


**HOW OPTIMISTIC LEADERS
CREATE EQUITY IN EARLY
LEARNING PROGRAMS**

NICHOLE PARKS & JUDY JABLON



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It's hard to be what you can't see.
— Marian Wright Edelman

Equity for every child must begin with equity for **all** the adults in their lives.




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LET'S EXPLORE

Strategies to:

1. Harness your power
2. Forge equitable partnerships
3. Nurture thriving communities



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PAUSE

Let's take a moment to breathe,
quiet the static, and be present.

4

We hope our conversation fills your cup of energy
and ignites your personal power!



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**EMOTIONAL
CONTAGION**

One person's mood and
behavior influences
another's



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WHAT IS OPTIMISM?


Optimists feel confident about the future and see a path forward.



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THE FIVE COMMITMENTS OF OPTIMISTIC LEADERS


- 1 Think Impact** to make informed decisions.
- 2 Cultivate self-awareness** to guide thought, emotion, and behavior.
- 3 Nurture relationships** to support learning and collaboration.
- 4 Refine communication** for mutual clarity and understanding.
- 5 Activate curiosity** to find connections and continue learning.



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HARNESS YOUR POWER

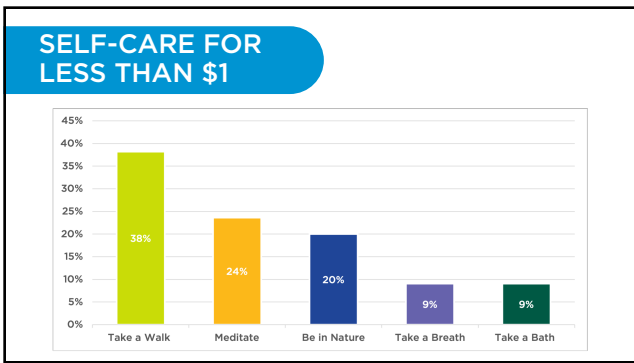
- You matter!
- Self-care is not “one size fits all” and not just for those with privilege
- Make self-care a priority and find your “just right fit”



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LET'S REFLECT


Why must we make self-care a priority?

12

Poll



If you can't see the slides after the poll, click the flower in the task bar at the **bottom of your screen**.



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AREAS OF SELF-CARE

- Physical needs
- Social needs
- Emotional needs
- Spiritual needs



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When we listen to our bodies, hearts, and minds, and consider input from trusted friends, we can find resiliency and renew our lives and work.

-Smithsonian, *Talking About Race*, National Museum of African American History & Culture

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LET'S REFLECT

Recall one thing you did over the past year to focus on your own needs.

Write it down so you always remember how to harness your power.

16

Poll



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IT'S ABOUT YOU

- Your experience
- Keep it simple
- What do you need?

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Through self-care, what we are doing is developing a relationship with ourselves - which actually supports us in developing relationships with everybody else.

— Prudence, Palliative Care Provider

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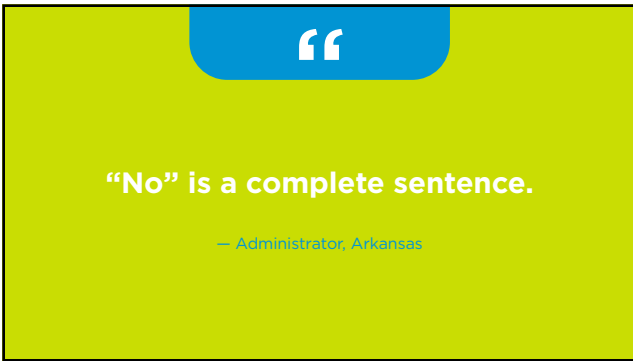
FORGE EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS

- Two-way
- Built on trust
- Both people learn and grow through curiosity

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LET'S REFLECT

Think about relationships that energize or deplete you.

Think about their impact on you.

25

Poll



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STAYING CONNECTED

- Reach out through text, phone, or video chat
- Schedule play dates with friends
- Prioritize energizers



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LET'S REFLECT

Think about ways to connect with people who give you energy.

Remember to connect with someone today.

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“

To stay connected to why we do this job, it is important to find your tribe. Time spent together is a breath of fresh air.

— Assistant Principal, Alabama

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NURTURE THRIVING COMMUNITIES

- Revitalize and reframe relationships through an equity lens
- Think of the impact on children



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HOW DO WE MAKE THIS A REALITY?

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LET'S REFLECT

Think about a setting where you feel valued.


What impact does it have on you?

33

Poll



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Everyone deserves to have their voice heard...
— Teacher, Mississippi

These meetings leave me energized and I'm like 'let's do it!'
— Teacher, Alabama

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TO ESTABLISH AN EQUITABLE CLIMATE AND CULTURE...


- Demonstrate respect to create a balance of power
- Forge connections that break down silos



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RISKS OF SILOS

- Groups remain isolated
- Power dynamics are reinforced
- Communication breaks down
- Unhealthy relationships form



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Healthy climates are equitable and energizing!



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LET'S REFLECT

What's one action you can take to build bridges and forge strong collaboration?

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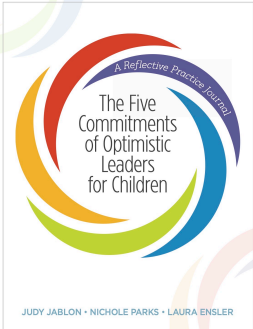
YOUR COMMITMENT

What will you do today to harness your power?

We encourage you to embrace your role as an Optimistic Leader for children.



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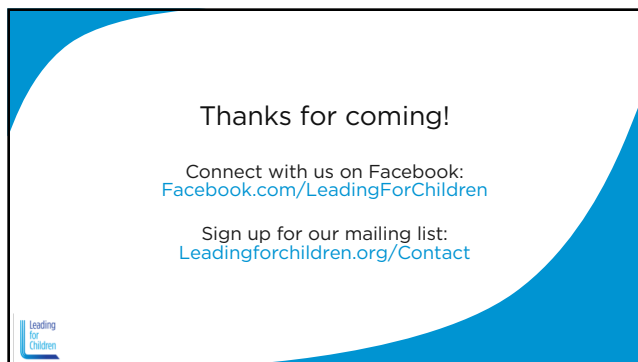


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