

Teaching from the Inside Out: How Mindfulness and Self-Reflection Can Transform Our Classrooms

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9th Annual Online English Conference
University of Piura, Peru

“There is only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving, and that’s your own self.”
– Aldous Huxley, English Writer and Philosopher

Purpose of Presentation

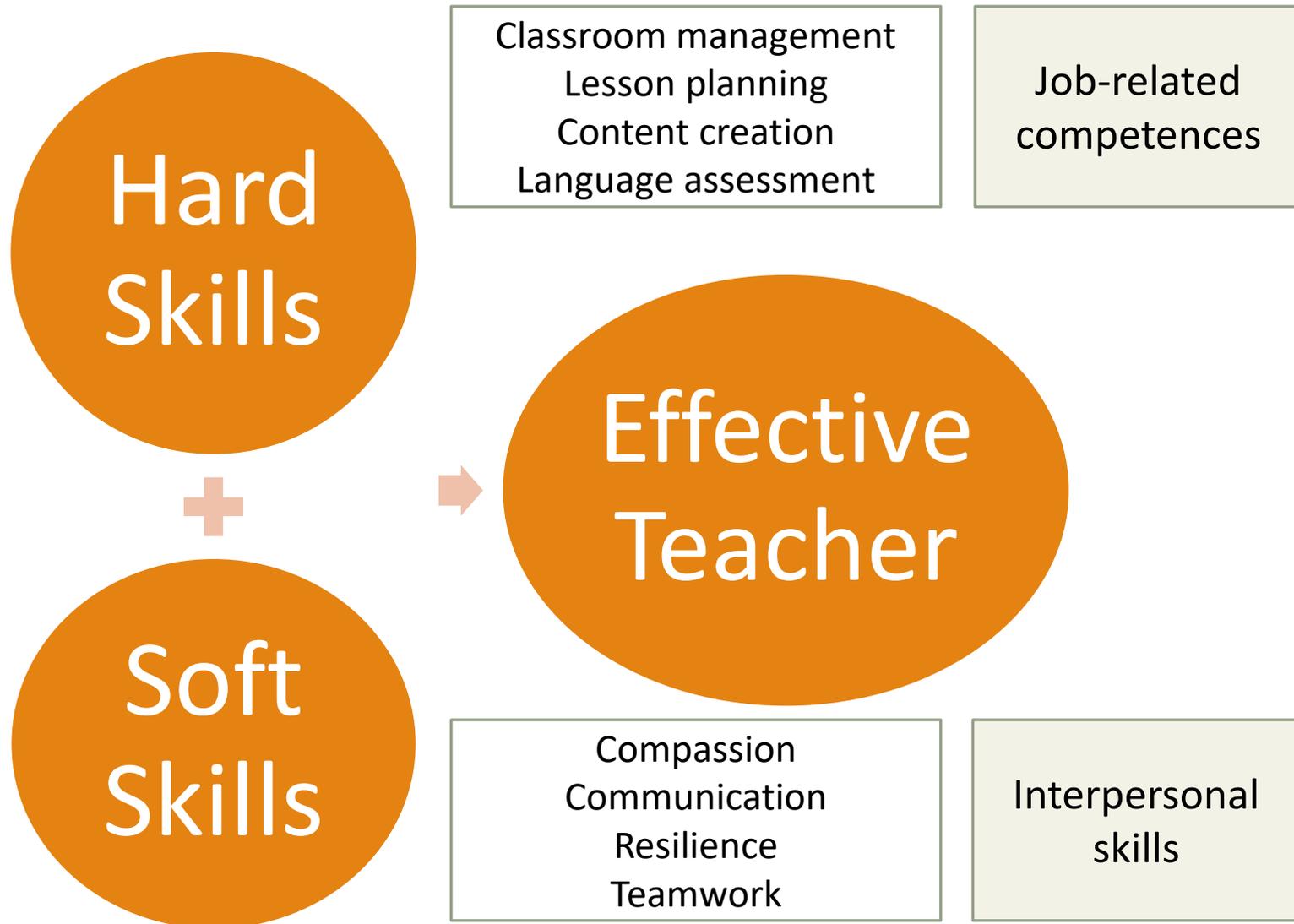
- (1) Highlight the relationship between mindfulness, self-reflection, and human development.
- (2) Relate personal experiences that have shaped our evolution as teachers.
- (3) Suggest simple methods of creating a self-reflective learning environment for personal growth for both teachers (Randall) and their students (Emily).



