

# *How Social-Emotional Skills and Pedagogy Connect to Spiritual Learning*

**Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.**

**Dept. of Psychology, Rutgers University**

**Director, Rutgers Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab  
([www.secdlab.org](http://www.secdlab.org)) @SECDLab**

**Co-Director, The Academy for Social-Emotional Learning in Schools  
([SELinSchools.org](http://SELinSchools.org)) @SELinSchools**

**[maurice.elias@rutgers.edu](mailto:maurice.elias@rutgers.edu)**

**[www.edutopia.org/profile/maurice-j-elias](http://www.edutopia.org/profile/maurice-j-elias)**

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# The Foundation of Resilience: Climate, Character, and SEL Competencies

True academic and life success integrates the intellectual, emotional, and social facets of learning. These are inextricably interconnected.

Positive,  
Character-Building  
School  
Climate

+

Explicit  
Instruction  
in SEL Skills

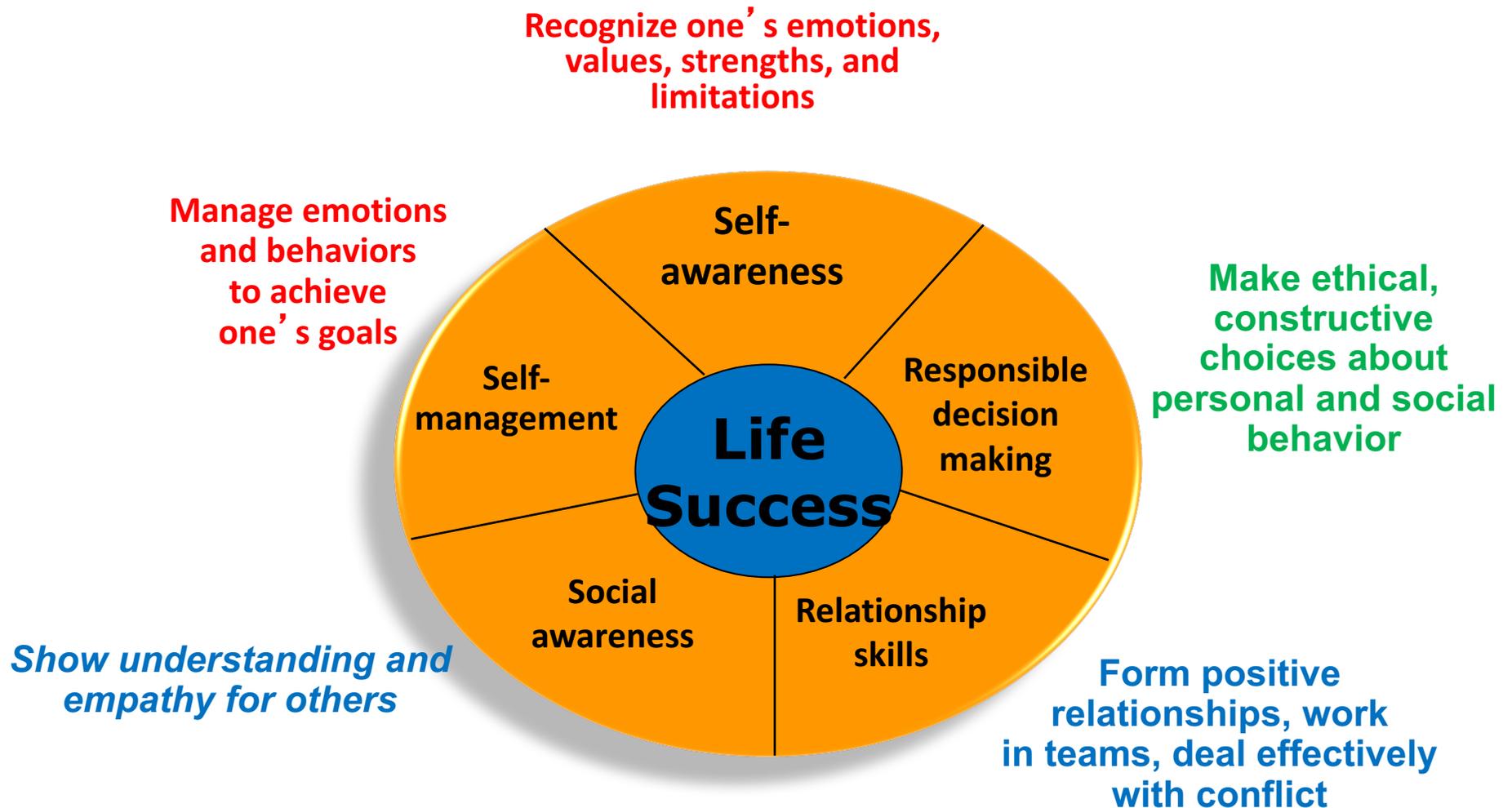
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Habits of mind and patterns of thinking that include curiosity, explaining their reasoning, feedback process, asking questions, and defining and solving problems, and striving to communicate clearly and proudly.

