




## Learning for Well-being Toolkit

Empowering Schools to Encourage Inclusion, Connection, and Flourishing

 Developed by the Learning for Well-being Foundation

 2025 Edition

 In collaboration with educators, students, and communities

“Well-being is not a luxury—it’s the foundation of all learning.”  
— L4WB



# From Pressure to Purpose

## Reframing School Through the Lens of Well-being



What if every school became a place where human potential—not just performance—was the measure of success?

In today's educational landscape, schools are at a tipping point. Burnout among teachers is on the rise, students report increased stress and disengagement, and school communities feel the strain of rigid systems that often neglect the inner life of learning.

Yet within this challenge lies our greatest opportunity: to reimagine schools not as factories of academic output, but as ecosystems of flourishing.

This toolkit our contribution to that transformation.

Because when we nurture well-being, we don't just improve education —we reimagine what it can be.

Let's begin.

# Goal 1: Cultivating Mindfulness

*Mindfulness is the practice of bringing non-judgmental attention to the present moment. It allows teachers to respond, not react—to slow down, self-regulate, and feel grounded even in chaotic moments.*


## A Brief History

Mindfulness has roots in ancient Buddhist meditation traditions, but it was psychologist Jon Kabat-Zinn who brought it into clinical and educational settings in the 1970s. Today, mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) is used worldwide to treat burnout, anxiety, and emotional exhaustion—especially in high-demand professions like teaching.



## Mood check: How are you feeling today?

 Feeling great

 Doing okay

 Struggling a bit

● Loading...



# Mindfulness Check-In

## Questions to Cultivate Presence

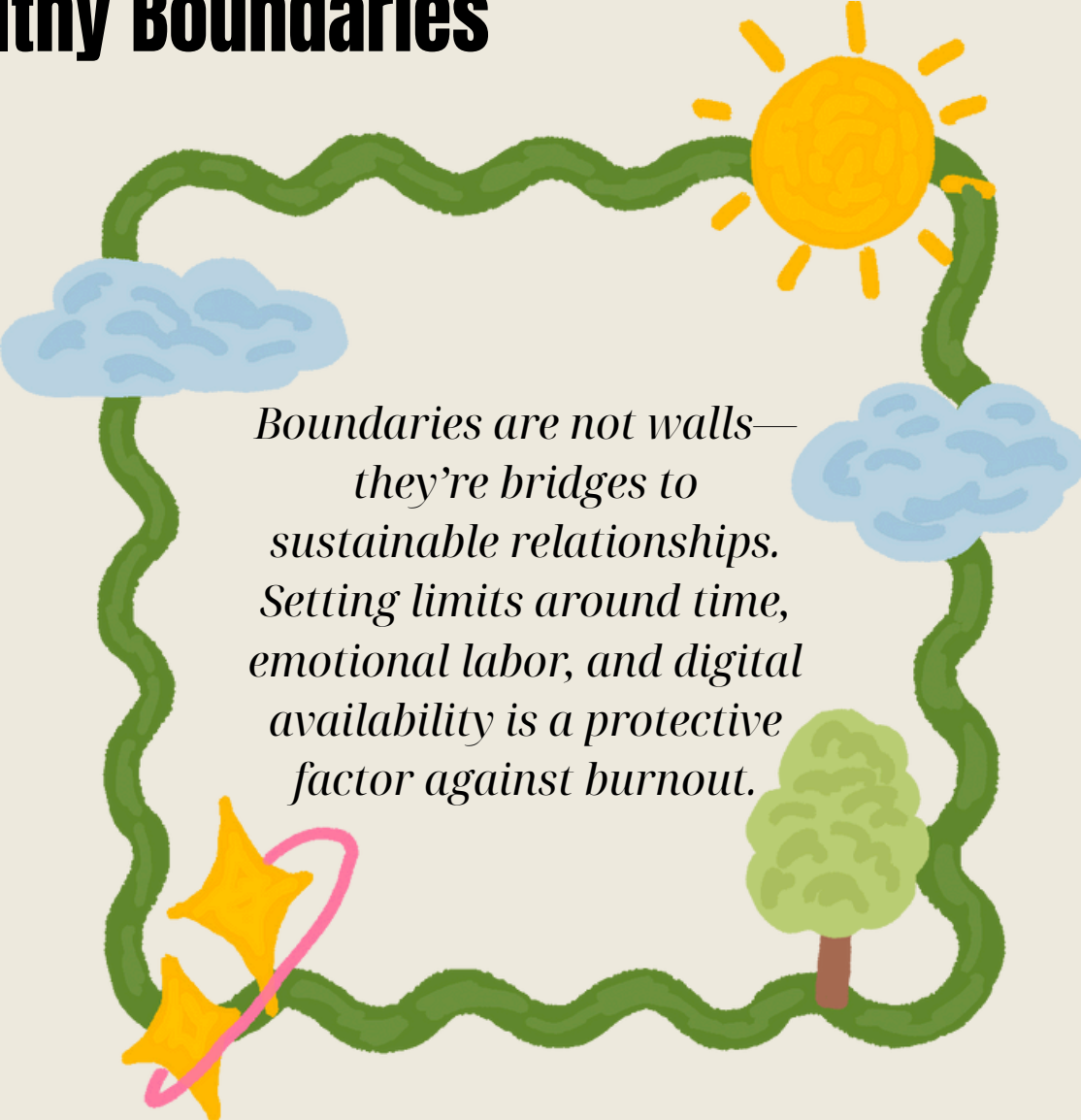
1. How can I take just 5 minutes today to pause and return to myself? (Could I focus on my breath, scan my body, or tune into sounds around me?)
2. Where in my schedule can I create a tiny pause between activities? (Can I take three deep breaths before entering the classroom or after a tough meeting?)
3. What sensory detail can I anchor to right now? (What do I see, smell, hear, or feel that brings me back to the present?)
4. Have I given myself the chance to sit in silence or stillness today? Why or why not?
5. Which guided support feels right for me today? (Would I benefit from a short meditation on Insight Timer, a body scan, or a breathing app?)
6. What emotion is visiting me right now? (Can I name it without judgment?)
7. What do I need in this moment—rest, movement, connection, stillness?
8. Am I reacting or responding to this moment? What would a mindful response look like?
9. What can I let go of, just for now?
10. How would I speak to myself if I were my own student or best friend?