Questions

1. How have you adapted your teaching (e.g., instructional practices, assessment techniques, use of technology) during and since the pandemic?
2. How do you regularly reflect on your teaching practices to identify areas for improvement and growth?
3. Can you describe a specific instance when your self-reflection led to a significant change or improvement in your teaching? What did you learn from that experience?

What About Mindfulness?



What About Mindfulness?

Mindfulness

“Paying attention to what is going on inside and outside ourselves, moment by moment.”



Empathy
Compassion
Healthy
Communication
Teamwork

Next Sections of Presentation

HOW TO DEVELOP
MINDFULNESS

ACTIVITIES TO ACTIVATE
MINDFULNESS

For Teachers – Randall

For Students - Emily



Developing Self-Awareness

1. Realize that I could be wrong about so many things and not even know it.

Our Life's Dilemma

People (teachers and students) are often so unaware of how unaware they really are at work, at school, and in friendships.

Self-Awareness

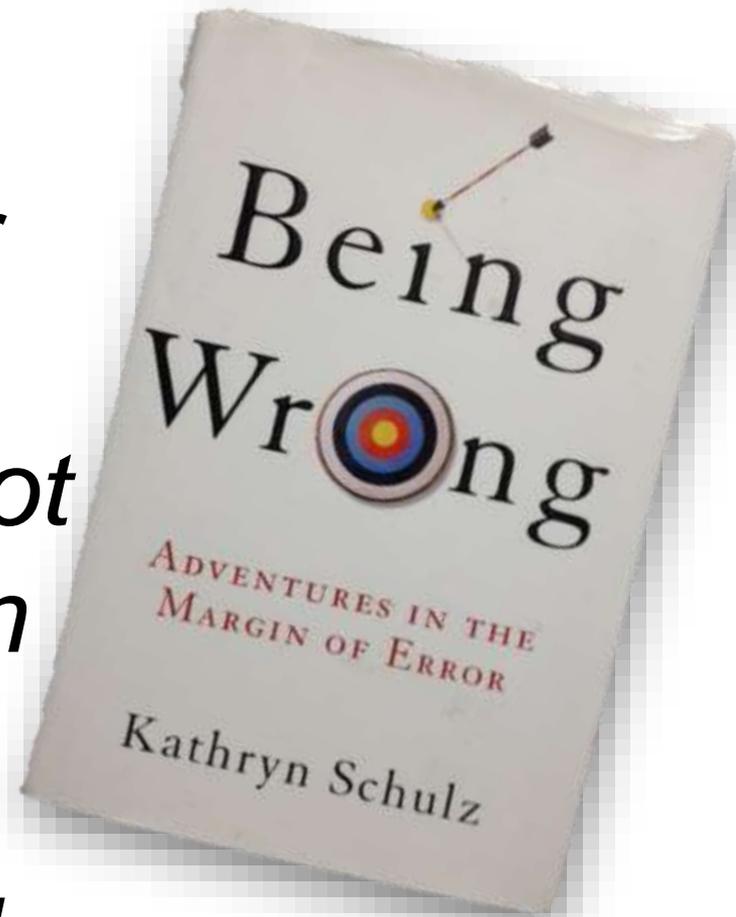
“What gets us into trouble is not what we don’t know; It’s what we know for sure that just ain’t so.”

- *Anonymous*

Learning Key

“However disorienting, difficult, or humbling our mistakes might be, it is ultimately wrongness, not rightness, that can teach us who we are.”

Kathryn Schulz, *Being Wrong*



Thought

Mistakes are the bridge between
inexperience and wisdom.

- Phyllis Theroux, Journalist

... but they can be painful to examine up close, and
there is often a deep fear to disclose them.

Application

- ❖ Accept the limitations and boundaries of your knowledge as teachers or students.
- ❖ Become more humble and open to new ideas and being wrong.

“The only true wisdom is knowing that you know nothing.”

- Socrates, Greek Philosopher



Developing Self-Awareness

1. Realize that I could be wrong about so many things and not even know it.
2. **Accept my imperfections and limitations > Be authentic.**

FEAR

“Will others see me as flawed or imperfect because of my mistakes or limitations?”

Quotes

“We often wear ourselves out trying to be someone we aren’t or aren’t meant to be.”