# SEL4NJ Guidelines for the Culture of a Learning Organization

- **INSPIRING**.....*of one another*
- **CHALLENGING**.....*take risks to improve*
- **SUPPORTIVE**.....*collective efficacy*
- **SAFE AND HEALTHY**.....*others' keepers*
- **ENGAGED**.....*collaborative norms*
- **RESPECTFUL**.....*no-fear communication*
- **COMMUNITIES OF LEARNERS**...*set and pursue goals for learning together*
- *It begins with the first day of school and persists every day thereafter!*
- See: [www.sel4NJ.org](http://www.sel4NJ.org),
- <http://selinschools.org/new-jersey-culture-and-climate-coalition/>

# CASEL's SEL Competencies: Enduring Building Blocks of All Interpersonal Relationships and Contexts



CASEL Version- also see handout

# Singapore Model of SECD Includes Explication of Core Value/Virtues at the Center

Recognize one's  
emotions, values,  
strengths, and  
limitations

Make ethical,  
constructive  
choices about  
personal and  
social behavior



Manage emotions  
and behaviors  
to achieve  
one's goals

Show  
understanding  
and  
empathy for  
others

Form positive relationships, work  
in teams, deal effectively with conflict

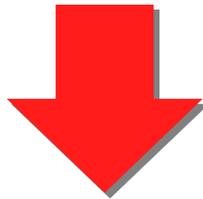
# Benefits of SECD

## Good Science Links SECD to the Following Student Gains:



- Social-emotional skills
- Improved attitudes about self, others, and school
- Positive classroom behavior
- 10-11 percentile-point gains on standardized achievement tests

## And Reduced Risks for Failure:



- Conduct problems
- Aggressive behavior
- Emotional distress

**Source:** Durlak, J.A., Weissberg, R.P., Dymnicki, A.B., Taylor, R.D., & Schellinger, K. (2011). The Impact of Enhancing Students' Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions. *Child Development*. (available at [www.casel.org](http://www.casel.org)) and M. Berkowitz & M. Bier, *What works in character education*. (Washington, DC: Character Education Partnership, 2006) (available at [www.characterandcitizenship.org](http://www.characterandcitizenship.org).)



# GETTING SERIOUS ABOUT SECD

**Tips for developing policy, teacher training and instructional practices around social-emotional character development.**

“THIS IS OUR TIME,” asserts Tim Shriver, an educator, advocate and [Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning](#) board chairman. “When you look at what’s going to make the country stronger, restore or rebuild the fabric of citizenship and service, reduce anxiety and fear, and promote competition and creativity and the entrepreneurial spirit — it’s not politics or business or entertainment. It’s education.”

Social and emotional learning and character development have been on the education priority list for decades but are getting a new attention thanks to:

**1** Increasing business demand for interpersonal skills. Employers want people who can communicate and interact well with others, but many US workers lack these skills, according

to [research from LinkedIn](#). “Communications is the No. 1 skills gap across those major cities in the United States,” says LinkedIn CEO Jeff Weiner in an interview with CNBC’s “SquawkBox.”

**2** Mounting scientific evidence that suggests success in school and life is dependent on healthy social and emotional development, including the ability to understand and manage emotions, according a report by [The Aspen Institute](#).

