

Educator reviews of The Full Value School

After some 40 years as an educator the foundational need of students willing and able to learn has never changed. What has changed is the need for us to create a more safe, stable and introspective environment in order for our students to cope with the myriad of inputs we call the 21st century. Which is why we embraced the Full Value program. Working with Dr. Maizell we have followed a path that placed our students and staff on a continuum of self-awareness and mindfulness that has benefited all involved and contributed to our mission of supporting student success and creating lifelong learners. This book serves as an essential guidepost for implementation.

- *James J. Opiekun, Superintendent of Schools, Kinnelon Borough Public Schools*

At first glance, Full Value may seem to be a separate entity from the academic classroom; but with a little creativity, teachers can use Full Value/Project Adventure activities to simultaneously cover content and character building. I've been able to examine conflict in Romeo and Juliet using the "Helium Hoop" and highlight learning from success and failure in Homer's epic the Odyssey using the "Pathway" activity. However, the moment that validated the inclusion of this program into my High School ELA classroom was witnessing a disengaged, emotionally traumatized student willingly participate in the Pitfall (Minefield) activity and smile for the first time. Not only did Full Value improve the dynamic of my classroom, truly making it a safe and engaging learning environment for all, but it also improved my effectiveness as an educator. This book is essential to creating an emotionally safe learning environment for your students.

- *Kelly DeAraujo, High School Teacher, Vernon Township Public Schools*

Cultivating an educational environment that incorporates social emotional learning starts with building trust between students and teachers. As the faculty applied Full Value training to establish behavioral awareness and accountability during classroom interactions, the opportunity for integration within lesson delivery proved to be a logical and powerful extension. Overall, the depth of student growth was quite impressive. Richard Maizell, Jim Schoel, John Grund have provided the blueprint for Full Value implementation that can enrich academic integrity, while emphasizing important life skills.

- *John P. Hynes, Superintendent of Schools*

Full Value empowers students to create a classroom environment where they can learn, thrive, and gain skills to become a valuable community member inside and outside of the classroom.

- *Terry Lummer, 5th Grade Teacher, Kinnelon Borough Public Schools*

I have found Full Value to be essential in establishing a sense of community in our school. The Full Value behaviors are concise and easy to understand, while at the same time having a scope wide enough to have a positive impact on all of our daily

interactions. This is supported by a common language that enables all of us to communicate about what really matters as we collaborate, problem solve, or resolve conflicts. Full Value is integral to the character of our school.

- *Mark Mongon, Principal, Pearl R. Miller School*

When Dr. Maizell first shared the Full Value norms with me, it became crystal clear that our planet would be a better place if we could all live by these simple, yet so powerful tenets. I am proud to have been part of the initial “Full Value Cadre” in my school district. Dr. Maizell provided mentoring and support that empowered teachers and students to engage in social-emotional learning that led to student empowerment and greater self-regulation. Leading a school community dedicated to developing kind, empathetic, caring humans will remain a career highlight.

- *Jodi Mulholland, Principal, Stonybrook Elementary School*

One of my favorite things about being part of a full value community is that as I worked alongside the students and my colleagues there was always this common understanding and shared value system that never failed. Even in the most tense or difficult situations, it is what invariably brought us together. It is and was a great feeling!

- *Lisa Nafash, High School Counselor, Kinnelon Borough Public Schools*

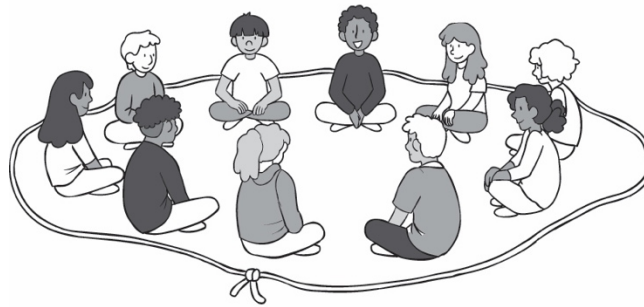
I knew that I had already formed some strong bonds in just one day with some teachers from other buildings I didn't even know. I knew that whatever I was involved in was going to change my life.