- *We pretend to **be** what we aren’t.*
- *We pretend to **know** what we don’t know.*

Brené Brown

Researcher on Vulnerability, Shame, and Courage

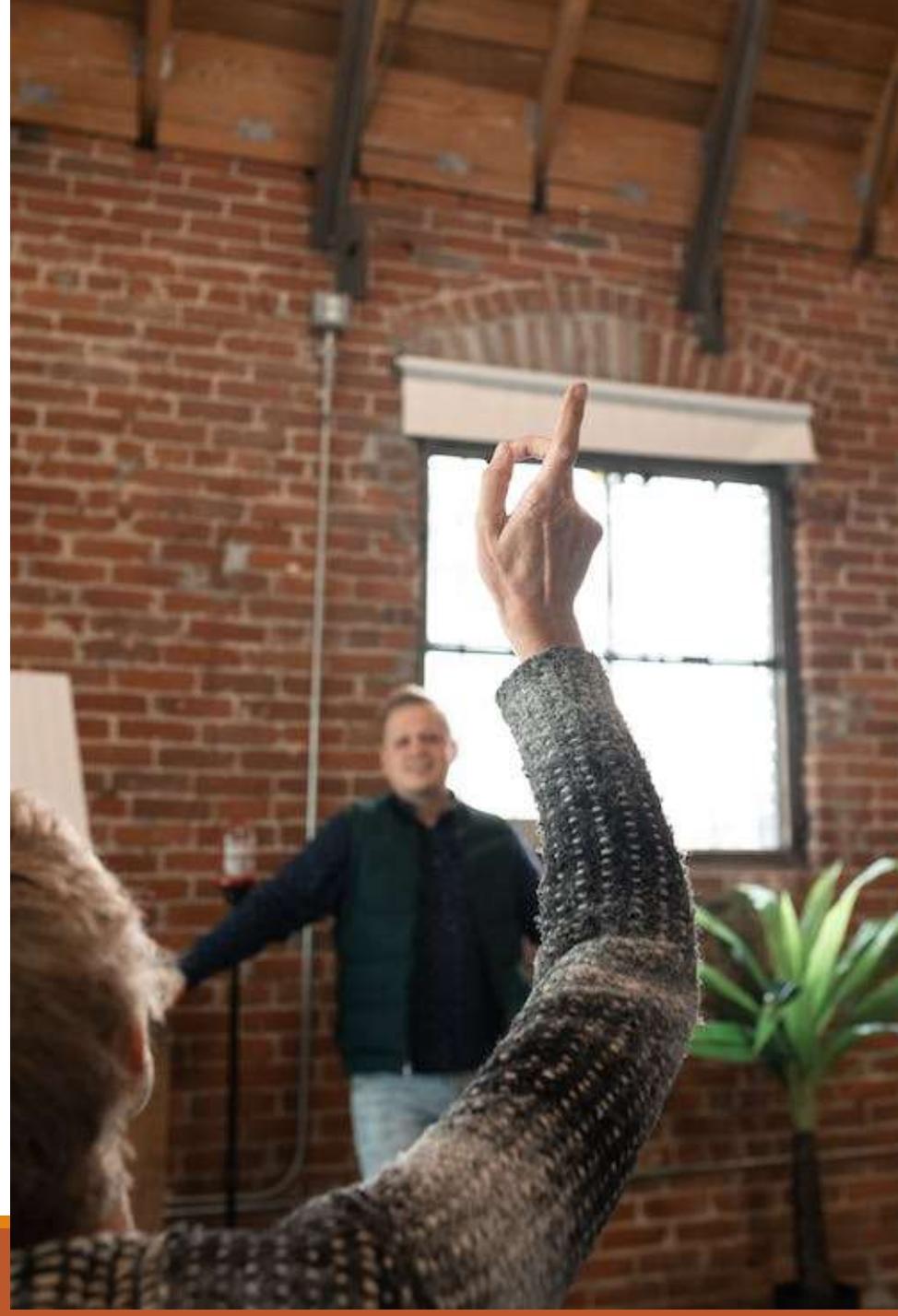
“Many of us live in fear —the fear of looking weak, flawed, and imperfect.”

“Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity and change.”



Vulnerability > Authenticity

Raise your hand if you have ever felt like an impostor?



Polyglot = Multilingual

Impostor
Syndrome

Versus

Growth
Mindset

Adam Grant:

Impostor syndrome: "I don't know what I'm doing. It's only a matter of time until everyone finds out."

Growth mindset: "I don't know what I'm doing yet. It's only a matter of time until I figure it out."

The highest form of self-confidence is believing in your ability to learn.

Application – Vulnerability

- ❖ Authenticity builds honest human connections with others and greater trust.
- ❖ Vulnerability fosters a growth mindset.
- ❖ Authenticity helps you wear the same face no matter what the circumstances.

