



Program for the Well-Being of Teachers

"TOOLBOX FOR TEACHER CARE"

Resources for the mutual care of the teaching community



AUTHORS

MICHELLE MOREIRA SOARES THOMAS ANDRÉ PROLA LETICIA FRAGA COLMAN JOSEP ALEMANY ITURRIAGA

PUBLICATION

Iberoamerican University Foundation (FUNIBER) www.funiber.org

COLLABORATION

Universidad Europea del Atlántico (European University of the Atlantic, UNEATLANTICO)
Universidad Internacional do Cuanza (International University of Cuanza, UNIC)
Universidad Internacional Iberoamericana (International Iberoamerican University, UNINI)
Fundación Universitaria Internacional de Colombia (International University Foundation of Colombia, UNINCOL)

Universidad Internacional Iberoamericana (International Iberoamerican University, UNIB) Universidad de La Romana (University of La Romana, UNIROMANA)

October 2025



















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PRESENTATION

Within the framework of the collaboration agreement between the Social Action area of the Iberoamerican University Foundation (FUNIBER) and the project funded by the European Union, DigitalTA (Project nº101055620), comprised by FUNIBER, the Universidad Europea del Atlántico (UNEATLANTICO), Artesis Plantijn University of Applied Sciences (AP); University of Limerick; Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci (Palacký University Olomouc); Uniwersytet Jana Kochanowskiego w Kielcach (Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce) and Swiętokrzyskie Centrum Doskonalenia Nauczycieli (Świętokrzyskie Teacher Training Center, SCDN), the Teacher Training Center of Segovia, we have developed the "Toolbox for Teacher Care" publication with the aim of socially transferring the results of our research to offer resources that promote teachers' well-being.

We have worked on designing strategies and lines of action that can serve as tools for the collective care of teachers. In this way, our social responsibility toward education is expressed through our commitment to develop projects aimed at the comprehensive training (theoretical, practical, and emotional) of professionals.

For over three years (2022 to 2025), the DigitalTA project developed resources for teacher training, particularly for those in the early stages of their careers. The main objective has been to improve the practical training of primary and secondary school teachers, both in initial and ongoing education, in European Union countries, thereby helping to reduce burnout syndrome and professional attrition. According to studies (Federičová, 2020), the attrition rate in Europe ranges around 28%, which calls for everyone's attention to the situation.

The project partners belong to European institutions dedicated to the initial and ongoing teacher training in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Poland, and Spain. Together, we have succeeded in developing a training platform that extends beyond the project's operational period, consolidating itself as a permanent space to support teachers' professional development.



"No one educates anyone else, no one educates themselves, humanity educates itself in communion."

Paulo Freire

The training offer seeks to strengthen teachers' skills and abilities as well as their overall well-being. We are convinced that fostering strong mental and physical health is not only essential for the development of our professional competencies, but also represents the greatest value of this initiative: providing concrete tools to build healthier, more sustainable, and humane educational environments.

In addition to the institutional commitment we assume through research, development, and the promotion of university education, we understand that this challenge must be sustainable and collectively upheld as a shared responsibility for social well-being. Thus, although there are a number of approaches to teacher care from an individual, subjective perspective, we, from the social perspective, believe that we must look to the collective for a person's full development and their responsible participation in society.

In this sense, we advocate for an ethics of care that recognizes educational practice as one grounded on human relationships, which are essential for the efficiency and effectiveness of pedagogical processes. Beyond professional, academic and research training, ongoing education is nourished by, and takes place through, community care. Various scientific studies have pointed to community as a factor in decreasing teacher attrition.

In this way, coexistence during the educational process becomes a fundamental space for strengthening bonds that reinforce human development and the social meaning of the teaching role. We hope that this Toolbox will be useful in facilitating the emotional understanding and intellectual enrichment for the members of your educational communities, and that its application will take place under a collective leadership capable of promoting and fostering the improvement of society as a whole.

