



MARY AND JEAN BORG

CENTER FOR READING AND LITERACY

Illinois State University

Short Course Content

Social and Emotional Practices for Anti-racist and Equity Minded Educators

Instructor: Becky Beucher Credentials

Somatic Experiencing Level 1 (<https://traumahealing.org/>)

Meditation Teacher Training (The Path) <https://www.thepath.com/teacher>

Yoga Instructor, 200 HR CYT (<https://www.oliviarousseauyoga.com/>)

CPDU/PDH Credits: 30 hours

Cost: \$350 per person; 12 participants max

Start: May 6th (Thursday)

End: June 10th

Time: 6-7:30pm

Location: Zoom (link will be sent to participants).

Prerequisites: Watch Building anti-racist educators through embodied contemplative practices:

<https://youtu.be/ZCFnFWW2mjA>

Workshop Description

Research Basis & Rationale: Teaching is a profession imbued with affect and emotion. While notable attention has been given to students' social and emotional learning (SEL) (Zins & Elias, 2007), teachers' mental and physical health is rarely at the center of educator professional development; rather, teachers are expected to employ the tools of SEL in the absence of being taught how to regulate their own affect, understand their emotions, or employ their own self-care practices (Rodriguez et al., 2020). Teacher and student Relationships are imperative to student learning (Pianta, 2006) and relationships built on trust and care are essential for engaging humanizing conversations about weighty and consequential social issues. Teacher resistance to teach controversial topics proliferates across k-12 education (Dunn, Sondell, & Baggetts, 2018). Unfortunately, this resistance creates barriers to conversation and divisions among students and fellow educators who are differentially impacted by injustices rampant within education systems and other connected institutions (prison systems, housing, employment, college, financial). The past decade of research on affect, or the pre-subjective body's response to stress or stimuli (Leys, 2012) has offered notable contributions to deepen an understanding of *how* and *why* people respond with resistance to engaging in conversations about weighty and consequential social issues. This includes attention to how racial trauma resides in the body. Alongside this body of research, is a research basis for how contemplative, somatic practices (mindfulness, yoga, meditation, breath, facilitated movement, SE) reduce perceived stress and beneficially impact people's physical and mental health. Specifically, mindfulness *resiliency* skills (Felver et al., 2019) develop a person's capacities for adapting to change despite challenges or

threats (Demirci, Eksi, Eksi, & Kaya, 2019). SE and mindfulness meditation can be used in tandem to support practitioners with understanding and processing embodied trauma (Payne, Levine, & Crane-Godreau, 2015).

Purpose. The purpose of this workshop is to support teachers of multicultural identities in understanding a holistic approach to managing embodied responses when discussing weighty and consequential topics in education contexts. Participants will learn social and emotional (SEL) methods for building resilience in the nervous system through community oriented, somatic practices, and contemplative practices grounded in concepts of critical care. These methods and practices can support educators in holding space for restorative work in their school contexts.

Learning experiences will include:

- gaining tools and experiences for self-examination and private and public reflection,
- gaining experiences with bearing witness to others' stories about experiences with racial and other social injustices,
- learning and practicing contemplative practices for building body resilience and compassionate witnessing and responding.

Audience. This workshop is designed for those who have a commitment to reconciling social injustices in education contexts and who are open to self-reflection, change, and growing in community with other like-minded educators.

Workshop sessions will include:

- Contemplative Practices (accessible yoga, meditation, breath, dance, chanting, somatic exercises).
- Lectures: Anti-racist Contemplative Practices, the Autonomic Nervous System, Somatic (body) practices.
- Listening Circles, Compassionate Witnessing, Small Group Discussions, Sharing Circles

Homework:

- Daily meditation practice & journaling (5-20 min) (strongly encouraged).
- Short weekly readings that compliment lectures.
- Ongoing group check-ins via a private Discord group.

Facilitator Biography

Dr. Becky Beucher (she/her/hers) - Identifies as cisgender female, queer, and white bodied person of Scottish and German ethnic ancestry. She is an Assistant Professor of Secondary Literacy Education, in the College of Education at Illinois State University, and the Lead Faculty Liaison & Curriculum Developer for the National Center for Urban Education. Beucher centers critical care in her work. She is a certified yoga instructor, is certified in Oku Den Second Degree Reiki, is trained in Restorative Practices and in leading Restorative Conferences and is currently training to be a Somatic Experiencing licensed practitioner. Dr. Beucher's scholarship engages critical new materialist, embodied literacies, critical discourse analysis, and critically oriented gender, queer, Indigenous and race centered theories with the intention of decolonizing education spaces. Beucher centers youth voices and experiences by exploring how middle and high school aged youth of minoritized identities navigate school spaces. She collaborates with high school teachers and community leaders to design and investigate how youth participate in culturally responsive, critical new media literacies curriculum centered on youth lead social movements, like NoDAPL Water Protection Movement and Black Lives Matter. She teaches undergraduate and graduate level classes in multiliteracies and technology, literacy theory, and multicultural education. Her most

recent scholarship and teaching involves exploring avenues for integrating anti-racist restorative and contemplative practices in education contexts.

References

- Demirci, I., Eksi, H., Eksi, F., & Kaya, C. (2019). Character strengths and psychological vulnerability: The mediating role of resilience. *CURRENT PSYCHOLOGY*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-019-00533-1>
- Dunn, A. H., Sondell, B., & Baggetts, H. C. (2018). "I Don't Want to Come Off as Pushing an Agenda": How contexts shaped teachers' pedagogy in the days after the 2016 U.S. presidential election. *American Educational Research Journal*, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/0002831218794892>
- Felver, J. C., Clawson, A. J., Morton, M. L., Brier-Kennedy, E., Janack, P., & DiFlorio, R. A. (2019). School-based mindfulness intervention supports adolescent resiliency: A randomized controlled pilot study. *International Journal of School & Educational Psychology*, *7*, 111–122.
- Leys, R. (2012). Trauma and the Turn to Affect. In *Trauma, Memory, and Narrative in the Contemporary South African Novel* (pp. 1-27). Brill Rodopi.
- Payne, P., Levine, P. A., & Crane-Godreau, M. A. (2015). Somatic experiencing: using interoception and proprioception as core elements of trauma therapy. *Frontiers in psychology*, *6*, 93.
- Pianta, R. C. (2006). Classroom Management and Relationships Between Children and Teachers: Implications for Research and Practice.
- Rodriguez, V., Lynneth Solis, S., Mascio, B., Kiely Gouley, K., Jennings, P. A., & Brotman, L. M. (2020). With awareness comes competency: The five awarenesses of teaching as a framework for understanding teacher social-emotional competency and well-being. *Early Education and Development*, *31*(7), 940-972.
- Zins, J. E., & Elias, M. J. (2007). Social and emotional learning: Promoting the development of all students. *Journal of Educational and Psychological consultation*, *17*(2-3), 233-255.