- *Sarah Tinney, Full Value Schools training participant, Primary School Counselor, Kinnelon Borough Public Schools*

As each new school year approaches, educators bring bright hopes of creating a classroom climate & culture that offer an engaging & emotionally safe environment for learning. Teachers & administrators seek meaningful connections between the integration of curriculum & character education. They are keenly aware of the need to find a balance between the two. Our district's solution was Full Value. Beginning with one school, some curious teachers attended a training & discovered how enthusiastic students became when taught content-based lessons using Full Value activities. The message traveled K-12 to all eight schools. The momentum grew, creating Full Value classrooms in every school & finding the balance that educators sought. With Full Value, the balance you seek is well within your grasp. This book will serve as an invaluable resource for character education & academic integration.

- *Iris Wechling, Director of Education, West Milford Township School*

The Full Value School



A Social Emotional Learning Community

By Richard Maizell & Jim Schoel, with John Grund

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COMMUNITY** by Richard Maizell, Psy.D. & Jim Schoel, with John Grund

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to Karl Rohnke, an international leader in experiential education. In 1971, Karl co-founded Project Adventure, adapting the principles of Outward Bound to the public schools. Karl's skills to invite engagement, play, and commitment has shaped the world of experiential learning. He remains the touch point for many of us who continue to do this transformational work. The field of experiential learning owes him a lasting debt of gratitude, as do we. "Life is serious. But not that serious."

What do you do with the mad that you feel? When you feel so mad you could bite. When the whole wide world seems oh so wrong, and nothing you do seems very right. What do you do? Do you punch a bag? Do you pound some clay or some dough? Do you round up friends for a game of tag or see how fast you go? It's great to be able to stop when you've planned the thing that's wrong. And be able to do something else instead—and think this song—

I can stop when I want to. Can stop when I wish. Can stop, stop, stop anytime... And what a good feeling to feel like this! And know that the feeling is really mine. Know that there's something deep inside that helps us become what we can. For a girl can be someday a woman, and a boy can be someday a man.

- Fred Rogers in Testimony Before the US Senate Commerce Committee, May 1, 1969 (Used with permission from Fred Rogers Productions)

INTRODUCTION

THE FULL VALUE SCHOOL

Our Purpose

The purpose of this book is to teach and demonstrate how Full Value norms (Be Here, Be Safe, Be Honest, Set Goals, Let Go & Move On, Care for Self & Others) can create an effective social emotional learning (SEL) primary prevention program in K-12 public and private schools.

School districts recognize that social emotional learning is at the core of their work.

It is our mission to prepare each student to be a contributing member of society and to participate successfully in the global community. We guide students to achieve academic skills and facilitate their social and emotional development so they can become lifelong learners and reach their fullest potential.

-Kinnelon Borough Public Schools, NJ

The Kinnelon Mission Statement, prominently featured on the District's home page, is representative of what can be found on websites of every school across the United States from urban to rural. Our larger society craves more civility, empathy, and compassion but struggles to find solutions. It makes sense that the process of fostering emotional intelligence is supported within the schools and as early as possible. Yet only recently has the response to this need begun to accelerate beyond mission statements to mission action.

In many instances the response has been haphazard and fragmented. Districts often rely on outside providers who offer lesson plans, workbooks, and videos. We call this, "doing" social emotional learning. A lesson is taught, perhaps weekly, in isolation from the rest of the curriculum with few opportunities to practice skills across school settings. SEL becomes just another deliverable, taught at students but not with students. It is not often that students have the opportunity to co-create classroom behavioral norms or given tools to facilitate their use.

SEL programs are often specific to a limited grade span. This becomes confusing to students who learn the terminology for a program introduced in the primary grades only to have to start all over again when they enter elementary, middle, or high school. In this book we provide a very different model that establishes common SEL language across all grade levels, fully engages students in creating behavioral norms, and connects SEL to all elements of instructional and social school experience. Full Value Schools is not a standalone program. It is an integral part of students' K-12 school life. In a Full Value community students and teachers experientially co-create and practice behavioral norms together. Along with the empowerment to define these norms (under the guidance of the teacher), comes the responsibility to model them during every interaction between students and with adults. Full Value is a partnership between students and educators, not a prescribed top down didactic process or a program that dictates rules and shapes behavior. We have also come to know that if practiced with fidelity, Full Value can be transformative for students and educators.

