



## MICRO SEL THREE SIGNATURE PRACTICES FOR EVERYONE...EVERY DAY

### Creating Inclusive and Positive Environments

Highly engaging, effective and purposeful interactions are created using three key social and emotional learning (SEL) practices in the small moments of our day:

**WELCOMING ACTIVITIES** • Greeting for Inclusion

**ENGAGING PRACTICES** • Attentive Listening

**OPTIMISTIC CLOSURES** • Reflections and Looking Forward

Even if you are using these three SEL practices for the first time, they can be effective in creating positive and productive relationships throughout the day with everyone you encounter. These signature practices engage all five SEL competencies and can help us to create a culturally inclusive community. They also build upon and are aligned with the principles of adult learning, Restorative Justice (RJ), Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and trauma-informed practices.

Using these three practices is beneficial for everyone and is absolutely essential for some people:

- *People who walk into our offices and schools after a morning, a day, a week or a lifetime of difficult situations need to experience a sense of calm and inclusion in order to participate fully.*
- *Humans are internally soothed by sameness—while paradoxically our brains need freshness, too. It's balancing novelty within routines and activities that allows us to move with confidence through our work day while navigating multiple competing demands on time, energy and attention. These micro-routines provide a solid foundation for our most overextended colleagues, students and families to be engaged as learners and contributors.*
- *Productivity and creative thinking result only when our basic human needs have been met and our neocortex is engaged and available.*

[Follow this link](#) for additional resources and research about the power of micro-practices.

**MICRO SIGNATURE SEL PRACTICES\***

**MICRO Signature SEL Practices** are small but powerful moments in our day that only take a few seconds or minutes to complete. Practices such as greeting a person by name, sincerely asking how they are doing and wishing them a good day are ways of demonstrating care and inclusion in a very short amount of time. When done authentically and systematically throughout a work environment they can help create and grow a culture of positive and productive relationships that are the foundation of learning, teaching and leading.

**WELCOMING ACTIVITIES****Greetings Designed for Inclusion**

*We all want to be acknowledged and welcomed.*

A culture of personal greetings establishes safety and predictability, supports contribution by all voices, set norms for respectful listening, and allows people to connect with one another, creating a sense of belonging. To be effective they must be authentic, warm and accompanied by appropriate eye contact and attentive body language.

**USE INCLUSIVE GREETINGS in passing**

**Eye Contact:** When culturally appropriate, establish eye contact while listening and speaking. This means not looking at your cell phone or computer screen while engaging with another person.

**Smile:** 😊! And if not a smile, assume a neutral and welcoming facial expression.

**Quick Greetings:**

- "Hi, [say person's name]."
- "Good morning (afternoon)."
- "How can I help you?"
- "Nice to see you."

**ENGAGING PRACTICES****Attentive Listening**

*Adults and students want to know that they have been heard and seen every day.*

Engaging practices such as attentive listening are brain compatible strategies that can foster relationships, cultural humility and responsiveness, empowerment, and collaboration. Attentive listening improves the quality of the thinking/speaking of the person who is talking and allows the listener time to understand the full message of what is being said or implied.

**DEMONSTRATE ENGAGEMENT even when time is tight****Non-verbal:**

- Offering a "High Five" a wave, a nod or other non-verbal acknowledgment.
- Nonverbal cues – not using technology during an encounter.
- Pausing your activity to acknowledge the other person.

**Verbal:**

- "How are you doing?"
- "What's new?"
- Asking a follow up question to their comment.

**OPTIMISTIC CLOSURE****Reflections and Looking Forward**

This provides positive closure, reinforces the topic, and creates momentum towards taking action. It is a way to show that you want to stay connected with the person.

**END ON AN OPTIMISTIC, APPRECIATIVE NOTE**

- "Is there anything else I can help you with?"
- "Bye. See you later."
- "Thank you."
- "Let me think about that."