



EDUCATOR'S 411 ON YOUR SELF 101

SNEAK PEEK

THE FOLLOWING PAGES PROVIDE A VERY BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE EDUCATOR'S GUIDE. CORRECT IMPLEMENTATION IS KEY TO THE PROGRAM'S SUCCESS AND YOUR STUDENTS' HAPPINESS. TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE PURCHASE THE COMPLETE 411.

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Important: The Your Self Series™ of books, including this guide, are not meant to take the place of a qualified mental health professional. If you or your students feel overwhelmed by the material or in need of counseling, please seek help from a qualified mental health professional such as a school counselor, psychologist or social worker.

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PLEASE NOTE: THIS IS THE TABLE OF CONTENTS FOR THE COMPLETE EDUCATOR'S 411. PLEASE REVIEW IT TO MORE FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS CENTRAL ROLE IN CORRECT PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION.

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SAMPLE INFORMATION FROM THE EDUCATOR'S 411: ALL SECTIONS ARE ABBREVIATED VERSIONS AND NOT ALL SECTIONS ARE INCLUDED. PLEASE SEE THE TABLE OF CONTENTS ON THE PREVIOUS PAGE.

GENERAL INFORMATION

YOUR SELF SERIES (YSS) is a comprehensive social, emotional, character development (SECD) program developed to foster a strong **sense of self** in our future generations. Its unique student-driven, teacher-facilitated structure is embedded within a project-based philosophy. This experiential learning style aims to foster intrinsic motivation, innovation and resilience – hallmarks for life success.

YSS Philosophy: Academics alone do not create a purposeful and meaningful life. A sense of self, a connection with others, and the ability to manage social and emotional difficulties are more powerful indicators of future success and happiness.

YSS aims to engage the student in a process of **self-discovery and identity development in order to build a positive self image and firm inner confidence.**

YSS takes your students on a journey of self-discovery: *Who am I? What are my morals, goals, values, feelings, relationships, personality and communication styles?* As critical thinking and decision-making skills are developed, confusion, fear and frustration diminish.

Overall, YSS aims to promote the following qualities in today's youth:

- emotional confidence
- social competence
- moral and ethical awareness
- self awareness
- personal value, dignity, respect and worth
- creativity
- connection and service to community

These qualities help youth to:

- set and attain personal goals
- create meaning and fulfillment in life, work and love
- lead purposeful lives
- feel happier
- demonstrate grit, tenacity, and determination
- develop a sense of worthiness
- experience positive mental health
- give joyfully to others

YSS PLACES AN EMPHASIS ON CONNECTIONS AND SOCIAL SKILLS

We find our selves through connections with others.

Building connections is the main focus of the **YSS** process and, indeed, sets it apart and above other programs. No other program has this central focus of group work whereby students own their learning. Team building, social skills and communication are built from the first day when students connect to create the group rules. This collaborative effort continues on the second day, when icebreakers are implemented, and continues throughout the student-led discussions.

If you feel that the safe and warm atmosphere of your classroom is beginning to falter, address it, either directly (*Guys, I feel as if some of you are feeling uncomfortable, is this true?*) or by taking the time to do another icebreaker.

Your ability to maintain and increase connection will have a direct impact on your students' growth. It is of primary importance in the **YSS™ process.**

HOW YSS HELPS YOU

YSS

meets many Common Core State Standards. (For a detailed description of all the standards **YSS** meets, visit <http://yourselfseries.com/teachers/overview/> to download the Keystone document.)

YSS

incorporates project-based and service learning as essential elements of your classroom, elevating your teaching to the new standards set by the 21st century global marketplace.

YSS

is taught as a health class because when supplemented with the website material, meets national health standards. Plus, it provides the message that good health is both physical and mental well-being, decreasing the stigma on mental health.

YSS

continually sends the message to your students: we care about you. We want you to be the best that you can be.

YSS

develops 21st century skills, which all stem from a solid sense of self.

YSS

builds character, morality, social skills, emotional management, empathy, resilience and self-awareness.

YSS

provides the foundation for the self, upon which prevention program initiatives “stick.” The website has a plethora of prevention information covering all sorts of topics.

