share their feelings while also building their feelings vocabulary and emotion knowledge. (less than 15 minutes)

[The Beauty of Collective Effervescence](#) (PreK—High school) Students learn about collective effervescence, and either reflect on a time they experienced it or try it in the classroom. (less than 15 minutes)

[Check-in Circle for Community Building](#) (PreK—adult) Students or staff sit in a circle, center themselves with a Mindfulness Moment, and use a talking piece to respectfully take turns answering a question about how they are doing. They close the Circle process by reflecting on the effectiveness of the process itself. (15—30 minutes)

[In Harmony with Sound](#) (PreK—college) Students experiment with listening and collectively creating sounds that can be awe-inducing. (less than 30 minutes)

[We Are Better \(Dancing\) Together](#) (PreK—Middle school) Students watch a brief dance sequence or flash mob and then mimic or collectively create a dance sequence, experiencing collective effervescence through movement. (less than 30 minutes)

[Random Acts of Kindness](#) (PreK—college) Students will engage in several acts of kindness using a method that leads to greater happiness. (multiple sessions)



## Additional Resources

### TOPICS 7.1 and 8.1: **PURPOSE** for Educators and Students

#### **Additional Identity Development Practices**

(see Purpose Challenge practices above for more practices that help develop students' identity)

[Encouraging Moral Character Through Language](#) (PreK—High school) Teachers review their lesson plans and classroom decor to identify opportunities for strategic use of language that encourages moral character. (less than 30 minutes)

[Reminders that Encourage Moral Character Strengths](#) (Upper elementary—High school) Students identify important character strengths for the classroom, create a classroom character strengths board, and write stories of themselves that include the character strengths the classroom has agreed are important. (less than 1 hour)

[Student Self Check-In Journal](#) (Middle school—College) Use a values-informed reflective process to help students make ethical decisions with open-mindedness, integrity, and fairness. (less than 15 minutes)

[Who Am I?](#) (Middle school—College) Students reflect on their individual identities and the stereotypes that people might hold about them, followed by a discussion on the impact of stereotypes and implicit biases. (less than 1 hour)

[Just Because \(Broaden Your Sense of What's Comfortable and Familiar\)](#) (Upper elementary—High school) Students discuss what it means to make assumptions, read two poems written to dismantle assumptions, and write and share their own version of the poem. (less than 1 hour)

[Take-Home Skill: Unpacking Identity for Teens](#) (Middle—High school) A series of questions to help parents/caregivers explore different identities with their teens and how those identities shape their experiences. (multiple sessions)

[Take-Home Skill: Expanding What's Culturally Familiar— Broadening Your Sense of "We"](#) (Middle school—College) Parents/caregivers and their teens attend an event or center that celebrates people with a different cultural identity than their own and reflect on their experience, helping to foster a sense of civil courage. (multiple sessions)





## TAKE IT DEEPER: Purpose Map Activity

This practice will walk you through mapping out two dreams for yourself and two for the world in a visual way to show how they are connected.

Following the prompts by each circle, write just a few sentences on the left-hand side about dreams for yourself— reflecting backwards and looking forward. Write a few sentences on the right-hand side about dreams you have for the world and how you can contribute to those dreams.

We suggest not dwelling for too long on your responses— try to write all four in 5–10 minutes.

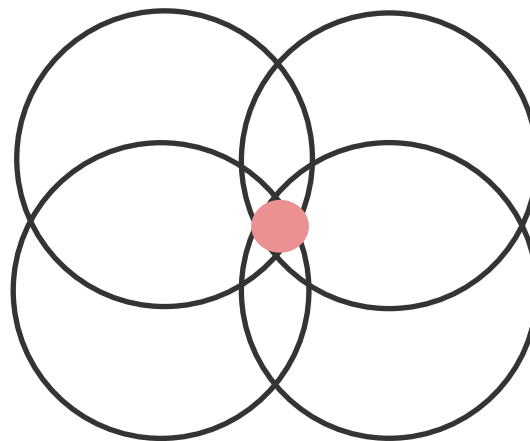
After you have written a sentence or two in response to each prompt, step back and consider: What is at the center of your Purpose Map— what do all four of your Dream responses have in common? Write that at the bottom of your map sheet. If the answer isn't immediately obvious to you, that's OK. Take some time to think about it and even return to it later. You can revisit this practice as many times as it is helpful to you!