Mindfulness Techniques

FOR TEACHERS

Randall

FOR STUDENTS

Emily

The ideas might not be revolutionary, but they tap into the concept of mindfulness and self-awareness. For both remote and face-to-face teaching environments.

Mindfulness Techniques

There is NOT just one “right” key for every context, situation, and culture.



Be careful not to impose our practices and opinions on someone else.

Coaching Partnerships

We seldom thrive in isolation.

~~One-shot observations~~

1. Work with a colleague over a designated period of time.
2. Engage in regular reflective discussions and provide constructive feedback to enhance self-awareness and professional growth.



Coaching Partnerships

We seldom thrive in isolation.

1. Set up goals for a two-month period.
2. Create a personalized evaluation sheet on what areas you want to examine in your teaching (classroom management, teacher-student engagement, clarity of instruction).
3. Observe regularly over the partnership period.
4. Take each other's tests and other assessments.
5. Interview students on what they like most about your partner teacher.
6. Record your class.

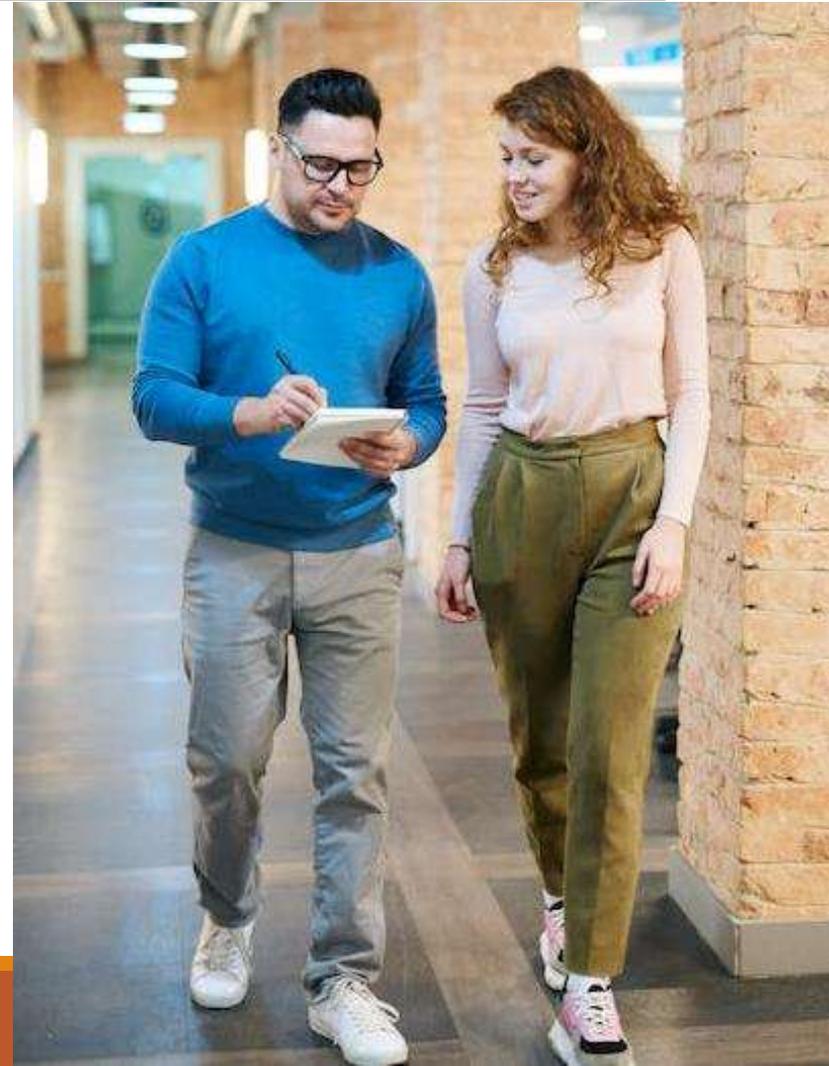


Mindful Walk and Talk

Mindful Walk and Talk

1. (Accountability) Take reflective walks with fellow teachers, discussing teaching experiences, challenges, and innovative approaches.
2. The combination of movement and conversation stimulates creative reflection.

(Vulnerability >>> Authenticity)



Anonymous Surveys

1. Elicit meaningful and anonymous feedback halfway through your class and then announce that you will act upon the suggestions.
 - [Mentimeter.com](https://www.mentimeter.com)



Mentimeter.com

This class is helping me improve reading and vocabulary skills.

Please tell me your feelings about the READING class. What do you like? What do you dislike? What can I do better as your teacher?

13 Answers

I like how you take time to make sure we all understand words. This class has been a safe place to express ourselves with confidence, without feeling any stress. I wish I experienced this kind of teaching earlier back in my country.