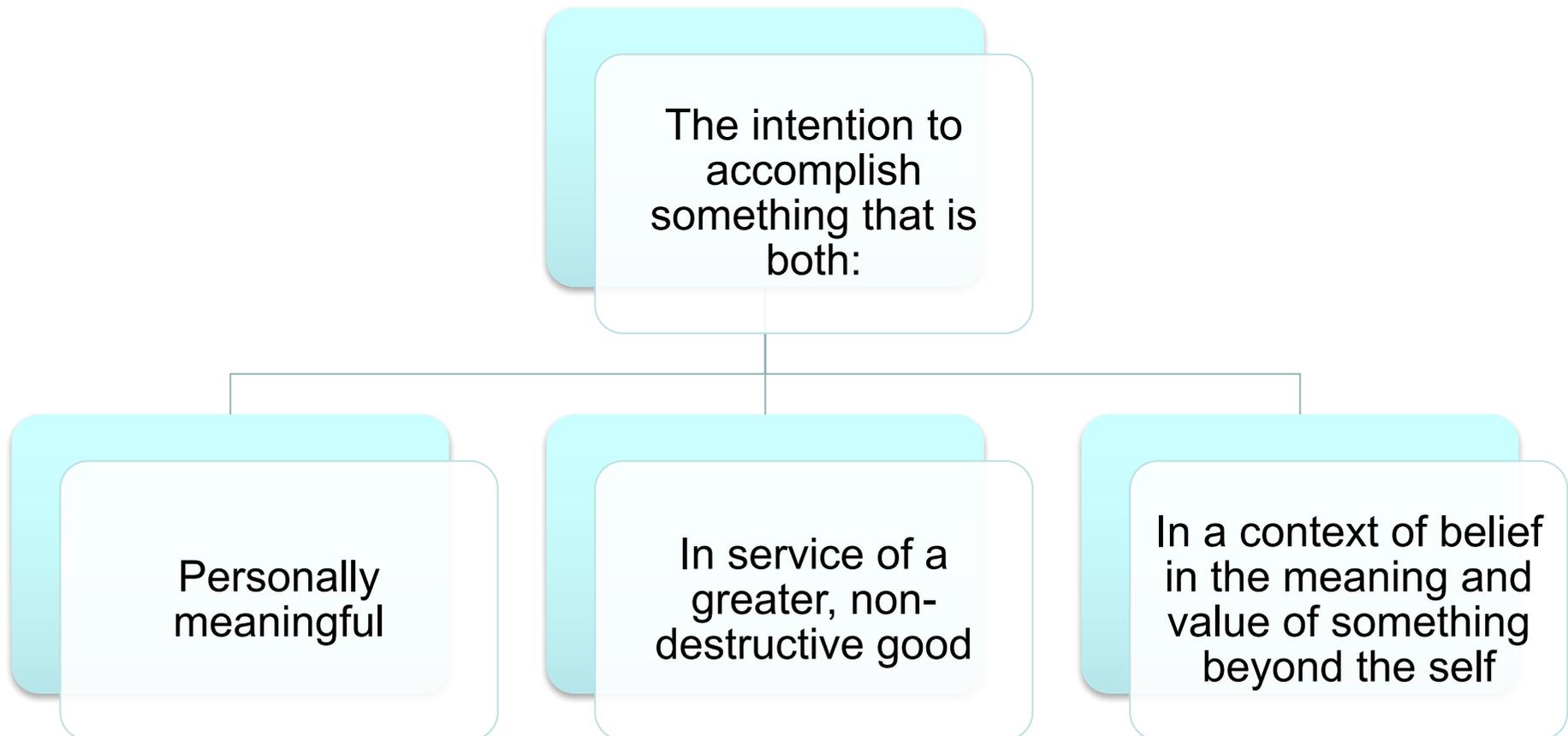
**3** Growing realization that this is not a minority or low socioeconomic status issue. “Today, the most elite independent private schools are looking for social and emotional learning programs in the same way most challenged urban high schools are,” Shriver says. SEL is not relegated to class or status; it impacts students from all walks of life.

What are the implications  
of this for SESL, and  
Jewish SESL in particular?