As Paulo Freire noted, "No one educates anyone else, no one educates themselves; humanity educates itself in communion" (Freire, 1997), reminding us that education is a collective and profoundly human process.

INTRODUCTION

This publication presents foundations for managing school coexistence through teaching experiences and strategies developed from a variety of cases.

The focus of this publication is on tools for collectively regulated interventions, emphasizing human connections as an essential component of organizational life. When properly harnessed, shared experiences have the potential to enhance professional performance in schools and foster more effective strategies for understanding, as well as for personal and social growth.

The first step in this process is to recognize the importance of addressing teacher care within the school environment from a systemic perspective, one that is not limited to the instrumental acquisition of competencies to meet a logic of standardization.

Understanding teacher training from an approach oriented toward the common good facilitates reflection on strengthening professional ties and designing strategies for collaborative work with the educational community.

The collective perspective makes us socially responsible and helps manage the stress and burnout that often affects teachers, especially those in the early stages of their careers (novice teachers). It also fosters growth as a group, strengthening self-esteem and the feeling of belonging to a group. Moreover, this perspective encourages a relationship of care that should constitute the moral core of education.

These strategies focus on interaction, conversation, and reflection, activities that are essential for a relationship-based ethic. To this end, we aim towards building a community of care.

To develop this shared space, it is essential to design environments that facilitate physical encounters, which represents a second crucial step for establishing dialogue and opening the door to mutual care. These spaces are not only physical, but also temporal, procedural, and dynamic.

Once these two challenges have been overcome - the ethical horizon of collective care and the creation of meeting spaces - it is possible to develop strategies and establish lines of action aimed at sustaining dialogues and encouraging reflection, thus promoting mutual care among teachers.

In this publication, we present guidelines for this third step, with the objective of inspiring the implementation and continuity of the entire cycle as an ongoing practice within educational communities.

TEACHER CARE AND WELL-BEING: DIMENSIONS

The process of caring for teachers' well-being includes the following dimensions:

- 1. lived experience;
- 2. constant dialogue among peers;
- 3. reflective practice;
- 4. collective construction of knowledge;
- 5. skills development;
- 6. valuing accumulated experience;
- 7. strengthening relationships;
- 8. shared and transformative action;
- 9. life trajectories.



LIVED EXPERIENCE:

Lived experience is the direct and personal experience of teachers and students in learning situations. For teachers, this involves not only transmitting knowledge, but also sharing real experiences and connecting with students through engaging practices.

Experiences enrich teaching because they allow teachers to better understand the needs of their students and adapt their methodology to specific contexts, fostering a more effective and meaningful learning environment.

CONSTANT DIALOGUE AMONG PEERS:

Ongoing peer-to-peer dialogue is essential for teachers' professional development. Through open communication and the exchange of ideas, teachers can share experiences, solve problems, and gain new perspectives on their educational practices.

This dialogue fosters a collaborative environment and mutual support, recognizing that learning is an ongoing process that is enriched through interaction with other educators.

Educational institutions should create spaces to make this dialogue a regular practice.





REFLECTIVE PRACTICE:

Reflective practice is a key component of teachers' professional growth.lt involves self-evaluation and critical analysis of one's own pedagogical practices. By reflecting on their actions and student responses, teachers can identify areas for improvement and develop more effective strategies for teaching. This continuous self-reflection enables educators to adapt to changes and constantly improve their teaching practice.

This is an essential exercise in our approach to care, both individual and collectively, which must be ongoing and nurtured by the educational community.

COLLECTIVE CONSTRUCTION OF KNOWLEDGE:

In education, the collective construction of knowledge is centered on the idea that learning is enriched when it takes place collaboratively. Teachers work together in communities of practice, sharing knowledge, and experiences to develop innovative pedagogical approaches.

This process involves not only acquiring information, but also creating a common understanding and collective solutions to educational challenges, thus promoting a culture of collaborative learning.