YSS

builds strong decision-making skills by creating a personal journey of self-exploration and a cognitive awareness that decisions are not merely an intellectual process, but an emotional one. When emotions are harnessed and understood, decisions are made more reflectively not reflexively.

YSS

compliments and supports preventative and proactive programs so that all such programs can reach their full potential.

THE COURSE

YSS is student-driven and teacher-facilitated. After the first couple of sessions, students will be responsible for preparing and leading at least every other session. The student-led part of the YSS process is essential to its success. Therefore, no matter what your time frame, please consider the student-led portion of YSS a priority. When you must make short cuts due to time constraints, err on the side of cutting back your actual teaching of the material rather than of the student-led group discussions (all of which will be detailed shortly).

Please make the group discussion a priority: it is this process that is essential for growth. No other course offered in school can have as much meaning to your students as discovering and exploring themselves. As such, for many students, the YSS is just what they need during the teen years – a chance to learn who they are and where they may choose to go in life.

The reasons to stress the student-led discussions:

1. Experiential learning generally finds a long-term home in the neuronal pathways of the brain by creating more meaning and stimulating brain activity to store it.
2. The discussions build upon the important life-long skills of leadership, teamwork, social skills and communication.
3. Empathy is encouraged when positive group mentality is supported by a caring teacher – YOU!
4. To have their voices heard and to be validated by their peers at this fragile stage is absolutely invaluable.
5. The group work done during YSS™ is facilitates the shift to the important and powerful process of project-based learning – an innovative learning technique for which YSS™ provides a foundation.

HOW LONG DO THE BOOKS TAKE TO TEACH?

The following chart provides a very broad sense of the minimum time needed to run the program, separated according to how many books and activities you choose to incorporate per year. Please consider an “hour” to be a class period that is from 40–50 minutes.

YSS is uniquely customizable in order to meet many different settings and needs. Therefore, please take the time now to prepare a detailed layout of the course according to your needs and what works for you. This will help ensure that you are able to meet all your required and desired topics within your specific time frame. Please see [Appendix D, YSS Calendar Templates](#) for a more detailed template to assist you with this process. Additionally, [Appendix B, The Website Integration Chart](#), will help you as well.

CONTENT	TIME
DISCOVER YOUR SELF - YOUR INTERNAL REALITY	15 hours
MANAGE YOUR SELF - YOUR EXTERNAL REALITY	15 hours
EXPRESS YOUR SELF - YOUR INTERACTIVE REALITY	15 hours
All three books	40 hours
One book plus projects from the Chapter-by-Chapter Log or lesson plans from the website to meet prevention program needs and/or national health standards (anti-bullying, drug and alcohol awareness, decision making, nutrition, etc.)	15 hours plus 1 - 3 hours for each lesson plan in a topic.
All three books plus projects from the Chapter-by-Chapter Log or lesson plans from the website to meet your needs.	40 hours plus 1-3 hours for each lesson plan in a topic.

WHAT TO DO AHEAD OF TIME

Good preparation is essential to a positive **YSS** experience for you and your students. By reading this manual you are well on your way. However, below are several key steps to help you feel even more prepared.

1. **Cruise the website.** Please familiarize yourself with all of the website topics (and the corresponding lesson plans) as you plan the overall content of your program within your timeframe. For instance, if you need to cover **Addiction** to meet health standards, you may wish to cover this topic after reading chapter one, **Your Brain** in **BOOK 1**. To do this, you would integrate **Addiction** from the website (located in the **Drugs and Alcohol** section) into your lesson schedule. **Appendix B, The Website Integration Chart** shows which topics online are easily integrated after each chapter. (Please note these are only suggestions for utilizing the website material and additional topics may have been added to the website since publication of this manual. Please check the website for topic availability.)

2. **Create your calendar.** What a shame to dive into the books and then realize at the end of the year that you forgot to meet standards or take advantage of all the free online material! **Appendix D, YSS Calendar Templates**, and **Appendix B, The Website Integration Chart** help you to avoid this pitfall and plan for optimal implementation. The **YSS Calendar Templates** offer two options: To teach the books once a week or twice a week all year. If your schedule is vastly different from this, please contact us for additional assistance. Meanwhile, the **Website Integration Chart** will help you weave the appropriate supplemental information into your teaching at an optimal time during the book material.

