

## Study Guide

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### Part I: Pedagogy and Research

#### Chapter 1: "What Is Transformative Social Emotional Learning?"

1. What does social and emotional learning look like in your school? In your classroom?
2. What are your school's biggest needs/challenges? How could social emotional learning help address these challenges?

##### *Activity*

Reflect on the attributes that have helped you thrive in life (determination, family support, love for reading, etc.). After creating this list, create a Venn diagram with three circles named: Social, Emotional, and Academic. Place your attributes in the appropriate circle (don't worry about the overlaps yet). What category is most full? Least full? Do any of the attributes overlap (empathy = social and emotional)? Put an asterisk (\*) next to the attributes you learned at school. Put a plus sign (+) next to the attributes you didn't learn until later in life (perhaps ones you wished you'd learned earlier in life). Lastly, if there was a Venn diagram for your classroom or school, what attributes would be on every child's Venn diagram? What social, emotional, and academic skills does your school prioritize?

#### Chapter 2: "Pedagogy"

1. Discuss your biggest take-away from each of the human development theories presented in the chapter.
2. Out of Creative Self, Coping Self, Social Self, Essential Self, and Physical Self, identify areas of personal strength and areas where you might benefit from targeted focus.

##### *Activity*

To understand why SEL is foundational to learning, we have to examine the pedagogy, or what, throughout history, influenced the concept. Reflect on what influences your personal pedagogy. What has influenced you to value certain aspects of your teaching? Create a tree diagram, starting with the "fruit" in the tree. These are the things that are your essentials. If someone visited your classroom or school, what would they see everyday (collaborative work, organization, praise, etc.). After you've made a list of the "fruit" of your tree, go to the roots of the tree. What from your past has influenced your classroom or school to look the way it does (a favorite teacher who made you believe in yourself, a bully who made you feel unsafe, a single mother who showed the importance of hardwork, etc.). Hopefully, in our educational careers, we continue to add "fruit" to our trees. What is something you want to add this year? What influenced you to want to add this "fruit"?

#### Chapter 3: "Equity"

1. How are equity and equality different from one another?
2. What is one goal you can set today to develop a more culturally responsive classroom or school?

##### *Activity*

Create a list writing down key distinctions between equality and equity. It is important to understand the difference. After making your list, watch the following video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETR9qrVS17g>. What from this video stuck out to you? What was inequitable? How does this impact schools? Can you add to your list after watching? Now, think about your classroom and school. Write down a list of things you do to make your classroom equitable (supplies for students who need them, accommodations, caregiver meetings times after work hours, etc.). What are additional ideas you have for the future?

#### Chapter 4: "Benefits of TSEL Programming in Schools"

1. Which of the benefits discussed in the book would positively impact your school the most? Why?
2. Using the EQ Graphic on page 34, discuss how the various components of emotional intelligence interact and the importance of each.

##### *Activity*

The library is a perfect way to connect to the other adults in the building and connection is a key component to a thriving school. Get with your librarian to create an Educators' Book Exchange in the library. We all have tons of dusty books on our shelves that sit for years and years. Have the educators in the building bring their favorite books that have helped influence their teaching to the library. Set up an exchange system throughout the year and encourage your colleagues to participate. At the end of the

year, have a reflection party where readers are able to share what they learned from different readings and celebrate a year of growth.

### **Chapter 5: "Transforming Curriculum by Integrating Arts and Rethinking Social Studies"**

1. Why is arts integration important? What is your school already doing well? Which areas would benefit from arts integration the most?
2. Discuss ways in which you can incorporate SEL into the social studies curriculum.

#### *Activity*

Transformation can be challenging and exciting. Think about one lesson or one staff development that you can add a little fun and creativity to transform the learning. For example, the beginning of the year staff development: Can you add a collaborative mural representing your values as a staff? Could your classroom come up with a dance to explain the parts of speech? Could a geometric math problem become an art sculpture?

### **Chapter 6: "Adult Transformative Social Emotional Learning"**

1. Which areas of TSEL should your campus professional development plan approach first?
2. What are some ways you can improve stress management as a campus starting today?

#### *Activity*

A jar can only hold so much until it spills over. Often, we fill our jars with "little rocks" and don't leave room for the "big rocks." The "little rocks" represent the business of life.. The big rocks represent the most valued parts of your life (family, health, etc.). Write down your "big rocks" in life. Do you prioritize these each week? What "big rocks" get kicked out of the jar when you fill your jar with a bunch of "little rocks"? How can you make sure your "big rocks" stay in your jar?

## **Part II: Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Chapter 7: "Administration"**

1. What is the most important role administrators have in schoolwide TSEL implementation?
2. Why is it important for administrators to model TSEL?

#### *Activity*

Support is one of the greatest gifts an administrator can give to her staff. The word support can be broad and meaningless if we aren't specific. What does support from your administrator actually look like? Create a treatment agreement (see page 80 in the book) defining what support looks like for you and your colleagues. Start with the question: How do we want our work environment to look at feel? Next, what does this look like: Administrator-to-Staff, Staff-to-Administrator, Staff-to-Staff, and Staff-Self.

### **Chapter 8: "School Counselor"**

1. School counselors are often tasked with many responsibilities beyond the mental health of students. How can school counselors delegate responsibilities for SEL implementation to maximize the impact on students?
2. How can teachers support school counselors in the classrooms?