SKILLS DEVELOPMENT:

Teacher training should focus on the development of both pedagogical and interpersonal skills. Pedagogical skills enable teachers to effectively apply various teaching methodologies, adapting them to the needs of students.

In parallel, interpersonal skills, such as communication and classroom management, are essential in creating a positive learning environment. Training programs should provide opportunities for teachers to develop and refine these skills in a comprehensive manner.

Teacher care specifically develops Socio-Emotional Skills (SES), which enhance pedagogical work. These are:

- Empathy
- Communication
- · Conflict Resolution
- · Assertive behavior
- Collective leadership
- Teamwork



VALUING ACCUMULATED EXPERIENCE:

A teacher's cumulative experience is a valuable resource that should be recognized and valued within the educational process. The exchange of experiences among teachers with varying degrees of experience enables intergenerational learning, where novice educators benefit from the knowledge and strategies of more experienced ones. In addition, valuing experience contributes to a richer and more nuanced teaching, based on a wealth of applied and proven knowledge.

On the other hand, the perspective of novice teachers helps to refresh the outlook, acknowledging demands that also change with times. In this dialogue, different teaching experiences come together and make transformation possible.





STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS:

Strengthening the relationships between teachers, students, and the educational community creates a collaborative and supportive learning environment. Positive relationships among educational stakeholders facilitate communication and teamwork, fostering a sense of belonging and commitment to common goals.

Hargreaves (2001) refers to this variable as "occupational intimacy", which encompasses acceptance, affiliation, shared interests, mutual help, and support.

Certain strategies can foster the development of these relationships, which in turn will contribute to a more cohesive and effective educational environment. However, as we have noted, creating spaces where these bonds can be established must be one of the key actions in teacher training.

These spaces are privileged opportunities for pedagogical reflection within the teaching community, and should also be understood as collective care:

- · Group dynamics among teachers
- Professional Networks
- Teacher interaction platforms
- Peer mentoring
- Discussion forums
- Transdisciplinary didactic projects

SHARED AND TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION:

Shared and transformative action in education implies joining efforts to implement significant changes that improve the quality of teaching and learning. By working together on collective projects and decision-making, teachers are able to influence their educational environments in a positive manner. This collaboration allows initiatives to have a greater and longer-lasting impact, fostering a culture of continuous improvement where all participants are active agents of transformation in the educational environment.

Positive relationships based on collaborative professionalism engage educators in socially meaningful work.





LIFE TRAJECTORIES:

Teachers' life trajectories play a crucial role in the educational process, as each educator brings a unique perspective based on their personal and professional experiences. These trajectories influence how teachers approach teaching, how they interact with students, and how they deal with challenges that arise in the classroom. Recognizing and valuing these individual trajectories enriches the learning environment, as it enables teachers to use their previous experiences as valuable pedagogical resources.

Moreover, by sharing their backgrounds with colleagues and students, teachers can foster a deeper respect for diversity and a broader understanding of multiculturalism in education. Teacher training programs should include spaces for educators to reflect on their life trajectory and explore how these experiences can inform and enrich their educational practice.

TEACHER CARE AND WELL-BEING: GUIDELINES

Teacher well-being is a set of practices that must be sustained over time. As a habit, it fosters a sense of accomplishment and promotes collaborative professionalism.

But, leadership is perceived less as an individual habit and more as a "generative" community practice; with shared missions and purposes, and an organizational ethic oriented toward the common good.

For this practice, it is necessary to create an educational community that knows how to take care its teachers through actions involving social responsibility.

