

## The Virtues Project

*God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can and the wisdom to know the difference.*

Teaching can be an overwhelming and demanding occupation due to many different stressors, many of which we cannot change. The one thing we can change is how we react to various challenges. How can we become more enlightened and continue to develop positive habits of mind that avoid leading to feelings of frustration and disillusionment?

The Virtues project offers five strategies for personal development that teachers can use to support student development as well as their own spiritual and emotional growth. The Project provides tools for breaking out of negative perspectives and presents strategies for building emotional stamina, achieving balance and finding inspiration to sustain us in our important work as educators.

Session One of this four-session workshop introduces the five strategies, which are based on virtues from sacred texts around the world. It outlines and provides insights into how the virtues can enhance our ability to manage, grow and foster nurturing relationships both with ourselves and others.

As educators we face daily challenges requiring us to draw on reserves of patience, humility, perseverance and gentleness. We will explore our own strength and growth virtues and in Sessions Two and Three we will learn about the first four strategies: Speak the Language of Virtues, Recognise Teachable Moments, Set Clear Boundaries and Honour the Spirit. Over the course of our time together we will practice our skills and reflect on current practices so that we may be equipped and increasingly mindful of the power of language and the great work that we are already doing and can continue to develop.

Session Five focuses purely on Companionship, a strategy that provides teachers with a tool for supporting one another as well as providing support for our students and families. Through instruction, practical exercises and peer guidance and encouragement, we will dig deep into the approach so that we may be able to coach each other and provide ongoing support using the common language and resources of the Virtues Project. We will explore how a coaching relationship can be an antidote for feeling burnt out and can lead to breakthroughs in our teaching practice.

Participants will come away with a level of knowledge, skill and understanding of the five strategies and how to apply them in the classroom as well as daily interactions with colleagues and loved ones.