3. **Familiarize yourself with the Student-Led Discussion Chart, Appendix E.** Within the first few sessions, students will sign up to lead a discussion. This chart keeps track of those sign ups as well as provides a place for you to log the group rules.

4. **Use the Log. Appendix G, the Chapter-by-Chapter Log (Log),** provides a class by class teaching journal to document the journey both you and your students take. It serves as your guide for what to do, say, and explain, as well as ways to enhance your students' learning experiences. In this Appendix, you will find:

“Possible Discussion Topics” to help stumped students find relevant discussion subjects. Directly after those ideas is the **“Teacher Review and Creative Clarification”** and a text box of **“Possible Creative Clarification Topics”** in case *you* are stumped.

“Possible Activities/Projects” is the next section. Here, you will find many ideas on how to expand the learning process. Project-Based Learning (PBL) supplies essential life skills and meets more common core standards than strict assessment. PBL is gaining popularity because of the freedom, flexibility and creativity it inspires. With that in mind, please know that some of the projects suggested rely on the creative process – they are not explained step by step for a purposeful reason.

“Related Website Material” is also provided so you may further the lessons.

Three things to note about the **Log**:



One

The suggested student discussions are ideas to “get the conversation started.” Students are by no means confined by these ideas. Please encourage them to come up with topics on their own. Indeed, we would prefer that you NOT share these ideas with them unless they are completely stuck. Any topics pertinent to the chapter material that are not covered by the students will be ripe material for discussion during your clarification and review.



Two

Likewise, the clarifications and reviews provided are merely suggestions. They are meant to give solid content for you to discuss, as well as a creative springboard for you to discover other topics that may be more meaningful for your students. Always feel free to use any of the question in the **Pit Stops** or **Your Car Wash and Personal Detailing** to spur conversation or to use the character dilemmas as a starting place for discussion (found throughout the books).



Three

With the exception of the **Introduction** in **BOOK 1**, the introductions and conclusions (**End of the Line**) of the books do not need to be discussed. However, if your time frame allows you to explore these chapters, we suggest focusing on the material in the conclusions as they summarize much of the learning and growth that has taken place. (**End of the Line** chapters offer various challenges that incorporate much of the material covered in the book as well as creative ways to integrate the self into awareness.) To assist you, you will find possible discussion topics for the **End of the Line** chapters in the **Log**, allowing students to lead a more broad based discussion on the book material if timing allows. However, just as in previous chapters, these are simply suggestions should a student be “stuck.” We always encourage students to generate their own topics for discussion if possible.

CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER LOG

Recall that before you begin the book content, you will be introducing the course, explaining the structure, handing out books, assigning homework and doing icebreakers. Please make sure all of this is complete:

SESSION ONE:

- Introduce the program
- Explain the course structure
- Distribute the books
- Assign homework [Design their covers, contemplate what “self” means to them (you may have them write down a definition and hand it in), review the table of contents to have ideas on which chapters to lead]

SESSION TWO:

- Arrange the classroom
- View covers and discuss the concept of “self” (or collect if written down)
- Create group rules
- Sign up for student-led discussions
- Assign homework [Read the Introduction, take the First Quiz, read “Meet Your Characters”]

SESSION THREE:

- Set the stage – are the desks and chairs set up in a circle?
- Icebreaker!!
- Review homework
- Distribute the assignment chart and post the rules
- Assign homework

Now you are prepared to dive into the book content!

As you dive into the program, please know that the **CHAPTER ENHANCEMENTS** section of this log provides suggested projects, activities and discussion topics to help students actively work with the chapter content. Every project, discussion or activity is designed to help your students reflect on how the information shapes who they are and how they can use that information and the experiences with their peers to be the best that they can be. Please adjust the suggested enhancements as you see fit to your population or feel free to use your own experiences and ideas. In addition, the **YSS Ongoing Support Newsletter** (see **Appendix F: Professional Development**) will sometimes feature new activities for use. (Make sure you are signed up to receive the newsletter.)

