



Little Talks That Make A Big Difference: THE TEI PODCAST SERIES

PODCAST REFLECTION GUIDE

#4 Emotional Imprinting: Applying What You've Learned

Definitions and Reflections:

Emotional imprints are values that we hold, often unconsciously, as a result of experiences that we had when we were young. Emotional imprints are often triggered by people or situations that elicit a conditioned response of anger or frustration. Everyone's emotional imprints are unique to their life experiences.

***Reflect:** Identify one of your emotional imprints. If you are having trouble with this, generate a list of situations that trigger your angry behaviors or "push your buttons"?*

The **conflict cycle** refers to what happens when someone's behavior elicits a conditioned response from you and you react instead of respond, which then leads to more difficult emotions that drive more challenging behaviors.

***Reflect:** Think of a time when you entered into the conflict cycle with a student or someone else in your life.*

Like the story about fixing the roof when it's sunny, **emotional bank-accounting** is the idea that we have to invest in relationships and build a sense of belonging and connection with students before there is conflict.

***Reflect:** What can you do to communicate positive feelings (such as trust, care, support, acknowledgment) toward this particular person before there is another conflict?*



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Try This:

Body Scan and Vacuum Breaths: When you sense that you are about to **react** to a student's behavior based on an emotional imprint, noticing physical sensations and becoming conscious of the breath can help create a pause between **the stimulus** (the student's behavior) and **your response**. Try this breathing exercise adapted from Mindfulness Educator Daniel Rechtschaffen:

1. Take a moment to notice the sensations in your body. Are there any areas that you are feeling heat, tightness or contraction?
2. Take a deep breath in and tighten up your body as much as you can, imagining you are sucking up all the tension in your body like a vacuum cleaner sucks up dirt. Then relax and release tension on the exhale. Try this 2 more times.
3. Now **respond** to the behavior.

Special Delivery: Arrange with another teacher to keep an envelope in your desk with his or her name on it. When a student is pushing your buttons and you are feeling stressed, ask the student to deliver the envelope to the other teacher. It will provide a break for both of you and give you time to consider what behavior management strategy you can apply when the child returns.