Some guidelines for fostering an ongoing practice of teacher care include:

- Placing people as a priority, both individually and collectively.
- Creating a shared sense and vision of the future that resonates with the school environment, encompassing such aspects as care, teaching, educational work, school objectives and its social contribution, among others.
- Fostering trusting relationships based on dialogue, active listening, and assertive communication.
- Promoting professional development by recognizing and enhancing the strengths and abilities of each team member.
- Encouraging participatory and democratic practices within educational communities.
- Developing an attitude of openness toward collaboration and encouraging the sharing of ideas and thoughts.
- Formulating provocative questions, since knowledge arises in response to meaningful questions.
- Promoting the connection between the body and emotions, working physical and emotional well-being together.
- Developing skills to face the diverse problems of every day school life.
- Creating spaces for emotional relief and management.
- Recognizing teachers as integral individuals, capable of reflecting on their practices with transformative and creative potential.
- Stimulating the capacity for collective analysis of the actual work.
- Facilitating consensus building.
- Encouraging daily practices of mutual care.
- Developing a common language on an ethic of care within the community.
- Highlighting the importance of distributed leadership and co-responsibility.
- Being mindful of the use of time and the number of people involved in conversations, in order to foster authentic and fluid dialogue.
- Reflecting on the meaning of work: What gives meaning to what I do?
- Establishing support networks: What elements make us feel supported in our community? How do I help support others?
- Facilitating a space for attentive listening between colleagues, thereby strengthening trust, empathy, and active listening.

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES FOR COORDINATING THE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION:

Organize Your School to Care for Your Teachers!

Implement practical actions from school management to support teacher care... The following are some concrete examples that follow the guidelines for teacher care and well-being.

These actions can build week after week... until they become routine!

	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	•••
Week 1	Greet and talk with your teachers every day	Film forum with the school's educational team	How are you feeling this month? Group activity	į
Week 2	Bring teachers together to share experiences	What is your favorite dish? Faculty creation of a recipe book	Conflict in the classroom: Athenaeum for the creation of common guidelines	
Week 3	Organize group dynamics for teachers to get to know one another	Faculty excursion	Organize a film forum with the community	
Week 4	Share your educational vision	Individual meetings with Heads of Studies/Coordinators	Faculty proposals for care	

TEACHER CARE AND WELL-BEING: STRATEGIES

Some strategies can be applied, depending on different contexts and training needs, to support teacher care and their process of integral development. These strategies are always connected to the possibility of meeting, dialogue, and reflexivity that are at the heart of the collective care process.

- · Teacher observation
- Peer-to-peer conversation
- · Conversation with family members
- Coaching
- Collective planning
- Psychopedagogical support
- Brainstorming
- · Group dynamics among teachers

OBSERVATION

Teacher observation is a valuable tool for improving classroom management. Florio-Ruane (1999) identifies observation as a key basic skill to help future teachers cope with the complexity of their new role. Therefore, being a participant observer in the classroom and in the school community as a whole is part of the beginner's task (Florio-Ruane, 2002, p. 204).

Observation is an act of presence, when we stick to the facts, how they unfold, and the possibilities for adjustments and arrangements. It is a space for meeting.

Also, by observing each other, teachers can identify effective practices and areas for improvement in classroom management and student interaction. This practice enables the exchange of constructive feedback, facilitating the adoption of new strategies that can enrich classroom dynamics. Mutual observation not only enriches pedagogical practice, but also fosters a culture of transparency and continuous learning among educators.

PFFR-TO-PFFR CONVFRSATION

Professional conversations are a key dimension of work in schools. That is, the conversations that takes place between teachers and/or between teachers and other professionals working in/with schools.

Peer-to-peer conversation provides a safe space where teachers can share their experiences and challenges in classroom management. These interactions enable the exchange of tips and strategies, helping teachers to address common difficulties effectively. In addition, these conversations foster a sense of community and support among colleagues, which helps reduce feelings of isolation and increase teacher resilience in the face of the demands of educational work.