# Rethink Education

- *All learning must be emotion-informed*
- Schools must not neglect or discount the role of emotion in the process of learning, in receiving and organizing what is learned, retrieving what is learned, and putting learning into practice.
- Inspiration precedes remediation: Emotions must be engaged in learning

# Transcendence and the Belief in Oneself as an Agent of Positive (Noble) Purpose Is Key to SESL (Damon et al., 2003)



# Human Dignity is the Guide on the Path to Positive Purpose

*It did not really matter what we expected from life,  
but rather what life expected of us.*

Viktor Frankl

*If you believe you are here for a purpose, your  
energies will be focused. A sense of mission will  
give you strength. You will do remarkable things.*

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

*The two most important days of your life are the day  
you were born and the day you know why.*

Mark Twain

# Formalize goal-setting in school toward Positive Purpose

- Set the expectation- do on a half-year or marking period basis-- 3 goals to:
- Make myself better
- Make my classroom better
- Make my school better
- Make “the community” and world better

No one tests the depth of a river  
with both feet.- Ashanti



**"Trust in the Lord with all your heart"**  
(Proverbs 3:5), but also listen to the Ashanti.

# The Pedagogy of SEL/SESL

*TEACH*

*MODEL*

*PROMPT*

*PRACTICE*

*REFLECT*

NOTE: These pedagogies exist, have proven their value, and await being used

# Teach Classrooms and Schools a Self-Calming Strategy

How would you prompt and cue a  
self-calming strategy for an  
amnesiac?

“Keep Calm”... derived from  
Lamaze, used in ***Social  
Decision Making***

# How Can We Prompt Students so that Keep Calm is Infused into our Day?

- Keep Calm Corner
- Common Language/Prompt and Cue; "Smell the Pizza/Cholent"
- Reflection/Imagery
- Keep Calm Journals
- Other Ideas?



# Over a Century Ago, John Dewey Pointed Out the Way

- Students must be prepared for citizenship by understanding our democracy and its history, but foremost ***by living it in the present in our schools.***
- ***Students will best learn and internalize mitzvot by living mitzvot in context.***
- ***This includes having to deal pragmatically with conflicts among mitzvot.***

# Students Taking Action Together (STAT): The Civility Project

- One of the purposes of STAT is to build students' SECD to create dialogue and civility among diverse students, and a sense of empowerment and civic engagement.
- Another purpose is to foster deeper thinking and engagement about issues in the classroom, school, community, and world.



## CIVILITY AND SOCIETY

### How to boost civil discourse in K-12 classrooms

**A**MERICA IS STRUGGLING WITH CIVILITY. According to a 2018 study from KRC Research, [Civility in America: A Nationwide Survey](#), Americans report a severe civility deficit, with 93% identifying a civility issue and 69% classifying it as a major societal problem.

Incivility goes beyond rude words and actions. It represents a complete disregard for the belief systems of others. With ethics, quality of life, health and civility so closely intertwined, however, more people are seeing the importance and necessity of civil interactions for society to thrive. Lack of civil behaviors within the nation's educational system, workforce or communities at large can threaten the greater good.

"Our society is more polarized than ever. That, paired with the nature of communicating electronically, which is devoid of the nuances of emotion and nonverbal cues, makes it essential we teach our students how to have a civil conversation," says Nicole Gianfredi, principal at Timberlane Middle School in Pennington, N.J.

So how can educators help students rise above the current climate of incivility? This SmartFocus on Social and Emotional Learning, sponsored by the Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab at Rutgers, offers a blueprint for building civil discourse in the classroom. Educators offer practical insights on how to integrate social and emotional skills into lessons, create an environment for honest discussion and teach the importance of civic participation.

# Focal Social-Emotional Skills *Developed* in the Students Taking Action Together (STAT) Approach

1. Empathy

2. Perspective Taking

3. Listening and Communication

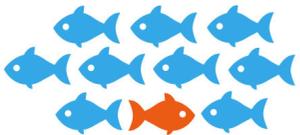
**4. Social Problem Solving**

5. Emotion Regulation

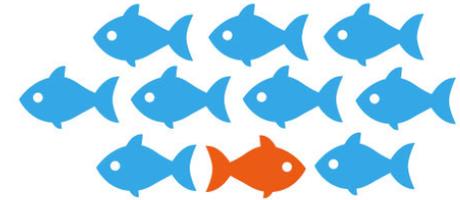


# STAT Teaching Strategies

- Norms
- Yes-No-Maybe
- Respectful Debate
- PLAN problem solving framework



# Norms



- **Foundational** process for creating safe and constructive climate
- If you already do this, **keep doing what you're doing!**
- **Student-generated** norms
- Sample activities: **Picture illusion**
- **Tip:** Frame norms positively rather than negatively (i.e. what *to* do, rather than what *not* to do)
  - **Example:** “Be a respectful listener by paying attention to the speaker with my eyes and ears.”



