

## LIC 7 – Social Emotional Wellbeing

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## LIC 7 – Social Emotional Wellbeing (For MTs)

### What Is Social Emotional Wellbeing?

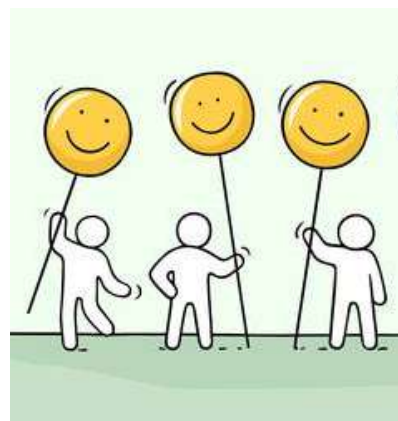
Being socially and emotionally well means being able to realise your abilities, cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and contribute to your community. With the unexpected Covid Crisis, all of us have been pushed into a 'new normal' that we did not choose. We have all had to socially distance from our peers, friends, and family – and, in many cases, this has also led to people feeling emotionally distant from others. The advisory by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) on the effects of Covid 19 on mental health warns that '*COVID-19 is also bringing new stressors on teachers, parents and caregivers. This can hamper their capacity to provide adequate support and remain positively engaged with their wards. One aspect is certain that COVID-19 will have a profound impact on the psychosocial wellbeing of students, families and teachers across the country.*'

While it is imperative that teachers support the social emotional wellbeing of their students, they will not be able to do that if their social emotional wellbeing is not supported too. For this reason, we will be focussing on Social Emotional Wellbeing for students and teachers in this LIC.

### What Can We Do for Teachers?

Some of the practices recommended by experts to support teachers' social emotional wellbeing, that can be used in our interactions with TDCs and teachers, are as follows:

- **Lighten the Load** – Find ways to help lighten the teachers' load. For example, by helping them create timetables or by encouraging them to switch off and be with their families in the evenings; or using the evenings only for those students who can access their smartphones only at that time. (Different ways to lighten each other's workload can be discussed and explored by the groups of teachers themselves.)
- **Promote Self Care** – Encourage teachers to engage in small activities that help them de-stress and relax. For ex. mindfulness activities, listening to music, catching up with friends and family over the phone, practicing yoga or any other physical exercise etc.
- **Space to Express Feelings & Challenges** – Like children, teachers also need a space where they can express their challenges to their colleagues and seek support.
- **Practicing Resilience Strategies** - Teachers can practice resilience related strategies by engaging in self-reflection about their strengths, contributions, and gratitude.



\*For TDCs and teachers, [this document \(click here\)](#) outlines what we can do for the wellbeing of students.

## What Will We Do for Teachers in LIC 7?

Since our teachers have been regularly interacting with each other to share their challenges and to support each other, in this LIC, we will focus on creating platforms for teachers to reflect on their strengths and contributions, and to celebrate their efforts!

### **Strategy: Reflections for Resilience**

**(To be implemented by MTs for TDCs, and by TDCs for other teachers in their schools)**

#### **An Example of How to Implement the Strategy:**

Neelam, a mentor teacher, has been reading a lot about resilience these days. She reads that The American Psychological Association uses the following definition for resilience: *the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress*. Being resilient does not mean that we do not feel negative emotions such as distress or sadness, but that we practice strategies that help us overcome those stressful situations.

Neelam also reads that our brains are wired to focus more vividly on negative things than on the positive, and that by finding time to appreciate the positives – we can build our own resilience. She decides that she would like to practice these strategies along with her TDCs.

She asks her 5 TDCs to get on a short video call on Friday, for 30 minutes, at the end of the work day. Since they have not engaged in such a reflection exercise earlier, she also asks them to come prepared with answers to the following questions. However, after this meeting, she decides she will not ask them to prepare beforehand so that the conversation can be more free flowing!

- 1) What is the one thing I did this week that might have helped someone else?
- 2) Looking back at the past few months of lockdown, what makes me proud of myself?

At 5:00 PM on Friday, 4 out of 5 of her TDCs join the video call. Neelam welcomes all of them and thanks them for taking the time to join this call. After a fun energiser, she starts the discussion by sharing her own answers to the two questions. One by one, each person takes 3-4 minutes to share their answers. Each time someone finishes sharing, Neelam ensures that everyone's sharing is admired and encouraged by others by clapping, or through any other significant way! At the end of the meeting, she asks any one TDC to volunteer to either share a joke, sing a song, or tell a funny story – Ajay sir agrees and sings a beautiful song for everyone present!

Finally, Neelam asks the TDCs to make sure that they spend a few minutes every week to reflect on what is going well, apart from thinking about their challenges. She asks them if they would like to do this again next Friday and they all agree. Neelam feels happy that she was able to give the TDCs 30 minutes in their week to just experience positivity and support!

## More About the Strategy

Research on resilience shows us that consciously seeking out the positives in a bad situation helps people become more resilient. This does not mean that they should not be allowed to talk or think about their challenges and difficulties – it simply means that they *also* take time to think about the positives. Creating such a space and time for teachers – either through short 30 minute meetings, sharing over WhatsApp groups, or on conference calls – will help you support them and their emotional wellbeing!

### Success Criteria:

**Build Community** – Ensure that you bring people together instead of doing this activity one on one

**Role Model** - Role model how you want everyone to engage in the activity by sharing your own reflections, and by being supportive to members who are sharing

**Make It Fun** – Let this be a light and fun exercise, include another small activity that everyone will enjoy!

### Reflect:

- 1) What do you think Neelam did well?
- 2) What could she have improved?
- 3) What would you do if you had to implement this strategy?

### Practice:

Use the following questions to plan how you can implement this strategy with your TDCs:

<b>What are some prompts you might use to enable such reflections in your TDCs?</b> (You can refer to the list of positive psychology exercises in the sources for more ideas - for ex. What are you grateful for? What has the experience taught you?)	
<b>How often would you want to run this activity?</b>	
<b>Apart from the reflections, what can you include to make this interaction fun for the TDCs?</b>	
<b>How will you run the activity? (For ex. video calls, phone calls, WhatsApp etc.)</b>	

Share your plan with a peer and get feedback to help improve!

### **What Will Teachers Do with Their Students?**

In LIC 7, teachers will be focussing on the following two strategies:

- **Strategy 1: Active Self-Reflection** – Encouraging students to reflect on and share their feelings and experiences related to positive developments during the lockdown, issues they are worried about, and questions they might have.
- **Strategy 2: Student Collaboration** – Small collaborative tasks integrated with lesson plans to help students interact with each other and maintain a social connect while remaining socially distanced - enabling them to feel a sense of belonging.

\* Please refer to [this document \(click here\)](#) for more details on Strategy 1 and to see the suggested structure for ART Meeting 1.

### **Sources:**

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