I am really enjoying the reading classes. In my opinion the classes are well organized, dynamic and useful. In general I feel very interested about everything that is explained. I would say that I have a good time while I am learning.

Group work is a great opportunity for students to get to know each other and exchange opinions.

Sometimes I can't understand the meaning of questions, but I like this class approach because we can have a lot of opportunities to discuss and

I like having many opportunities to discuss and to practice speaking in this class. But, we spend too much time on discussion, so I want to

I have learned a lot in this reading class! I've studied English before, but never in such way. The way we get to focus on vocabulary and try to engage them in our daily life makes it much easier to remember words and increase our word bank.

Show the results in the next class to demonstrate your action plan for the rest of the course.

Emotional Check-Ins

1. Prior to or after each class, take a moment to check in with your emotions and state of mind.
2. Identify any challenges and/or successes, and reflect on how they impact your teaching.
3. Practice self-care. (How do different people respond to self-praise?)



Other Teacher Ideas

1. I usually “debrief” with myself after teaching and ask:

What went right?

What should I keep for next time?

What was meh or wrong?

What will I change next time?

Mindfulness Techniques

FOR TEACHERS

Randall

Coaching partnerships

Mindful walk and talk

Anonymous surveys

Emotional check-ins

FOR STUDENTS

Emily

Model growth mindset

5 senses mindfulness

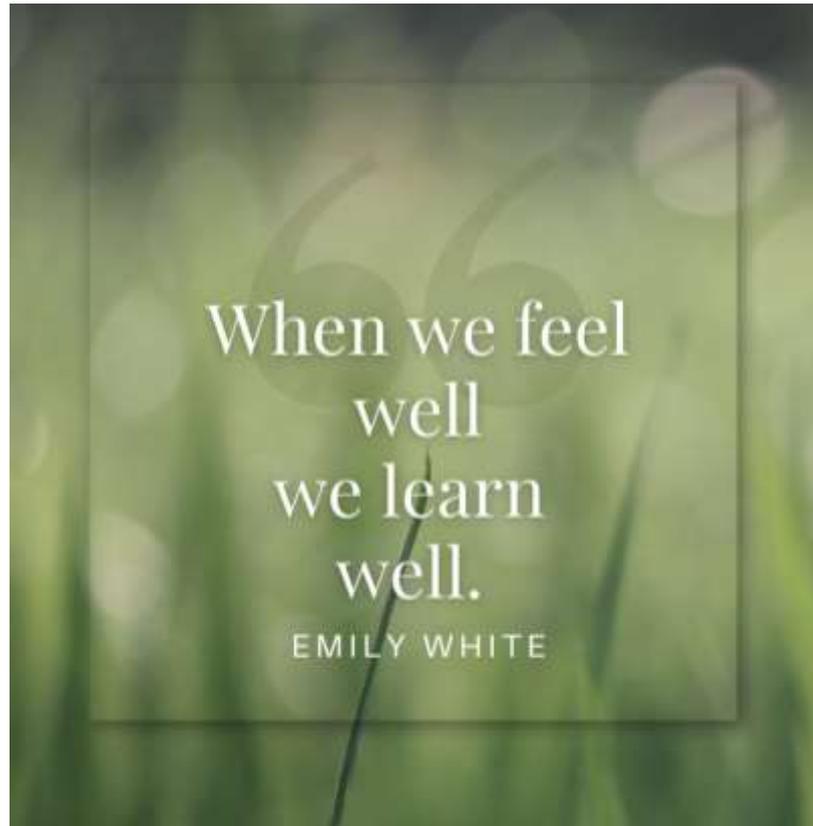
Adapting to Change Builds Resilience

How have you adapted your teaching during and since the pandemic?

WHO? WHAT?

WHEN? WHERE? WHY?

Emotional Resilience



360: Panoramic Vision



Classroom Activity

Mindfulness: Using My 5 Senses

WHAT IS 1 THING YOU CAN SEE, SMELL, TOUCH, TASTE, HEAR?



I SEE



I SMELL



I TOUCH



I TASTE



I HEAR

Adaptable Teaching Tool

How can you adapt this mindful tool to any learner level and skill?

Listening: Active Listening

Speaking: Think, Pair, Share with Adjectives

Grammar: Simple Present

Writing: Reflective Journaling

Roadblocks to Mindfulness

1. We overcomplicate the process.
2. We remain in denial that there is a problem.
3. We try to learn these concepts alone.
4. We forget that the journey IS the destination.

