

Walking the Talk....the importance of living what we teach. ~ Kim Parker

I was a youth care worker for over 40 years and, I must admit, that there were days that took effort to not become apathetic. However, I made that effort each time as I knew that the youth and staff I worked with deserved it and so did I.

As a trainer and program coordinator of the PREPARE Curriculum, I was not invisible and could be sure that the “hypocrisy police” were ever present: I needed to practice anger regulation, model pro-social skills, and make decisions that followed an honorable moral compass.

In the majority of Social Emotional Learning modules taught today, we ask our students to go home and practice what they have learned. That is a fine goal but every aspect of their learning is practice, beginning when they walk into the room until long after they leave. Our lessons need to captivate their interest by connecting to what matters in each of their lives, opening up possibilities to adjust their thinking when/if they can. In order to do this effectively, we have to believe in what we teach and model this in and out of the “classroom”.

This means, as facilitators, we must integrate all we teach into our own lives. When a challenging situation presents itself, one should practice Problem Solving and first stop and think. This can be followed by regulating emotions, practicing Anger Control as one takes a deep breath and uses PHEW as a reminder to be:

Patient
Helpful
Empathetic
and **Walk the Talk**