# Yes-No-Maybe

- **Key Points:**

- **3 versions:** current events, historical events, school problems
- **Easy** and **active** intro activity for any lesson
- Student **summarizes** what group discussed
- Teacher **models** summarizing the points of all groups and checks for understanding
- **Timing:** Typically at start of lesson for 5 minutes

- **SEL Connection:** Social Awareness

- **YNM Video** (up to minute 5:20):

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=316&v=7PuPbjGQE0k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=316&v=7PuPbjGQE0k)

# Students Should be able to Think, Speak, and Act on Statements Like These: **Yes-No-or Maybe**

- Since Jews had slaves, the main issue with slavery is how slaves are treated.
- Students should participate in school committees about bullying, drugs and alcohol, discipline, and other school issues.

# PLAN



- **Problem Solving Framework** (School and community issues, current events, historical problems)
- **Acronym:**
  - Problem description
  - List goal, options, pros/cons
  - Action plan (Note: Anticipate obstacles)
  - Notice successes
- Start with **simple example** (e.g., Cafeteria food or literature example)
- **Timing:** Typically multiple 45-minute lessons
- Can connect to **service-learning** and **audience-focused communication**
- **SEL Connection:** Responsible decision-making
- See posted example at **SESL Web site using Parashat HaShvua**

# Examples of STAT in Action

- **Example: Social Studies/History class**
  - **Topic: the Civil War (think about an example in the context of religious/spiritual education)**

## Example #2 of STAT in Action

- Consider beginning with a debate, or a Yes-No-Maybe discussion on this question, based on this statement:

***All through history, many countries have had slaves. What the South was doing was no different.***

- Then, with background reading from your current curriculum, consider the problem from different perspectives, using the PLAN framework

# Example of STAT in Action

- **P:** How did the North and the South define the problem in the country? What were the issues, from each perspective? Who were the key people involved in making important decisions?
- **L:** What were their goals? What options did they consider to be acceptable ways to resolve the problem? What did they ultimately decide?
- **A:** How did they carry out their plan? What obstacles did they encounter? How did they deal with them?
- **N:** How did it work out? What can be learned from their experiences that are relevant to the present?

# Academy for Social-Emotional Learning in Schools: *SELinSchools.org*

- Overarching goals are to address the gap in professional development of school leaders and teachers that exists today and to create a community for on-going mentoring, resource support, and sharing of experiences from walking the talk!
- The Academy offers a virtual Professional Learning Community and two certificate programs.
- Certificate for School Leadership in Social-Emotional Learning and Character Development.
- Certificate for Instruction of Social-Emotional Learning and Character Development. ([sel.rutgers.edu](http://sel.rutgers.edu))
- Academy Overview Video: <http://sel.cse.edu/>



Academy for  
**SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL**  
Learning in Schools



# What is the Online Professional Development Community?

- A unique feature of the courses and the certificate is participants' involvement in a virtual Professional Learning Community (vPLC). Beginning with participation in one's classes and practicum, there is an emphasis on being part of a community of learners who support and assist one-another during the courses– and beyond– in making applications of SEL/SECD and academics for prek-12.

# SESL is Grounded in What We Do in Our Classrooms and Schools Every Day; The Transcendent Depends on the Mundane

*“Don’t let what you  
cannot do interfere  
with what you can do.”*

*John Wooden*

*“The children are  
waiting.”*

*Ted Sizer*



# Contact Information for Materials and Follow Up

- [www.secdlab.org/STAT](http://www.secdlab.org/STAT)  
[www.secdlab.org/MOSAIC](http://www.secdlab.org/MOSAIC)
- The Resource Center at SELinSchools.org
- For Support or Questions about Implementation:
  - [SECDLab@gmail.com](mailto:SECDLab@gmail.com)

Please follow the lab @SECDLab for updates and information on the latest projects and events.

<https://twitter.com/SECDLab>

- For ongoing information about SECD:
  - [www.edutopia.org/profile/maurice-j-elias](http://www.edutopia.org/profile/maurice-j-elias)