Some readers may choose not to delve more deeply into this book as they are already invested in an existing SEL program that helps their students. We would gently advise you to keep reading. Many elements and tools of The Full Value Schools model can be utilized to broaden, deepen, and sustain the impact of existing programs. After understanding the unique characteristics of Full Value, a discussion of sustainability in Chapter 14 defines how our model provides meaningful enhancements to many existing SEL programs.

Who is This Book For?

Our intended audience is teachers, administrators, board members, school counselors, child study team members, Paraprofessional educators, parents, and any other adults who interact with students, including cafeteria and playground aides, school bus drivers, and maintenance and custodial staff. In the larger community this text will be helpful to any agency working with young people.

SEL – A Different Way of Being Smart (Elias, et al. 1997)¹

The term social emotional learning emerged in the mid 1990s to describe many disparate programs supporting character education. A prime mover in this effort was and is the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL). The organization has identified the following five core competencies: Self Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, Responsible Decision-Making, and Relationship Skills (Core SEL Competencies, 2007).² CASEL has also created the acronym SAFE to describe their philosophy:

Sequenced: Connected and coordinated activities to foster skills development.

Active: Active forms of learning to help students master new skills and attitudes.

Focused: A component that emphasizes developing personal and social skills.

Explicit: Targeting specific social and emotional skills. (CASAL guide, 2015)³

Foundational to this philosophy is the importance of integrating SEL into all aspects of student life, from the classroom to the playground. Continual and systemic exposure to concepts as well as opportunities to practice them through participation is essential. This integration should also extend into the larger community and, where possible, into the home. Primary prevention work is hard, requiring sufficient training and ongoing support. The work must happen every day and permeate every interaction.

- Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is not a luxury; it is essential to the becoming a fully actualized member of society.
- True leaders display social emotional maturity, which includes empathy, compassion, listening, affirmation, critical self-reflection, and wisdom.
- SEL can and must be efficiently and effectively woven into the fabric of our children's daily lives.

- Success is assured if educators integrate SEL into their own lives. Full Value must be more than prescriptive; it must be participatory.
- Only by fully blending SEL into all aspects of the curriculum will it be accepted and integrated by students.
- SEL strengthens abstract reasoning and enhances cognitive functioning and associated behaviors.

The idea of systemic infusion has found its way into federal law. This was initiated by the Obama administration under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). The law requires that interventions must be, “sustained (not stand-alone, one-day, and short-term workshops), intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data-driven, and classroom focused” (pg. 401).⁴

Under this legislation Title 1 funding will be set aside for implementation at the state level. In a number of states including Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Jersey legislation already exists that requires adopting and implementing primary prevention SEL programs in order to address harassment, intimidation, and bullying.

It is often an assumption that a clear definition exists for what social emotional learning is. However, the first question educators often ask when participating in one of our trainings and workshops is, “What is SEL?” We focus on two essentials: the ability to self-regulate, and the wherewithal to have a voice that can positively influence the world around you. These essentials are described in detail in the outcomes associated with each Full Value (Chapter 1) and reflect what CASEL defines as:

...the process through which children and adults understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.⁵

Drilling down into this process we look at the skills and competencies of well designed, systemic SEL programs. These include:

1. Cognitive skills including executive functions such as working memory, attention control and flexibility, inhibition, and planning, as well as beliefs and attitudes that guide one’s sense of self and approaches to learning and growth.
2. Emotional competencies that enable one to cope with frustration, recognize and manage emotions, and understand others’ emotions and perspectives.
3. Social and interpersonal skills that enable one to read social cues, navigate social situations, resolve interpersonal conflicts, cooperate with others and work effectively in a team, and demonstrate compassion and empathy toward others (pg. 15).⁶

Living a Full Value Life

- In our work with children and adults in schools, business groups, and in the community, we find a deep yearning for defining and living a Full Value life with norms that are developed together, rather than imposed. These norms must be universal, teachable, comprehensive, easy to understand, and sustainable and inspirational. In the Full Value and associated outcomes, we find these qualities. We have learned that while the desire is there, often the process to get there is missing.
- We want to be present with each other, but do not know how to bring our focus to bear. There are many internal and external distractions and preoccupations that can get in the way.
- We feel a deep need to feel physically and emotionally safe. This can often take the form of defensiveness and aggression rather than support and trust.
- We crave affiliation but often suffer from loneliness and isolation.
- We want to be honest with each other but shy away from the potential for the conflict, hurt, and alienation that can be associated with honesty.
- We are continually involved in goal setting, but lack the skills to define what is important to us, the help we will require, the internal resources we will need to commit, and how we know we've succeeded. These skills are rarely taught.
- We want to be able to resolve conflicts and continue to have relationships but often don't know how. We experience confrontation as being a bad thing, rather than growth enabling. This causes fixable situations to become irresolvable, compromising relationships that did not have to end.
- And finally, we need to become better at tending to our own needs as a prerequisite to becoming good at nurturing those around us.