Trainers for effective professional conversation (Timperley, 2015):

- Resources such as tools and specialists to help identify relevant and practical evidence
- · Relationships based on trust and mutual respect
- A culture focused on questioning and problem-solving with collective responsibility to solve problems and make a difference
- · Structured and purposeful processes
- Development and use of updated knowledge for practice

CONVERSATIONS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS

Interaction with family members is essential for effective classroom management, as it helps build communication and collaborative bridges with students' families. By maintaining an open and constant dialogue with family members, teachers can better understand the individual circumstances and contexts of their students, enabling them to address their needs in a more personalized manner. Collaboration with families strengthens support for student learning and development, creating a more cohesive educational environment.

Conversations with family members, as a habit, also enables sharing emotions between teachers and family members with more confidence, as relationships become bonds. Through dialogue, teaching and learning expectations are agreed upon in a way that is more coherent with the diversity of the educational community.

PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL SUPPORT

Psycho-pedagogical support is essential in helping teachers handle the complexities that arise in classroom management, especially with regard to students' emotional and learning needs.

Through collaboration with psycho-pedagogical professionals, teachers can receive advice on strategies to address behavioral problems, inclusion, and curricular adaptation. This support helps to create a positive and balanced learning environment that fosters the well-being of students and teachers.

Likewise, frequent communication with the school's psycho-pedagogical division is a necessary factor when implementing therapeutic activities in the classroom and the proper management of emotional aspects, thanks to the recommendations and guidance provided by specialists.

COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

Collective planning involves teachers collaborating to create teaching plans and classroom management strategies. This practice allows educators to share their strengths and experiences, facilitating the creation of more effective and innovative solutions. Through joint planning, teachers can ensure pedagogical coherence that benefits students, as well as foster a sense of belonging and collaboration within the educational community.

Collaboration should foster professional conversations among teachers to develop their subject matter expertise, diversify their teaching methods, and facilitate the effective use of teaching resources and concepts (Ford, 2023).

This collaboration helps promote a culture of collaboration, strengthens team spirit, and further supports professional dialogue. Doing so can achieve a variety of benefits:

- Teachers who are supported in their subject matter knowledge, as well as their teaching resources and strategies, experience greater self-efficacy and job satisfaction, which is reflected in better quality teaching.
- When teachers are aware of how a concept has been taught, it is easier for them to make meaningful connections for students and build on students' prior learning.
- Efficient teaching adapts and responds to the needs of the classroom, optimizing support for student learning.
- It encourages teachers to focus on effective differentiation, anticipate misunderstandings, and explore alternative approaches that students can bring to sessions.
- Teachers feel valued, engaged and confident when they have clarity about what is expected of them in the classroom.
- Professional teachers are motivated about improving their skills and effectiveness, and appreciate how this approach is valued and planned as an investment in their professional development.

BRAINSTORMING

Brainstorming is a creative technique that helps generate innovative solutions to classroom management challenges. By bringing teachers together to share ideas freely, a creative and open environment is fostered where diverse possibilities for improving management practices can be explored.

This strategy promotes active participation, critical thinking, and the creation of strategies adapted to the specific needs of a classroom, thus strengthening teachers' ability to face every day challenges effectively.

There are four basic rules for brainstorming that lessen the fear of sharing ideas:

- · Avoiding criticism
- · Accepting unusual ideas
- · The more ideas, the better
- · Accepting combinations and improvements among ideas

In brainstorming, some techniques lead to different dynamics:

Nominal group technique: This technique consists of asking all members to write their ideas anonymously. The group then votes on these ideas in a process known as distillation. The ideas that receive the best evaluations are subsequently subjected to a brainstorming session.

Group brainstorming technique: Each participant writes an idea on a piece of paper and passes it to the next person, who adds their own suggestions. The process continues until everyone receives their own piece of paper back.

Team mapping of ideas: Each member individually brainstorms a clearly defined topic. All the ideas are then combined into a large concept map and the discussion focuses on the connections between the ideas.