## 🛑 Goal 2: Setting Healthy Boundaries

### A Brief History

In psychology, boundary theory (Ashforth et al., 2000) explains how individuals manage the borders between personal and professional roles. Teachers often operate in “porous” boundaries, leading to role overload and compassion fatigue. Establishing firmer internal and external boundaries increases clarity and reduces stress.



*Boundaries are not walls—  
they're bridges to  
sustainable relationships.  
Setting limits around time,  
emotional labor, and digital  
availability is a protective  
factor against burnout.*



# **Drawing the Line with Love** **Boundary-Setting Reflection**

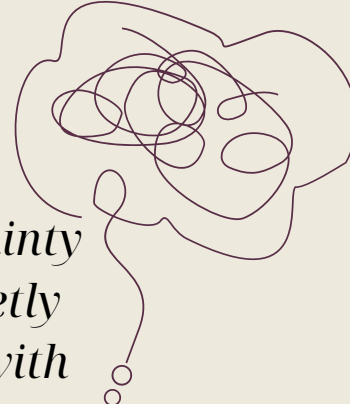


1. Where in my week do I give more than I actually have to give? (Where does 'yes' come from fear, not alignment?)
2. What would it feel like to say no—and trust that nothing will fall apart?
3. What are the quiet ways I abandon myself in the name of being 'a good teacher'? (And how can I return to myself gently?)
4. When do I check emails out of habit or anxiety rather than purpose? (Could I protect one sacred hour without pings, alerts, or demands?)
5. Who needs to hear my limits lovingly—but clearly? (Students, parents, colleagues... myself?)
6. What small ritual could mark the end of my workday today? (A closed laptop, a walk, a song, a cup of tea?)
7. What version of me shows up when I have no space to breathe? (And what version shows up when I do?)
8. If my boundary was a physical object, what would it be? (A velvet rope? A sturdy gate? A soft lantern?)
9. Where can I create more space—not to do more, but to feel more peace?
10. What part of me believes that exhaustion = worth? (And is it ready to let go?)



# Goal 3: Navigating Anxiety with Compassion

*Anxiety is a natural response to uncertainty  
but in schools, chronic anxiety can quietly  
erode confidence and joy. Managing it with  
self-compassion and practical tools is crucial.*



## A Brief History

Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) introduced the idea that thoughts influence emotions and behavior. More recently, Kristin Neff's work on self-compassion emphasizes that meeting anxiety with understanding—rather than self-criticism—builds resilience and emotional regulation in educators.