Most of all, have fun with the material!

“My contribution [to the world] is to teach as many people as I can to use both sides of their brain, so that for every problem, every decision in their lives, they consider creative as well as analytical solutions.”

~ David Kelly, Founder, The Hasso Platner Institute of Design (the d.school)
at Stanford University

EXAMPLE FROM BOOK ONE, CHAPTER TWO



CHAPTER TWO: YOUR EMOTIONS: ARE THEY REALLY SO ALIEN?

Test drive

The difference between an emotion and a feeling

Emotions are energy!

How to create emotional awareness

How to manage your emotions

Positive expression of your emotions

Your car wash and personal detailing

Your self summary

Student-led discussion (s):

Date: _____ Student(s) _____

POSSIBLE DISCUSSION TOPICS

- What do you think about emotions being energy?
- What emotions are positive? How can you tell?
- What is the best way that you manage your emotions?
- Read an emotional story. Ask the group for their individual reactions.
- Present face icons displaying emotions: discuss if it is easy or difficult to read other people's faces. Discuss when someone might feel that way the face feels.

Topic presented: _____

Teacher notes on the discussion:

TEACHER REVIEW AND CREATIVE CLARIFICATION:

Date: _____

1. Ask your students about which information they would like further clarification. Begin your discussion with those topics. (Focus on the overall question: how did this chapter help you learn more about **who you are** and why?)
2. Clarify topics that present confusion, character, chaos or conflict (remember the growth mindset finds opportunity when faced with challenges; focus on the **effort** to discover the self.)

POSSIBLE CREATIVE CLARIFICATION TOPICS

- What are the differences between an emotion and a feeling?
- Provide examples of how emotions are energy and how trapped energy may affect a person.
- What are the differences between thoughts and feelings? Have students give examples.
- Go over the steps to creating emotional awareness.
- Emphasize the importance of positive communication of your emotions.
- Recap the four steps to choosing a response.
- Cover short-term emotional management strategies.

CHAPTER ENHANCEMENTS

- **Class activity:** Put the circle diagram on the board and have the group fill in THOUGHTS, FEELINGS/EMOTIONS and RESPONSES/EXPERIENCES to different situations such as *getting braces, receiving a mean text message, finding out your crush has a crush on someone else, getting a teacher you don't like, receiving a terrific present*, etc. Have students offer their own scenarios. Whenever possible, have students offer both positive and negative thoughts in a situation and highlight the effect on the cycle of feelings and experiences.
- **Family activity:** Provide the following directions to your students: Interview your parents: What emotions were they allowed to show when they were growing up? Did they feel like they could express any emotion to their parents? Could they express sadness? Fear? Anger? Frustration? Do they feel like they can express their emotions now? Do they ever hide certain emotions? Which emotions are difficult for them to handle today? What helps them to “deal” when they feel sad/angry/frustrated/stressed? What do they think is the best emotion if they had to pick just one? When do they feel that emotion most? Challenge yourself to the same set of questions – do you see a pattern?
- **Fun/competition:** Play “Emotions Pyramid”: Equipment needed: a stopwatch/timer. Have students create various decks of “emotions cards”– 10 cards per deck, each with a unique emotion written on one side. (Each deck ideally should have a range of different emotions and different emotions than the other decks (try not to overlap too many emotions).

Group your students into pairs or small groups (up to 4 in a group). The challenge is for one student, the clue giver, to pick a card and then tell or act out a story that will make the other

student(s) say the name of the emotion on the card. For example, if a card reads, “Grief” the clue giver might say, “When your dog dies. When you lose someone you love. It’s the emotions that finishes this phrase by Charlie Brown, ‘Good ____ .’” When the “guesser(s)” say the correct emotion, the clue giver moves on to the next emotion in the deck. Guessers may say “Pass” if they can not guess the emotion. One point given for each correct guess, none for a pass. How many emotions can your student pairs guess correctly in 60 seconds?