COACHING

Teacher coaching is an effective professional development strategy that allows teachers to receive personalized guidance on key aspects of classroom management. Through coaching, teachers can develop specific skills, such as behavior management or the implementation of innovative methodologies. This form of individualized support helps teachers reflect on their practice, set specific goals and acquire new tools to improve classroom dynamics and student learning.

Peer coaching is a confidential process by which two or more professional colleagues work together to reflect on their current practices; expand, refine, and develop new skills; share ideas; teach each other; conduct classroom research; or solve problems in their workplace (Robbins, 1991, p. 1).

The respective literature offers numerous benefits from peer coaching (Bowman, McCormick, 2000; Briggs, Van Nieuwerburgh, 2010; Devine, Houssemand, Meyers, 2013). Typical situations in which peer coaching is implemented are, for example, problems related to curriculum, teaching strategies, teaching, skills or classroom practices.

There are two types of coaching (Friedman, 2008) that can be implemented in the teacher coaching relationship:

- **1. Management coaching** involves listening to newly qualified teachers (NQT) and then offering advice based on one's own experience or knowledge.
- 2. Non-directive coaching involves listening to newly qualified teachers' problems, but rather than offering advice, asking good questions that encourage them to find solutions on their own, thus helping them achieve greater self-understanding.

Three types of coaching relationship (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004):

- 1. Mirror coaching, in which the coach acts as a mirror and takes notes on the NQT practice, and then shares them with the coach in a non-judgmental way.
- **2. Collaborative coaching**, in which colleagues focus on teaching dilemmas, one observes the other and both discuss the issue after the observation.
- **3. Expert coaching**, in which two teachers work in pairs and one experienced teacher offers alternative suggestions based on the analysis of the less experienced teacher's lesson.

GROUP DYNAMICS AMONG TEACHERS

Group dynamics among teachers are valuable tools for strengthening professional relationships and improving communication and collaboration within the educational team. These activities are designed to foster group cohesion, create an atmosphere of trust, and encourage the exchange of ideas and experiences in a safe and constructive environment. Through group dynamics, teachers can improve their teamwork skills, develop new perspectives on classroom management and find creative solutions to common problems.

By participating in activities such as participatory workshops, role-playing or problem-solving exercises, teachers not only strengthen their ties with their colleagues, but also acquire tools that they can transfer to their own classrooms. These dynamics promote a sense of community and mutual support, which is crucial for teachers' emotional and professional well-being. Improving communication and cooperation among teachers also creates a more positive and efficient work environment, directly impacting the quality of teaching and continuous professional development.

CARE STRATEGIES AT SCHOOL



TEACHER CARE AND WELL-BEING: COURSE OF ACTION

As we have seen, there are different strategies for sharing experiences in classroom management and for supporting teacher care within the educational process. Below, we have compiled a line of action from the classroom management process developed in the European **DigitalTA** project to analyze teacher care in educational experiences.

To address the care process from a dialogical and reflective perspective, we propose a line of action that includes five key moments. This structure can be used to ensure that teacher development becomes a shared process and translates into an enriching experience, both emotionally and intellectually.

The line of action is based on reflective action for practical teacher learning, with attention to both support and autonomy in the decisions made. This line of action is divided into five moments:

What happened? - Consultation and deepening - Action taken - Self-assessment - Peer reflection on teacher well-being.

PHASE	CHARACTERIZA- TION	OBJECTIVE	QUESTIONS
Moment 1	Presentation	The experience, case, or challenge is explained	What happens in my classes? What am I feeling? What action has moved me?
Moment 2	Deepening	How did you seek information to understand the experience?	What background do I have at my disposal that helps me understand it, think about it, work on it? • Books, videos, colleagues • Where did you consult the subject, with whom? • Did the answer convince you? Have you tried to put it into practice?
Moment 3	Action taken	Case closure	Have you taken any action? Have you shared the experience with others in the educational community (students, families, colleagues, directors, etc.)? What strategies have you used to address the issue?
Moment 4	Self-evaluation	Self-assessment of teaching activities	What have I learned from the case? Have I ever experienced anything similar? How do I feel about the experience narrated? What will I do if something similar happens in the future?
Moment 5	Dialogue	Peer reflection	Debate among teaching professionals, shared reflection, reflexivity

CASE STUDY COMMENTS: TRANSFORMATIONS

Experiences from practice: excerpts from teaching experiences

This section presents a selection of testimonies and reflections that emerged during the case studies carried out during the project. These excerpts offer a direct window into the experiences of future and current teachers facing the challenges and transformations inherent in their training and professional practice.

