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Combating Compassion Fatigue in the Classroom

LearnOn 2022 Breakout Session
July 21, 2022

AGENDA



- Introductions
- Mindful Moment
- Pandemic Impact on Compassion Fatigue
- Introduction to *The Compassion Project*
- Background & Research
- Best Practices in the Classroom
- Q & A

Combating Compassion Fatigue the Classroom



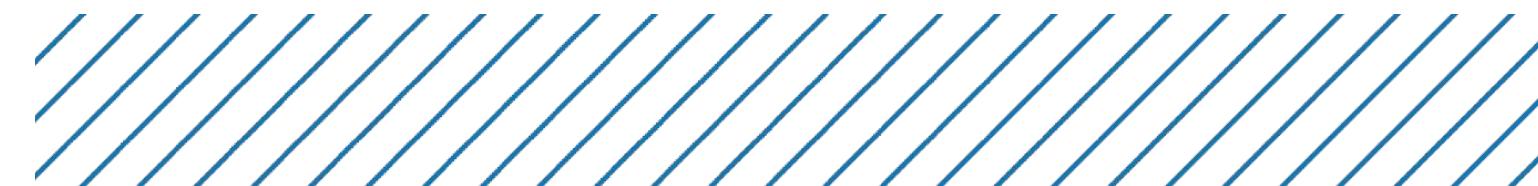
Kayla Coppock

Dover, NH
K-12 Product Marketing Specialist
EVERFI