Possible emotions to use in the decks: joyous, excited, anxious, scared, tired, powerful, calm, tranquil, mellow, tender, angry, fearful, disgust, respect, awe, sad, happy, lonely, frustrated, irritated, curious, frightened, timid, serious, accepted, optimistic, remorseful, guilty, shameful, thrilled, love, passion, cheerful, blissful, satisfied, thrilled, proud, eager, amazed, annoyed, grouchy, envious, jealous, tormented, hurt, hopeless, regretful, isolated, homesick, neglected, sympathy, shocked, horrified, nervous, tense, chilled

- **Group activity:** Break the group into groups of about 4 students each. Within each group have students use cameras or cell phones to take pictures of four different emotions. You can assign them specific emotions from the list above or they may choose their own. (Another variation is to assign one emotion to each student and have them take a selfie.) Share pictures with the class: can the other groups correctly guess the emotion? Which emotions were easiest to express, which were hardest? Optional: have the class as a whole make a caption for the photo that helps underscore the emotion (humor encouraged!).
- **Watch this video** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sN6ZgBJOTO4&index=84> Have students reflect on how Butter views sadness. Do they agree or disagree? Have them make a visual representation or poem about Butter’s belief.
- **Class activity:** Tell an emotionally-heavy story (we have one below if you need an idea) and ask students to tell their personal feelings about it. Go around the room to show that the same story elicits different emotions/feeling even though everyone heard the exact same story in the exact same context.

One possible story:

A 13 year-old girl grew up in the Sudan where there is no formal education, no local medical facilities and hardly enough food and running water. (Expand on this point if students are not familiar with these living conditions.) As her mother is giving birth she is the only one available to help. Both baby and mother die during the birth. The girl decides, from that moment on, that she will become a doctor. Soon she hears that a doctor and his family from England will be moving to the area. She walks many, many miles with no shoes, food or shelter, over many days (can you imagine!?) to find this doctor and family. She offers herself as the house-girl. They accept. After two years of cleaning, cooking and caring for the two young daughters, it is time for the family to move back to England. During that time, however, the young daughters have taught this Sudan girl how to read and write. The family offers to bring her back to England with them. Can you imagine, England compared to the Sudan? She accepts. She enrolls in school, finishes college, goes to medical school and becomes an OBGYN!! She turns down offers to make lots of money in England so that she can fulfill her dream of helping people from her local villages. She returns to the Sudan and teaches local people how to help during childbirth, not by formal education (remember, they can’t read or write) but by showing them pictures. (Story adapted from a lecture by Mary Helen Immordino-Yang at the Learning and the Brain summer conference, 2010)

Questions to explore include:

- Was everyone’s emotional response the same? If not, why do you think different reactions to this story occurred?
- To which character in the story did you relate and why?
- What did the main character face and what emotions do you think she had?
- What sorts of limitations in pursuing her dream of becoming a doctor did she have?

-What limitations did she have in her mind? How did her mindset affect her goals?

- **Class project:** Spread a smile project: Without informing their friends, students are to spend the day spreading smiles. They are to smile at people in the hallways, cafeteria and classrooms and see if people smile back. Have students keep track of their experiences: Do people smile back? What did it feel like if someone smiled back? If someone didn't? What does this tell you about emotions and contagion? What does this tell you about the importance of reading emotions in others?
- **Community:** Ask your students: What emotions will help change the world for the better? If you could create a bill board to help foster that emotion in the world, what would it look like and say? Create that billboard. If you could spread one emotion by Tweeting, what emotion would it be and how would you Tweet it? Tweet it.
- **Create:** Have your students develop their own project surrounding the question, "YOUR EMOTIONS: ARE THEY REALLY SO ALIEN?"

RELATED WEBSITE MATERIAL: TOP 3 PICKS

What is mental health?



3 Tips for mental health



Mental disorders



THE YSS PROGRAM, INCLUDING THE THREE BOOKS, MEETS THE GENERAL CRITERIA FOR:

Social Emotional Learning

Character Education

Life Skills Development

21st Century Skills

THE BOOKS AND WEBSITE COMBINED ALSO MEET:

National Health Standards

Common Core State Standards

21st Century Skills

21st Century Community Learning Centers' Program Description

Anti-bullying Mandates

Prevention Strategies/Programs