In the following chapters we will offer insights into how to teach Full Value and why from a pragmatic perspective it is of critical value to do so.

Full Value & CASEL Core Competencies

We have highlighted the evolving work of CASEL as a way to frame how the Full Value Schools model aligns with what are defined as critical needs and effective interventions. The bedrock behavioral norms of Full Value dovetail with CASEL's five core competencies.

We believe that these competencies are directly supported by the Full Value Behavioral Norms with significant crossover, as indicated in the table below:

FULL VALUE	CASEL CORE COMPETENCIES
Be Here	Self-Management, Social Awareness
Be Safe	Social Awareness, Self-Awareness
Be Honest	Relationship Skills
Set Goals	Responsible Decision Making
Let Go & Move On	Self-Awareness, Self-Management
Care for Self & Others	Self-Management, Relationship Skills, Social Awareness

While these norms will be reviewed in detail further on in our book, their basic intent can be easily derived. Beyond the CASEL competencies the six Full Values embrace the critical SEL components of trust, presence, commitment, mindfulness, physical and emotional safety, giving and receiving feedback, defining and achieving measurable goals, relinquishing anger and hurt in order to maintain important relationships, and generativity.

The CASEL model of best practices is embedded in the DNA of Full Value work.

- The teaching and implementation of Full Value is activity-based. Students and teachers may engage in games and initiatives that model and practice the behavioral norms and/or use the learning process in the classroom.
- Full Value activities can be connected to curriculum content areas such as language arts/literacy, reading, science, mathematics, physical education, and the performing and visual arts. They become part of the natural tapestry of the classroom experience.
- Students are active participants in co-creating how the Full Value norms are used in their classrooms and throughout the school.
- The public acceptance of mindfulness is an important aspect of Full Value.
- Students are taught and empowered to identify and discuss their differences and to resolve them in a way that avoids shaming, guilt, and blame.
- The focus is squarely on developing specific social emotional skills.
- Full Value provides a common language and process that can be used at all developmental levels and across grade levels. There is no need for students to start over in new grades, classrooms, and schools as they move through their K-12 educational experience.
- In order to maintain simplicity, the three essential key components of (1) co-creating behavioral norms, (2) goal setting, and (3) student led group discussions can be conveyed to staff via a short intensive training session.
- Sustainability training has been developed to ensure that internal experts can support school staff.

Finally, ongoing outcome evaluations would indicate a direct correlation between the systematic implementation of Full Value and a concurrent reduction in incidents of harassment, intimidation, and bullying, as well as a reduction in disciplinary referral rates. Also noted are improvements in grade point average and attendance. This parallels the results of the CASEL meta-analysis (Durlak, 2011).⁷

How is This Activity Book Different from Other Activity Books?

A casual online search for experiential activity books yields literally hundreds of titles. They are usually focused on promoting team building, self-efficacy, self-esteem, goal setting, and problem solving with populations ranging from corporate groups to students. In this text we apply activities specific to the creation of a Full Value Commitment. This purposeful application is unique, structured to offer an experiential approach to Full Value and social emotional learning. We also make direct connections to academic content areas, which further promotes the integration of SEL into all aspects of student learning.

For a detailed review of the background of this work, please read our earlier text, *Exploring Islands of Healing* (Schoel & Maizell, 2002).⁸

It has long been accepted that peer-to-peer learning, as well as cross-age interactions between students, is extremely beneficial. We will whet your appetite concerning the integration of peer leadership training with Full Value.

We hope that our efforts will provide a clear roadmap and a broad array of resources in support of training and implementation in your school setting, as we strive to develop a more empathetic, compassionate, and emotionally sophisticated community of learners.

What's Inside the Cover?