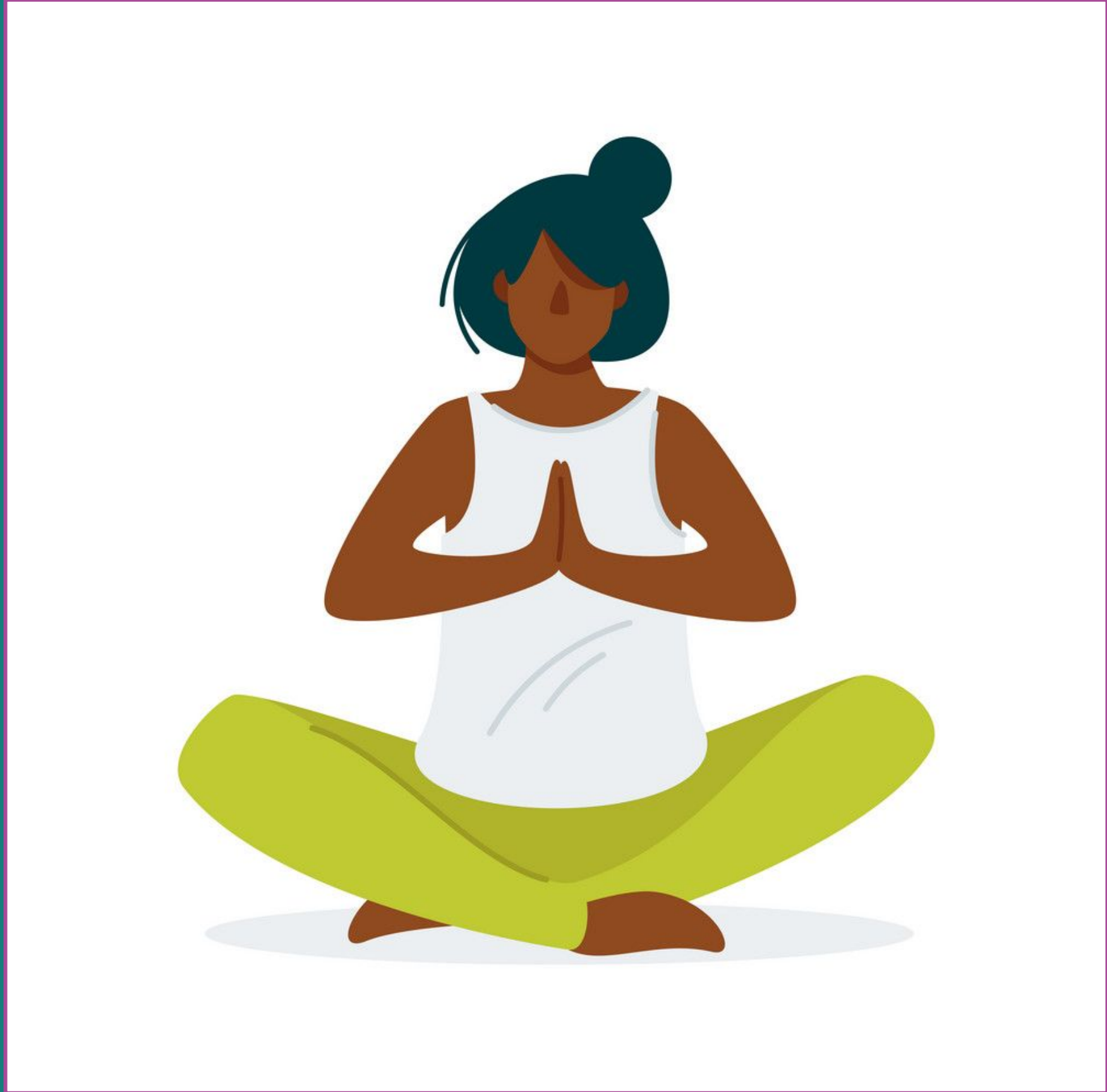


Karen Colgan

San Diego, CA
K-12 Implementation Specialist
EVERFI



Mindful Moment



Pandemic Impact

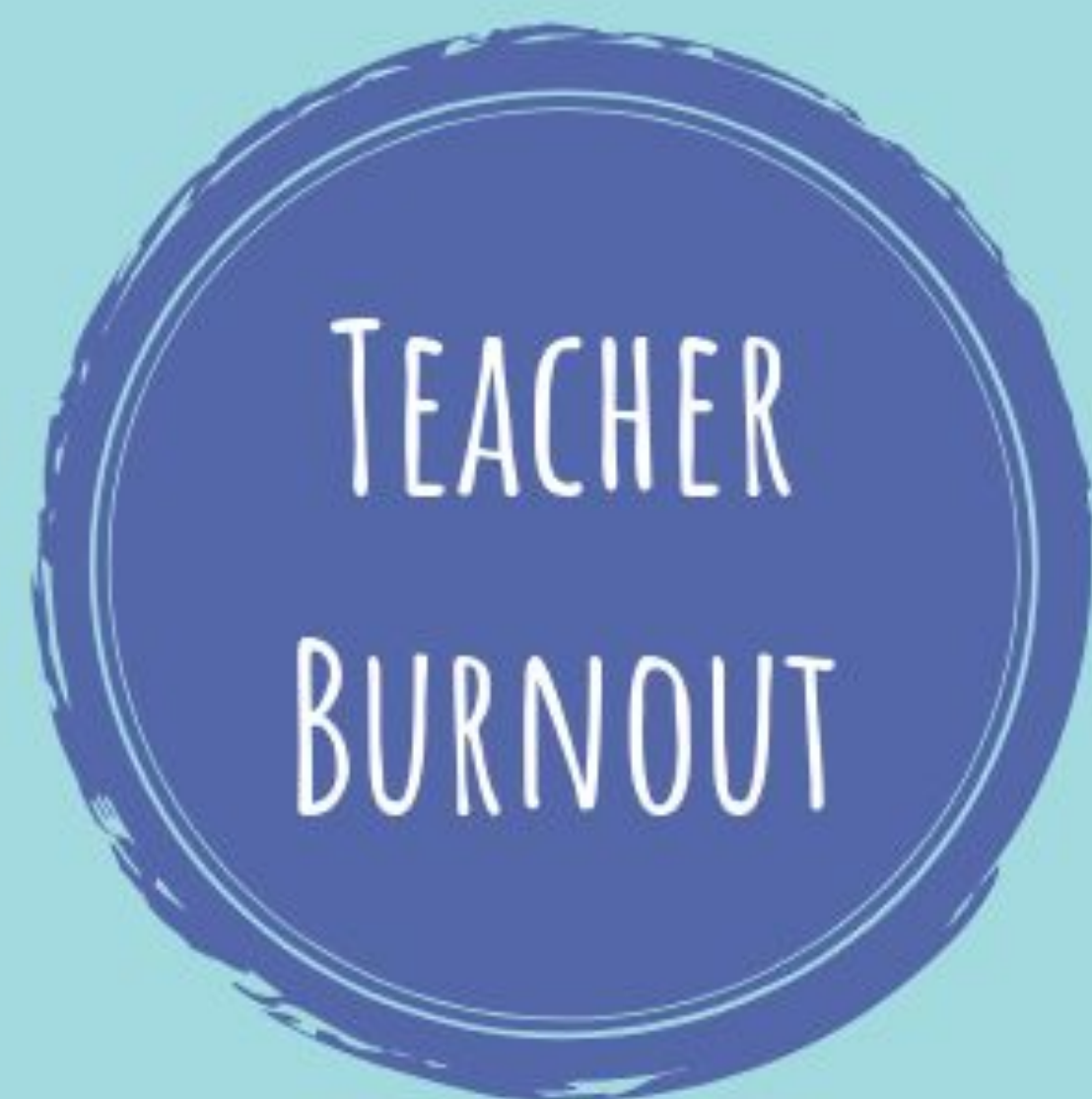
- Many teachers, bus drivers, and other school admins are **out of school** due to illness or COVID exposure.
- Districts that have vaccine requirements **have had to let go** their unvaccinated teachers.
- **Learning loss** and **behavioral issues** from students who have been out of the classroom
- **High turnover rates** amongst teachers



