Our fatigue is often caused not by work, but by worry, frustration, and resentment.” — Dale Carnegie

“The calm and balanced mind is the strong and great mind; the hurried and agitated mind is the weak one.” — Wallace D. Wattles

The four sectors of the compass model — Mind, Spirit, Strength and Heart — not only contribute to our overall wellness, but also provide guidance on strategies to help build our compassion resilience. Before delving in further, you may want to take a self-assessment of your current wellness practices (found at the end of this document). Hold onto this and notice if any that you marked as “this never occurred to me” change as you encounter the next four sections of the toolkit.

Mind is the first sector we will explore. Being resilient in this area is exemplified by being well-organized, engaging in meaningful work, and being fully present in the moment. As we learned in Section 1, mindful self-awareness is a contemplative practice of being intentionally aware in the present moment. We have practiced strategies to enhance our mindfulness in various sections of the toolkit. Mindful self-awareness is a key skill for the Mind Section area as well as those that follow: Spirit, Strength, and Heart.

The practice of mindfulness is displayed in this brief, animated video. The goal of mindfulness is to be fully present with our emotions (HEART), with others (HEART), with our bodies (STRENGTH), with our environment (MIND), and with the universe (SPIRIT) (Davidson, 2012); therefore, mindfulness is a key skill that will form a foundation for building our compassion resilience in all four sectors of the wellness compass. It is through being fully present and aware and observing mindfully that we can participate most effectively in building our own resilience and wellness. A lot of mindfulness practices involve using an anchor, such as breathing, as a way to turn attention back to the present moment. In this 4-minute video, children show how a focus on breathing can be a helpful strategy for both adults and children. While the breath is a good anchor for many, it is not the best for everyone. Some use a focus on feeling their feet on the ground, others touch their thumb and index fingers together forming a circle, and there are many other ways to anchor ourselves.

Mindfulness is not only a mechanism to sharpen our attention, but is also a means of strengthening our compassion and empathy. Specifically, mindfulness is associated with increased self-compassion, higher compassion resilience, and lower compassion fatigue (Thielman & Cacciatore, 2014).

Because mindfulness is so intimately connected to compassion resilience, you may find it useful to assess how mindful you are. This article shares a few different surveys of mindfulness and sets assessing your mindfulness in a healthy context.

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This area of wellness has to do with how we manage our time, work space, and belongings. Let’s pretend that Mary, a zealot in her first year of teaching who volunteers at every opportunity, is starting to feel overcommitted and over-scheduled. One week Mary double-books herself, is late to a meeting, and begins to feel strapped for time to dedicate to her lesson planning. Mary, ever attentive of when her life feels out of balance, notices how her tendency to say “yes” to everything makes it difficult to give her all to the things she has agreed to do. Rather than engage in self-blame (a form of judgment), Mary accepts that she cannot reasonably (and with compassion) do everything asked of her. She identifies the areas of her job where she has the freedom to say “no” and she vows to only say “yes” to opportunities that most reflect her interests and values.

Learning to say “no” compassionately (see Compassionate Boundaries - Section 6) especially in a professional or work culture where we might be expected to say “yes” (see Expectations - Section 5), is imperative to maintaining resilience in this sector of the compass.

If you struggle with taking on too much, you may benefit from learning more about the benefits of saying “no” and how to do so compassionately.

It is likely not news to anyone that living and working in an environment that is organized to support our activities and offers visuals or space that are calming adds to our overall well-being. Reflect on the following questions regarding your current level of organization:

1. In what area of your life are you most easily organized? (finances, belongings, workspace, connecting to friends and family, cleaning your living area, scheduling your time, etc.)
2. In what area do you find it the most challenging to be organized?

3. When you recognize a need for organization do you tend to use negative self-talk to try to motivate yourself or ask yourself what supports or skills might be helpful to you?
4. Our self-expectations can become unrealistic when it comes to how we approach getting more organized in areas that are a challenge. What step might you take to organize the part of your life that you listed in #2? (example: I want to recognize my family’s birthdays. Do I start by figuring out how I can follow-through on sending happy birthday texts to my siblings or do I expect that I buy and send birthday cards to everyone in my extended family?)

To learn more about how to “organize your brain, your time, your workspace, and your projects”, check out this blog.

The mind area of the wellness compass also suggests that we have a strong need to do meaningful work that engages our individual gifts and skills. In “Mindsets,” Dr. Carol Dweck (2016) shows that it is not just our abilities and talents that bring us success as teachers, but whether we approach our work with a fixed or growth mindset. People with fixed mindsets believe qualities are etched in stone and that abilities are fixed. This mindset often leads to people feeling deficient or incompetent when faced with difficult situations. When we feel a lack of competence, we may retreat from the challenge before us and become judgmental. For example, in a fixed mindset, if we are challenged by the complex needs of a student in our classroom that we do not feel competent to address, we may retreat from engagement with that child. In the process, we might blame ourselves and/or the student. Thus, our lack of a sense of competence can leave us in a place of compassion fatigue for that student.

In contrast, people with a growth mindset believe that abilities can be developed through practice and effort. Our skills and talents are not predetermined; therefore, people with growth mindsets stretch themselves to learn new things and believe themselves capable of learning through experience. These people and are more resilient in the face
of setbacks. In a growth mindset, if we experience compassion fatigue, we may view it as an opportunity to grow our compassion resilience!