# Grounding Reflection for Teachers

*When the day spins too fast – come back to your senses.*

## **Step 1: Reconnect with the Present Moment (Sensory Awareness)**

*Begin with your body. Slow your breath. Notice what's around you.*

1. What are 5 things I can see right now?
2. What are 4 things I can touch?
3. What are 3 things I can hear?
4. What is 1 thing I can taste?

## **Step 2: Anchor in Your Body (Physical Grounding)**

*The body holds more wisdom than we think. Let it speak.*

6. Where in my body am I holding tension right now?
7. Can I place my feet flat on the ground and feel my weight supported?
8. What happens if I exhale just 10% slower than I inhale?
9. Could I move gently – roll my shoulders, stretch my fingers, unclench my hands?

## **Step 3: Recenter with Gentle Curiosity (Emotional Grounding)**

*Name what's present so it doesn't have to shout.*

10. What emotion is most present in me right now?
11. What might this feeling be trying to tell me?
12. If this feeling had a shape or color, what would it look like?

*(Exmp. "I am doing my best.")*

*"This moment will pass."*

*"I am enough, even when I am not okay.")*

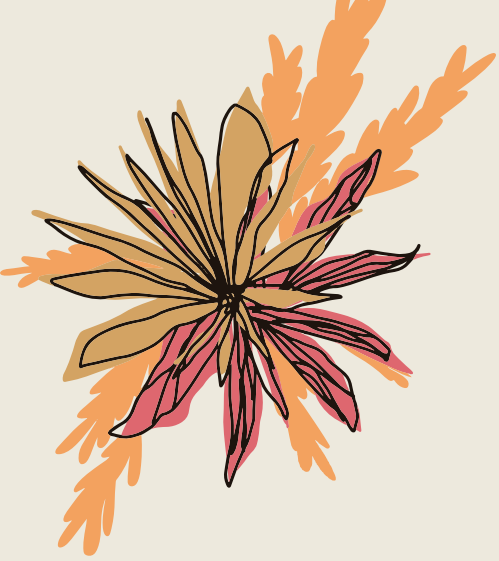
## **Optional Closing Practice: 30-Second Reset**

Sit or stand still. Close your eyes or lower your gaze.

Breathe in for 4... hold for 2... out for 6. Repeat



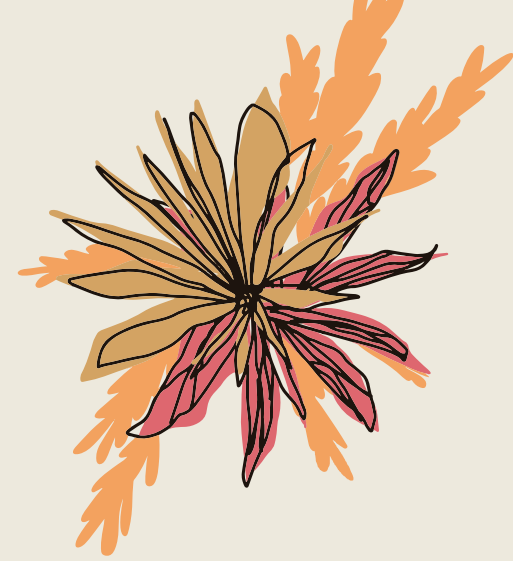




## Reflection 1

*The Soft Work*  
*The quiet, invisible labor of care.*

Not for the curriculum,  
but for the soul behind the teacher.  
You do not need to do more—  
you only need to return to yourself,  
again and again and again.  
Let stillness be your strategy.  
Let kindness be your compass.



## 🌙 Reflection 2

*For the Teacher Who Keeps Going*

You hold so much—  
books and burdens,  
data and doubt,  
the sharp edges of children's hurt  
and the quiet ache of your own.  
But this, too, is your legacy:  
To teach from a place of presence,  
to lead without losing yourself,  
to rest without guilt.  
Even in stillness, you are shaping futures.



## Reflection 3

*The Day You Paused*

Today may not be the day you solved it all.  
But it was the day you paused.  
To breathe.  
To feel.  
To remember there is no shame  
in needing the same care you give.  
And maybe, just maybe—  
That's where the healing begins.