Teacher Burnout

1. As staff shortages deepen across the country and **workload increases**, more educators are feeling burned out and **demoralized**.
2. Research shows that school leaders who protect teachers' time, invite their input, and support their **mental health** and **well-being** through comprehensive programs see higher levels of satisfaction.
3. Unions have been pushing districts to address shortages, **reduce the extreme demand** on educators, and hire more health and wellness coordinators.





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Compassion Fatigue

Compassion fatigue is the cost of caring, the secondary trauma developed from caring for a person who has experienced trauma.

**[EdWeek](#)*





Combating Compassion Fatigue

1. Stick to what you can control. Separate what you wish you could do from what you know you can do.
2. Let go of how things should be.
3. Practice self-care.
4. Create a strong network.
5. Be authentic.
6. Practice mindfulness.

Poll:

Have you experienced compassion fatigue?

700

Yes



No



Not sure



Chat in your strategies & tips for combating compassion fatigue like

- *be mindful*
- *take breaks*
- *take care of yourself when you are feeling fatigued*

Mindfulness Strategies

- **Mindful Walk** - intentional where students start at one end of room with gaze down and hands behind their backs with heel touching the ground
- **Passing out a raisin** - smelling it, feeling the texture eating it slowly for mindful eating
- **Be present of your body**
- **Visualization** - visualize a place that makes you happy
- **Affirmations** - positive self talk



Compassion

Background & Research

Poll:

How do you currently foster compassion and empathy in your curriculum?

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I have **solid lessons** built into my instruction



I have **some lessons** built into my curriculum but I'd like to include more



I touch on it at times but I'd like **more resources**



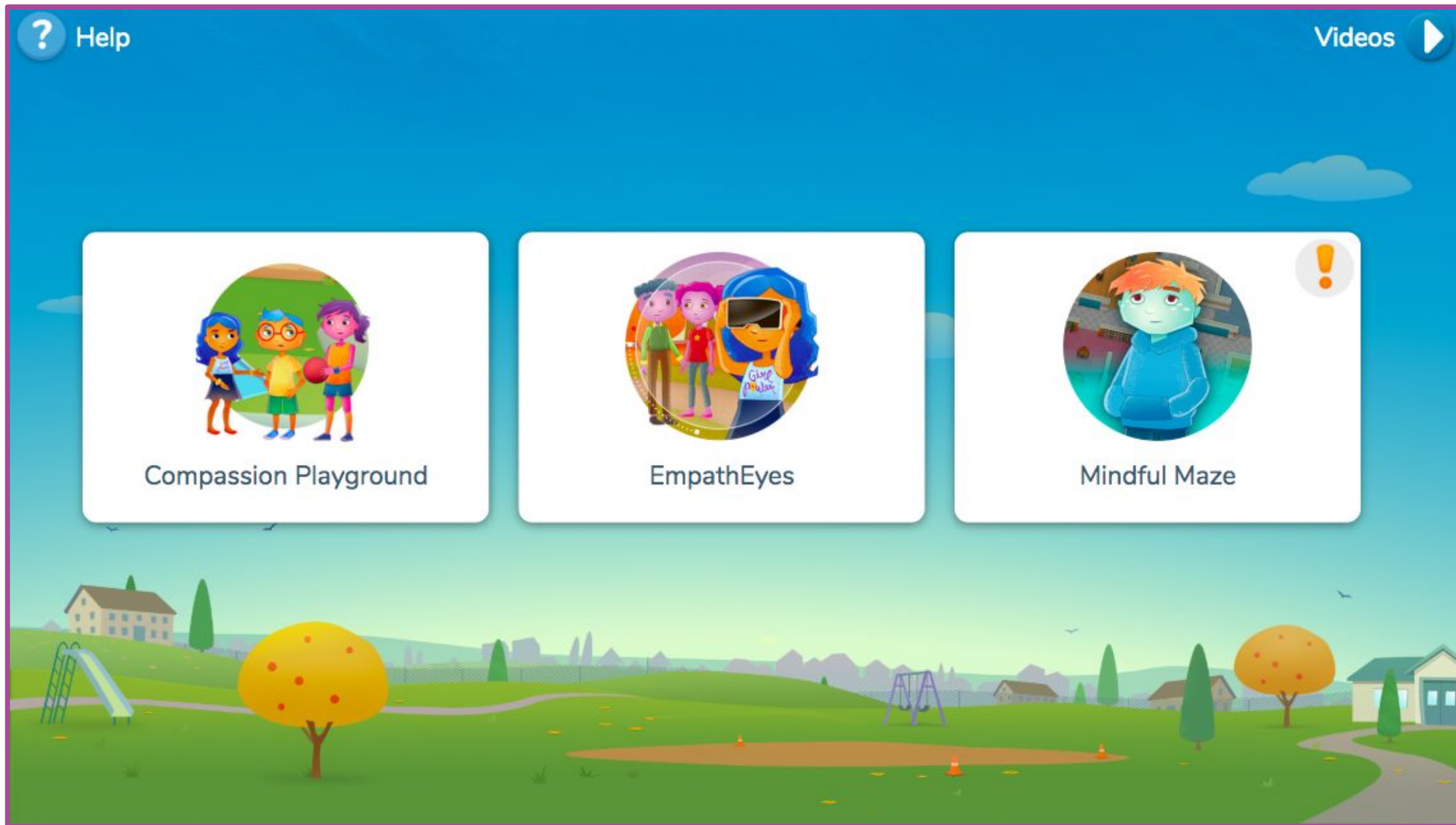
I don't currently but I'm **interested!**