The book begins with a history of Full Value and an overview of each behavioral norm. Following this is a chapter discussing the impact of Full Value work on fostering abstract reasoning skills and the associated effect on the mastery of complex academic material. This chapter also includes research on how the teaching of affective regulation positively impacts on behavior and cognition, from the classroom, to the workplace, to the community. While it is important for us to convey that the Full Value model comes with clear theoretical underpinnings, we will then leave theory behind and focus primarily on providing the necessary tools for implementation.

This includes chapters on:

- Co-creating a Full Value Commitment with students
- An activity-based goal setting process
- Full Value specific concepts including Calling Group (the way students problem solve and/or celebrate their successes)

- Challenge of Choice
- The Control to Empowerment continuum which allows students the freedom to take ownership of the Full Value process with adult guidance
- GRABBSS, an assessment tool used for activity selection and for examining the necessary elements of successful program implementation and sustainability

Following this is a chapter on connecting Full Value to academic content areas with examples of lesson plans, a tool for developing content-based lessons, a chapter on mindfulness & Full Value (with activities), and information on the application of Full Value to train peer leaders and to use these students as program ambassadors with their peers.

While this seems like more than enough for one text, the preponderance of the book provides several hundred activities to use in teaching Full Value to students, organized under each behavioral norm. Activity write ups include necessary materials, the level of presentation difficulty, how the activity is done, suggestions for reflection, and other Full Value cross categories where the same activity can be used for different purposes.

Cross Categories

Once you become more familiar with the activities it will become apparent that they can be used to teach many areas of Full Value. That is, activities can be used again and again depending on how they are introduced by you or co-created with students.

We think that defining cross categories for activities will free you to tap into your personal creativity in using them for more than one purpose, and for more than one age group. For example, a tag game can be used to help students learn to be present and engaged with each other, but can also be applied to issues of physical and emotional safety, honesty, and to Let Go & Move On. The purposes and difficulty level of activities can be adjusted for different developmental stages and/or varying cognitive and physical capacities. Activities can also be used to teach multiple Full Values at the same time. We encourage and applaud creativity when engaging in activity selection and design with students.

Activity Difficulty Level & Materials

Activities are rated for ease of preparation, presentation, and facilitation based upon reviews by outside readers who were unfamiliar with them. An activity receives a rating of 1 for easy to 4 for most complex. The complexity of an activity should not discourage its use, but we thought that a rating system would be helpful for teachers experiencing some entry anxiety into this process.

Understanding that most schools have limited resources we have chosen activities that require minimal use of materials and supplies. Most of what you will need can be found in your kitchen, basement, attic, or garage (e.g. tarps, Beanie Babies, Popsicle sticks, eggs, balls for juggling, carpet squares, rope, buckets, etc.). Some suggestions for purchasing items are listed within the activity chapters and in the appendix.

While it would be impossible to categorize the thousands of activities that have been invented over the years by experiential practitioners, our many examples will hopefully lead to looking at what exists in many books through the lens of teaching Full Value.

How and Why Do I Find Time for This?

In the past you may have chosen to post a set of rules on the classroom bulletin board, explain them, reinforce them, and then enforce them (often again and again with the same students). Or perhaps you tried another more inclusive method for establishing your classroom climate and culture. In either instance, it all takes time. Creating and sustaining a Full Value Commitment is no different. However, once established, with students taking responsibility for their own behavior and feeling more empowered, increased instructional time becomes available with associated improvement in academic performance while also teaching students the essential skills of self-regulation and having a voice when their peers violate established classroom norms (Zins, Bloodworth, Weissberg & Walberg, 2007; Payton, Weissberg, Durlak, Dymnicki, Taylor, et al., 2008; McCormick, Cappella, O'Connor, McClowry, 2015; Schonfeld, Adams, Fredstrom, Weissberg, Gilman, et. al, 2015; Corcoran, Cheung, Kim, Xie, 2018).⁹

Teaching Full Value can be frontloaded into the beginning of the school year using the activities we provide to familiarize students with the program, which then leads to the creation of a classroom Full Value Commitment. At the primary and elementary level, this might involve using the initial period each morning during the first week or two of school. Once the Commitment is developed it is adjusted over time depending on the needs of the class. The practicing of the behaviors connected to each Full Value occurs naturalistically during individual, small group, and whole class interactions. Further on in the book you will see how Full Value can be completely integrated into academic content areas (Chapter 12).