### DREAM FOR SELF

**Dream Backwards:**  
How have you most enjoyed spending your time?

**Dream Forward:** What does your life look like in 50 years? Who are you with? What is your purpose?

### PURPOSE MAP



### DREAM FOR THE WORLD

**Dream for the World:**  
What would you wish to see changed or created in the world?

**Dare to Offer:** What are your unique gifts? What are ways in which you can serve people and the planet around you?

**What is at the center of all your dreams?**

## Module 8.1

### PURPOSE for Students



### TAKE IT DEEPER: 1 of 2

## Guiding Questions for Exploring Purpose in the Classroom

The [Siemens Child Development Center](#) in Wilsonville, Oregon created these five guiding statements when approaching and exploring purpose with their students (0–5 years old) and families. Although developed for young children, most of these questions remain relevant for all ages of students. Some of these questions can be posed directly to students (particularly older ones), while others can be helpful for you as you design learning opportunities. For example, you don't need to explicitly pose the question "What opportunities do mistakes offer?"— instead, when a mistake occurs in the classroom, you can open a discussion like "What did you learn? What might you do differently next time?"

Take a moment to read through the statements and associated questions. Circle any questions that resonate with you or stand as good launching pads for a discussion around meaning and purpose and/or for helping to integrate purpose into your curriculum and pedagogy. In the space below/on next page, can you reflect on some connections you draw between these questions and fostering students' sense of purpose? What are some ways to use these statements in a discussion or activity with your students?

# Module 8.1

## PURPOSE for Students



### TAKE IT DEEPER: 2 of 2

## Guiding Questions for Exploring Purpose in the Classroom

Take a moment to read through the statements and associated questions. Circle any questions that resonate with you or stand as good launching pads for a discussion around meaning and purpose and/or for helping to integrate purpose into your curriculum and pedagogy. Source: [Siemens Child Development Center](#)

### **I am an evolving individual**

Who am I? What does it mean to be an individual?  
What do I value about myself? What is unique about me?  
What does it mean to be authentically myself?  
How do I safely take risks and embrace mistakes as I change and grow?  
What opportunities do mistakes offer? How do I embrace my capabilities and talents? How do I realize my power for positive change?

### **I am a contributing member of a community**

What does it mean to be a member of a community?  
What are my rights and responsibilities as a member of this community?  
How are respectful, responsive, reciprocal communities nurtured?  
How can I contribute meaningfully to my community?

### **I am a creator of ideas and questions**

What role does creativity play in thinking and learning?  
How are doing and learning interconnected?  
What roles do observation, attention, and persistence play in learning?  
How does play support me in developing ideas, theories, and questions?  
What materials will support my thinking?

### **I am a communicator**

How do I effectively share my ideas/needs/questions with others?  
What material/ 'language' will best express my ideas and questions?  
How do I respectfully advocate for myself and others?  
What does it mean to 'listen' with all your senses?  
What role do joy and humor play in being a competent communicator?  
What does responsive and reciprocal communication look and feel like?

### **I am a steward of my environment**

What are my rights and responsibilities in regards to the world outside myself? To the natural world?  
What role does the outdoors play in supporting my personal growth and well-being? How do I acknowledge the interdependence of all living things? How do I foster health in myself and others?  
What impact do appreciation and aesthetics have on our ability to act respectfully and mindfully?  
How do I realize my power for positive change?  
What does it mean to live sustainably?