#### *Activity*

Breathing can be one of the most powerful tools to help levels of stress. Deep breathing tells your brain to relax, which tells the body to calm the nervous system. Controlled breathing is shown to reduce stress, increase focus, and boost your immune system. To help guide controlled breathing, draw a triangle and label the three sides (Breathe In, Hold, Breath Out). Trace the triangle with your finger: first you will breath in, inhaling deeply for 5 seconds; second, you should hold the inhaled breath for 5 seconds; finally, you will slowly exhale the breath for 5 seconds. Repeat for two minutes. This can be done anywhere and everywhere. With your students or by yourself. Set a goal to practice controlled breathing three times per day.

### **Chapter 9: "Librarian"**

1. What resources are already available in the school library for use in TSEL?
2. Discuss ways librarians can support schoolwide TSEL implementation.

#### *Activity*

Create a Mindfulness Kit for your personal use (see page 76 in the book). Put things in the mindfulness kit that help you destress, reflect, and calm. This can be a picture, mandala coloring page, stress ball, and more. Keep your kit somewhere accessible. Be an example to your students about taking a moment to recenter with your kit when you need to refocus or destress. Making a kit with your grade-level team is also a great collaborative activity!

#### **Chapter 10: "Classroom Teachers"**

1. Why is it important for classroom teachers to practice TSEL for themselves and to model it for their students?
2. What is one thing that all teachers can do, starting now, to create a common language for TSEL in your school?

##### *Activity*

Teaching can be extremely stressful. You are multi-taking all day, every day. Before you go into school for the day or into your home for the night, sit in your car for two minutes in silence. Do not listen to the radio or get on your phone. If you have children in your car, this is a great exercise for them as well. Simply be present in the moment and embrace the stillness.

#### **Chapter 11: "Special Education and Learning Support Teachers"**

1. Make a list of all of the special area teachers in your school building and make sure they are included in the TSEL implementation planning for your campus.
2. What are some ways that the special area teachers on your campus can be specifically utilized for TSEL implementation?

##### *Activity*

"It is difficult to put so much time and effort into what feels like small gains" (p. 86). The small gains add up, but take more attention to appreciate their impact. To help reflect on the impact of the day, create a gratitude jar where, once a day, you write down something you were grateful or proud of for the day. At the end of each week, read these gratitude reflections and think about the impact of your work. Welcome others to add notes to the jar as well.

#### **Chapter 12: "School Support Staff"**

1. Make a list of all of the school support staff in the building. Identify how each person contributes to schoolwide TSEL implementation and make sure they are included in the planning process.

##### *Activity*

Create "*Just Because...*" notes to the cafeteria, office, and custodial staff members. These notes are meant to encourage, thank, and support the support staff who do so much to help the school function. Have students help create this "*Just Because...*" notes throughout the year. This would be a great activity for students when they finish work and want something extra to do. Keep a list of these essential support staff and make sure each receive a "*Just Because...*" note each semester.

#### **Chapter 13: "Family and Community Involvement"**

1. Identify school events, policies, or procedures that currently include families. Brainstorm ways to incorporate TSEL into these areas.
2. Brainstorm ways the school can train and involve families in TSEL as it is being utilized on your campus.

##### *Activity*

Plan an TSEL activity for your families at your open house night. Having the students facilitate the activity would be ideal. Have students walk their families through a breathing exercise, calming exercise, or expressing emotions. Talk to your students' families about how regulating the brain is essential for effective learning. Have your students make a plan about what they want their families to learn during open house about social emotional learning.

### **Part III: Outcomes**

#### **Chapter 14: "Creating a Culture of Belonging:"**

1. Reflect to a time you feel like you didn't belong: What did it feel like (physically, emotionally)? What were your thoughts? What did you do?
2. In what ways does your campus already promote belonging?

##### *Activity*

Help create community among your colleagues. Often, there are people in the building who do not have a sense of connection. Small groups, or "community circles" can

make sure everyone is connected. Create a community circle that includes people throughout the school, people who you may not normally work with (support staff, teachers, specials teachers, etc.). Ideally, every person in the school would belong to a community circle. These groups would make sure to check-in with one another each week through a group chat and schedule a monthly meet up (even if it is for 15 minutes). This can be a small gesture in making sure all adults in the building feel like they belong.

### Chapter 15: "TSEL and Student Achievement"

1. Research shows a positive correlation between TSEL implementation and student academic achievement. How could schoolwide TSEL benefit your students?

What areas of goal development should be analyzed to include TSEL?

#### Activity

A regulated brain is best for effective learning. A glitter jar can help students regulate when their brains are feeling out-of-control. They simply shake the glitter jar and watch the glitter gradually settle to the bottom of the jar. By the time the glitter has settled, so have their emotions. Consult the following two videos for more information on glitter jars: Make a Glitter Jar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gBnlKQmLfe8>. Instructions on Use of a Glitter Jar: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1MefB0P8ptA>

### Chapter 16: "Preserving Passionate Educators"

1. Identify practices within the school where administrators could lead from a more compassionate lens. How would this change in practice benefit school staff?
2. Define your passion and purpose for working in education. How might TSEL implementation support or further develop your passion?

#### Activity

*"Your vocation in life is where your greatest joy meets the world's greatest need."*

—Frederick Buechner

Reflect on your greatest joys in life. Make a list of all of them. Now reflect on the greatest needs of the world. Make a list of some of them (too many to list). Where does your passion and the world's greatest needs merge? Is this why you choose education as a career? Share your vocation with someone and tell them why you choose to live your passion.

### Chapter 17: "Community and Family"

1. Brainstorm opportunities for how your campus can involve the greater community in TSEL implementation. Choose one or two points and set a goal to make them happen.

#### Activity

Plan a community activity with your classroom or community circle. Plan a weekend where you can meet up with students or colleagues to serve a need in your community. This could be volunteering at a local foodbank or helping organize coats for a nonprofit. This can be a small gesture that bring together your school community in support of the larger community.

#### MLA CITATION

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