In today's world **compassion seems to have vanished**. We need to teach others how to have compassion and feelings for the plight of others, for other people, animals and our planet. The Compassion Project addresses these issues in thoughtful and fun ways for students. The interactive lessons are engaging and creative. The students really enjoy the games and are eager to complete them. The benefits are the **social and emotional skills learned** in the process of having fun. When I hear counselors and other educators talk about how kids don't seem to care about their classmates and are focused on their needs and gains only – I knew we had to do something to make a systemic change. [Using Compassion has brought] **Changes in classroom conflicts** and school climate and culture is better. When you hear students repeating and or using taught skills of empathy and understanding, kindness and other fundamental social and emotional skills... it is joy to the ears!

Kathryn Everest, M.Ed., Director of Counseling Services, Fort Worth ISD

Building the Compassion Project



"I witness students who argue, get angry, feel left out, and get emotional almost every single day on the playground. These activities give them real life scenarios and ways to handle them appropriately. We all experience them, but can leave a long lasting mark for students who don't know how to handle them. Thank you for this resource."

Teacher, Florida

Why Teach Compassion?

- For every **\$1** invested in effective SEL programs, there is an average return of **\$11** in long term benefits. ¹
- Students are better **prepared for jobs** which are increasingly dependant on interpersonal skills such as the need to navigate cultural differences. ²
- Increases academic achievement and **reduces disciplinary issues.** ³



The Compassion Project: Lower Elementary

Grade Level: 2nd -3rd

Total Lessons: 15 lessons (3 digital), 25-30 minutes each

Aligns with CASEL SEL framework; CCSS ELA Standards

Suggested Class Fit: SEL Time, Morning Meeting, ELA



At-a-Glance

Through storytelling, reflection, and rich interactive experiences, this curriculum helps to build a foundation for compassion to take root. Videos, digital activities, and classroom lessons invite students to engage with compassion in context and apply new skills, strategies, and insights to their daily lives.

Course Highlights

- Short videos to model key themes and concepts
- Interactive scenarios help students practice compassion
- Guided classroom discussion

Course Topics

- Defining compassion
- Empathy and perspective taking
- Mindfulness and growth mindset

The Compassion Project: Upper Elementary

Grade Level: 4th-5th (Upper Elementary)

Total Lessons: 3 lessons, 10 mins each

Course Length: 30 mins

Subject Alignment: SEL, Counseling

Languages: English, Spanish

Mobile-Friendly



At-a-Glance

The Compassion Project: Upper Elementary builds on *The Compassion Project* to continue to teach the complex but critical skill of compassion. This course covers key social-emotional learning competencies such as the development of the understanding of self, others and impact of the actions we take.