Another implementation option is to use daily classroom activities and interactions as the basis for teaching Full Value, which can be more effective with middle and high school students. This involves developing an understanding of how behaviors that are elicited by the daily interactions in the classroom are connected to each Full Value Behavioral Norm. For example, if a class has a difficult time settling down and paying attention during the framing of a lesson, this can be used as a Be Here issue. The lesson stops and group is called. Students are prompted to co-create a list of behaviors (predicated on what just happened) that will support being here when they begin the lesson. This conversation will also include distractors that need to be avoided. The co-creation of the classroom Full Value Commitment flows out of this conversation without the need for a specific activity other than what is happening during the lesson.

Often the most effective path is a combination of the two: using activities that are designed to elicit behavior that focuses on one Full Value in combination with integration into the day to day interactions in the classroom. The activities are particularly effective as they are targeted, experiential, novel, and fun. Aside from their focus on a particular Full Value they build students' capacity to work together on a goal as a group and all of the various skills that entails.



Finally, and most importantly, we continue to grapple with repeating episodes of self-injurious behaviors and unspeakable, aggressive violence in our schools and communities. At the root of this are children who feel marginalized at an early age and who are never given the tools to self-regulate or to have a voice when feeling overwhelmed or threatened. We have seen these children as early as preschool. They are very easy to identify. They are either too quiet or too agitated. They are not provided with a safe and affirming environment within which they can communicate their needs, fears, hopes, and aspirations. They feel alone and isolated. These are the students whose pain becomes transmuted into anger or self-harm and who, as they become older, have increasing access to resources to do harm to themselves or others.

Feelings of marginalization, depression and hopelessness are not limited to a small group of students. The California Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study (1998)¹⁰, surveyed 17,000 adult Californians and reported that two-thirds of the adult respondents experienced at least one ACE, and 12.5% experiencing four or more ACEs during their public school experience. ACEs are shown to have a causative link with nearly every major public health problem in America, including depression, suicide, substance abuse, and decreased life expectancy.

At the core of many children's mental health issues is the experiencing of trauma. In a study conducted by the Data Resource Center for Child & Adolescent Health (2013) it was estimated that nearly thirty-five million children between the ages of 0-17 have experienced one or more episodes of serious trauma in their families. This is close to half of our nation's children. According to Dr. Christina Bethell, Professor, Bloomberg School of Public Health, Johns Hopkins University:

If more prevention, trauma-healing and resiliency training programs aren't provided for children who have experienced trauma, and if our educational, juvenile justice, mental health and medical systems are not changed to stop traumatizing already traumatized children, many of the nation's children are likely to suffer chronic disease and mental illness.¹¹

As noted, the study indicates that building resilience serves to inoculate students against many of these catastrophic outcomes. The Full Value School provides a systemic culture and climate to support resiliency including the development of behavioral norms (co-creation), providing opportunities for students to make choices about how they participate in the program (Challenge of Choice), control and empowerment through goal setting, and a forum for discussing issues and celebrating successes within a nurturing and supportive group process (Calling Group). Full Value components, and their positive impact on mitigating trauma, will be discussed within this book.

No matter how we choose to do it, primary prevention SEL work is essential to maintain safe schools and a safe and healthy society. We have wasted far too much time debating its importance.

We must educate our children for civic participation at every level, so that they and we come to see more committed, generous, and heroic actions as part of everyday life, not just a reaction to crisis. We must prepare our children for the tests of life, not a life of tests (2001).¹²

- Maurice Elias, Professor of Psychology at Rutgers University and creator of the NJ Safe and Civil Schools initiative

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Some Thoughts About Co-Authorship

This text involved the work of Richard Maizell, Jim Schoel, and John Grund with a total of over 135 years of experience in the field of education, social work, psychology, counseling, teaching, administration, and experiential learning. The blending of their skills and experience has resulted in a work that imparts essential theoretical knowledge and implementation strategies to support your efforts to integrate social emotional learning into your particular setting. Every effort has been made to have the authors speak with one voice. Where our individual experiences are important to enrich your understanding of the material, breakout boxes will contain this information. We hope you enjoy the fruits of this collaboration as much as we have.