Finding a level of competence in the face of complex challenges is tough! We benefit from understanding our own growth potential; but, we also benefit from understanding the resilience and strengths of those we serve and those with whom we work. None of us are the sole source of connection, support, or learning for a student, parent, or colleague. And, all students, families, and colleagues have internal strengths that can be accessed to move them closer to the lives they desire. Many of the activities in this section invite us to recognize our own strengths and competencies and to celebrate the skills and strengths of those with whom we work.
The Wellness Compass Practices Assessment

“Self-care is not an indulgence. Self-care is a discipline. It requires tough-mindedness, a deep and personal understanding of your priorities, and a respect for both yourself and the people you choose to spend your life with.” — Tami Forman

The following worksheet for assessing wellness practices is not exhaustive, merely suggestive. Feel free to add areas of self-care that are relevant for you and rate yourself on how often and how well you are taking care of yourself these days. When you are finished, look for patterns in your responses. Are you more active in some areas of self-care but ignore others? Are there items on the list that make you think, “I would never do that”? Listen to your inner responses, your internal dialogue about self-care and making yourself a priority. Take particular note of anything you would like to include more in your life.

Rate the following areas according to how well you think you are doing:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3 = I do this well (e.g., frequently)</th>
<th>0 = I never do this</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 = I do this OK (e.g., occasionally)</td>
<td>? = This never occurred to me. I might be interested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 = I barely or rarely do this</td>
<td>N/A = doesn’t apply or it’s not of interest to me</td>
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**Relationships**
- Spend time with others whose company I enjoy
- Stay in contact with important people in my life
- Make time to reply to personal emails/letters; send holiday cards
- Allow others to do things for me
- Enlarge my social circle
- Ask for help when I need it
- Share a fear, hope, or secret with someone I trust
- Resolve conflict with people in a productive way
- If relevant, spend time with my companion animals
- If relevant, schedule regular dates with my partner or spouse
- If relevant, schedule regular activities with my children
- Other:

**Emotions**
- Give myself affirmations, praise myself
- Practice self-compassion
- Practice being mindfully present
- Re-read favorite books, re-view favorite movies
- Seek out comforting activities, objects, people, and places
- Allow myself to cry
- Find things that make me laugh
- Notice my inner experience – my thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, feelings
- Express my outrage in social action, letters, donations, marches, protests
- Use emotional regulation strategies
- Other:
### Wellness and Resilience Strategies: Mind

**Core Values**
- Identify what is meaningful and notice its place in my life
- Find a connection/community that shares my values
- Have experiences of awe
- Contribute my time or other resources to causes in which I believe
- Read books or listen to talks/music that inspire me
- Choose to focus my attention on ideas, people and situations that nurture my optimism and hope
- Be aware of the non-material aspects of life that I value
- Be curious and engage in conversations with other people about their values
- Other:

**Rest & Play**
- Explore how to maintain balance in my work and non-work life
- Make time for reflection to balance time spent doing
- Take vacations
- Take day trips or mini-vacations
- Do something that makes me laugh
- Take rest breaks in the day – a walk at work, brief nap, etc.
- Spend time in nature
- Sing
- Meditate
- Dance, swim, walk/run, play sports, or other physical activities
- Other:

**Stress Resilience**
- Make time away from telephones, email, and the Internet
- Make time for self-reflection
- Have my own personal support – professional or peer
- Write in a journal
- Read about things that are unrelated to work
- Do something at which I am not an expert or in charge
- Attend to minimizing stress in my life
- Learn something new
- Say no to extra responsibilities sometimes
- Practice accepting discomfort
- Practice gratitude
- Other:

**Care for Body**
- Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch, and dinner)
- Eat healthily
- Exercise on a regular basis
- Explore new ways to exercise
- Get regular medical care for prevention
- Get medical care when needed
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MIND</th>
<th>STRENGTH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wellness and Resilience Strategies: Mind</strong></td>
<td><strong>Care for Body (continued)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Take time off when sick</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Get regular comforting, relaxing and/or healing touch</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ If relevant, take time to be sexual - with myself, with a partner</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Get enough sleep</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Wear clothes I like</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Make healthy decisions around use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>____ Other:</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Work</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Take a break during the workday (e.g. lunch)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>____ Have intentional conversations with co-workers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>____ Make quiet time to complete tasks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding</td>
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<td></td>
<td>____ Set limits/boundaries with colleagues and people you serve</td>
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<td></td>
<td>____ Balance work so that no one day or part of a day is “too much”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>____ Get regular supervision or consultation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>____ Negotiate for my needs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>____ Have a peer support group</td>
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<td></td>
<td>____ Other:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Make a budget for how I plan to spend and save money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Keep track of how I spend my money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Use a calendar to plan my day, week, month, year</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Prioritize how I spend my time</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Arrange my living space so it is comfortable and comforting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Arrange my workspace so it is comfortable and supports my efficiency</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Accomplish the tasks I plan each day</td>
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<td></td>
<td>____ Other:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Overall Balance</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>____ Maintain balance among work, family, relationships, play, and rest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Saakvitne, Pearlman, & Staff of TSI/CAAP (1996). Transforming the pain: A workbook on vicarious traumatization. Norton. The compass model is adapted from the work of The Samaritan Family Wellness Foundation.