Course Highlights

- Scenario-based narrative
- Six videos integrated throughout course
- Diverse characters
- Learning through problem solving - new “EmpathEyes” game

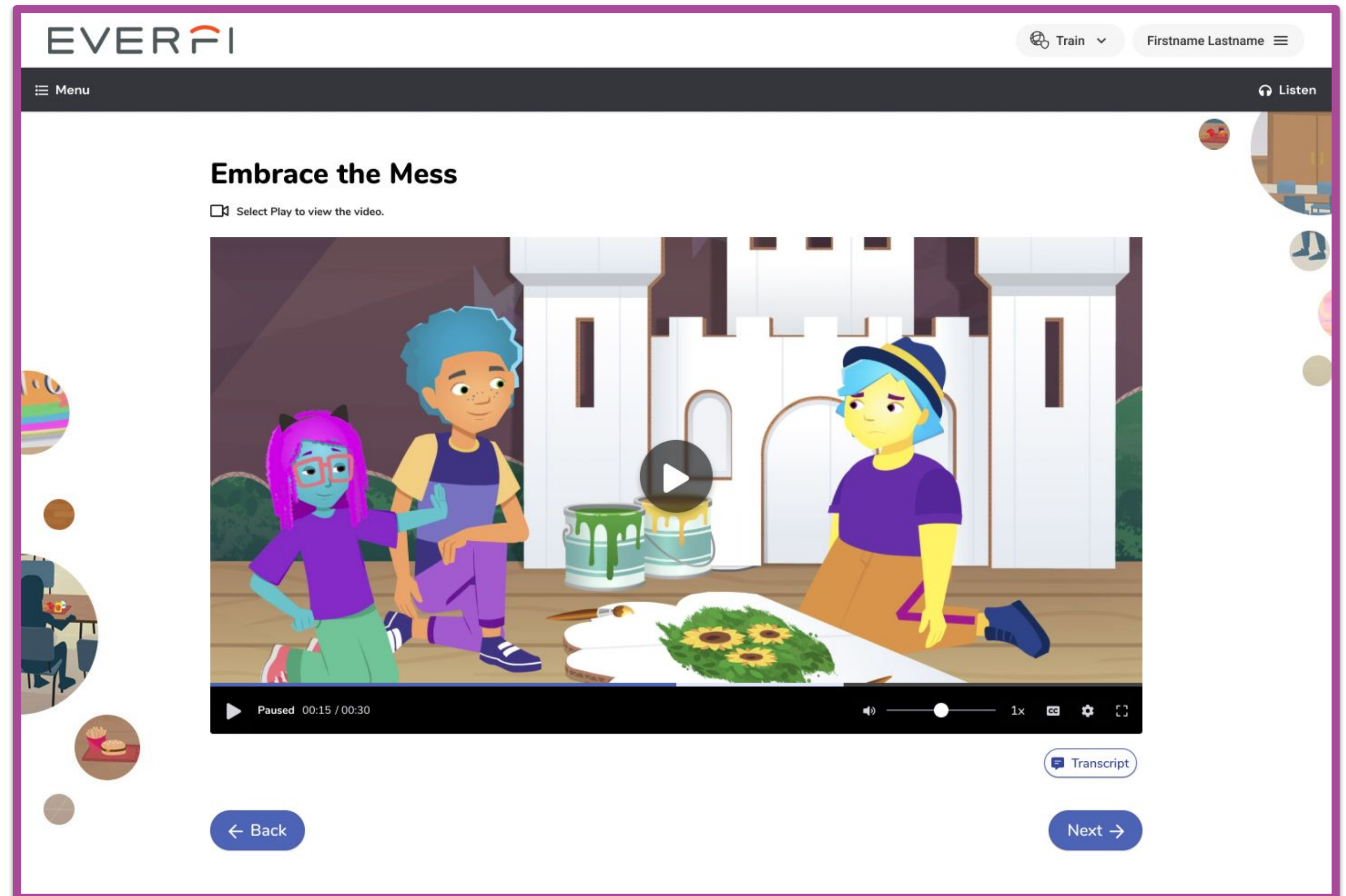
Course Topics

- Compassion and Empathy
- Mistakes and Self-Care
- Emotions and Mindfulness



Thread of Video Stories

- Putting on a Play
- Casting/Compassion
- Costumes/Empathy
- Rehearsals/Emotions
- Building the Sets/Mistakes
- Getting Ready/Self-Care
- The Big Day/Mindfulness





Getting Started/Next Steps

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Questions?

Thank you! Let's go Forward Together!



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