

New Research-Based Handbook Teaches High School Students 40 Mental Health and Well-Being Competencies

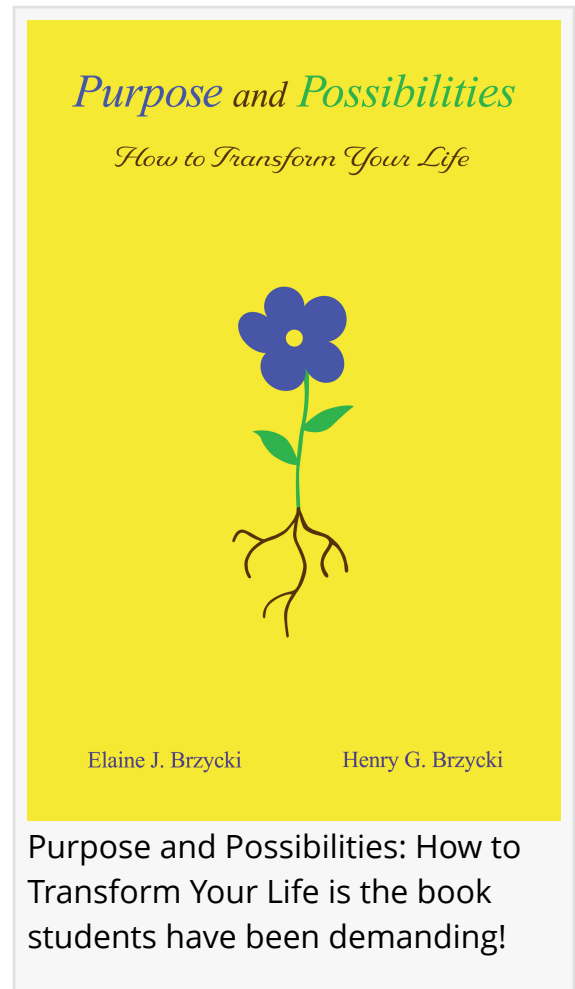
40 Mental Health and Well-Being Competencies Taught Through 15 Mindfulness Reflections - Essential Handbook for Adolescents

STATE COLLEGE, PENNSYLVANIA, UNITED STATES, November 11, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- A new essential handbook from lifelong educators and counselors helps high-school students make the successful transition from adolescence to young adulthood by imparting mental health and [well-being](#) competencies such as resilience, self-understanding and a sense of purpose.

High schools are not doing enough to impart these competencies, and offering a few programs in Social Emotional Learning (SEL) or conducting depression screenings is simply not enough. Students and their families want more—they want real-world tools that proactively teach them how to envision and pursue a happy, healthy and flourishing life.

[Purpose and Possibilities: How to Transform Your Life](#), based on human development and positive psychology research, teaches students 40 essential well-being and self-knowledge competencies, including how to develop a purpose and direction for their futures.

Coauthor Dr. Henry Brzycki explained, “Students want to gain competencies that are relevant to them, and their future success. They want to learn for themselves what mental health and well-being look like, to understand their own emotions, what being happy feels like and what makes them happy. Students want to know how to assess and impact all the dimensions of their own health, mind, body and spirit, and they want to achieve and maintain high levels of well-being in school and life.”



Purpose and Possibilities: How to Transform Your Life is the book students have been demanding!

Public high schools can and should incorporate these mental health and well-being competencies throughout both co-curricular and curricular activities. *Purpose and Possibilities: How to Transform Your Life* is relevant to high school students from all socio-economic backgrounds and is effective in Freshman transition programs, SEL programs, guidance counseling/advising sessions, Senior college counseling, and integrated into the classroom curricula. Using the handbook also helps school counselors identify those students who may need additional psychological services.

Coauthor Elaine Brzycki said, “Learning to be healthy and happy doesn’t stop at the school doors. The kinds of discussions that go on in families about students’ hopes and dreams should be supported by school cultures that integrate well-being competencies into all aspects of the educational experience. This handbook gives adolescents the support they need to dream big dreams.”

Using research-based, evidence-based high-impact practices in SEL and student empowerment, the handbook contains 15 mindfulness reflections on mental health and well-being competencies, what a healthy self feels like, how to frame challenges and how to contribute to others. The handbook does not talk down to students, but rather challenges them with new concepts that they can return to time and again. As one reader said, “It feels like the book was written just for me. It’s about my own life!”

Studies, such as one at Harvard University, find that 75% of success in life is due to non-cognitive factors such as motivation, self-awareness, emotional intelligence and passion for pursuing an area of interest. These factors are acquired through competency-based learning, yet public high schools still operate from the old mindset that seat-time in the classroom equates to learning. Seat time does not teach or measure the mental health and well-being competencies that students are demanding.

High-school counselors and teachers can take action by ordering a copy of *Purpose and Possibilities: How to Transform Your Life* for each student in their classes. Students and their parents and caregivers are expecting school districts to facilitate constructive conversations between schools and families about well-being and to offer resources to ensure students’ future success. High-school students need this essential handbook to learn how to thrive in world, and



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school leaders need to provide the best resources to ensure these outcomes.

Elaine J. Brzycki, Ed.M., and Henry G. Brzycki, Ph.D., are copresidents of [The Brzycki Group and The Center for the Self in Schools](#), which has pioneered and created the field of imparting mental health and well-being competencies throughout K-16 schooling. Between them, they have served in the education field as counselors, teachers, higher education administrators, authors, a professor, and a college dean. They bring presentations and workshops to schools, districts and parent/caregiver groups to empower teachers, counselors, leadership, communities and students directly.

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