From the initial uncertainty of assuming the teaching role, to the importance of tutorial support and coaching, to the richness of peer collaboration and teamwork, these stories show how professional development is built through interaction, reflection, and continuous dialogue. They also reflect the relevance of safe and inclusive spaces for the exchange of ideas, collaborative planning, and pedagogical innovation.

By sharing these experiences, we hope to inspire an understanding of the training process not only as an individual acquisition of competencies, but as a collective process that strengthens well-being, sense of belonging, and ethical commitment to the educational community.



"As a student teacher in my last school internship experience, the reality of taking on the role of a professional teacher is a bit overwhelming. It's an exciting time for meaningful learning, but also confusing and stressful. I try to understand my role in this school and the teaching and learning requirements of the curriculum, while negotiating my expectations with the reality of the practices. I have university mentors to support and guide me during the internship, but I am very aware of the vast experience that teachers and colleagues who collaborate at my school have."



"I know I can learn a lot from them, but I need to understand how to observe a class effectively and engage in professional conversations to enrich my teaching experience. I am also aware that observing my colleagues and engaging in professional conversations with them will be an excellent form of professional development. I have reflected on some areas that I can benefit from observing, such as class structure, classroom management strategies, teaching strategies, use of questioning and feedback, assessment, and student interaction/participation."

"During the first few weeks of internships, I noticed that I lack structure at the beginning of classes and students seem unsure of what they are learning. I am aware that my communication of learning intentions is not clear and this causes confusion among students as a result. Collaborating with my colleagues has been essential. I spoke with experienced colleagues who had dealt with similar difficulties. We analyzed how to modify teaching materials, created engaging activities for students and implemented effective pedagogical strategies. These conversations have been enriching and provided me with invaluable insights."

"The host family has been an invaluable additional source of information. I am in constant communication with them to better understand the specific needs of the children as well as their cultural preferences. This direct collaboration has been crucial in ensuring a more successful integration and customizing my approach."

"It has helped me get rid of my prejudices to open myself to the possibility of using educational platforms in the best way. I forced myself to break paradigms and I feel good about it, because I realized that much of what is said is exaggerated and that everyone needs to experience the use of technology in the classroom to appreciate the advances and setbacks."

The importance of creating a safe and inclusive space for dialogue

"Collaborating with some colleagues who shared my passion for social justice education provided invaluable support and encouragement. Together, we overcame uncertainties and celebrated the small victories along the way."

Peer-to-peer discussion to gather information for collaborative planning

"The school principal encouraged our autonomy and did not interfere in the collaborative planning process. I believe that teachers need their leader to trust them and support them in making their own decisions. Thus, they were able to plan options for curriculum design. I believe that autonomy is fundamental to collaboration."

"I felt I had more energy to work as a team where we were meeting. I felt a greater connection with my colleagues as we expanded collaboration outside of our meetings."

"I coordinated with the teaching team of my group to analyze the individual and general situations of the group throughout the teaching and learning process, in order to take appropriate measures to improve student's or the group's overall progress. I convened the entire teaching team as many times as I deemed necessary and informed the head of studies of these meetings beforehand."

Coaching

"I consider the time I spent with my colleague, my coach, talking about my needs and goals, a great opportunity for my professional development. I gained a lot of knowledge from an experienced teacher, but I also had the opportunity to understand myself and build my own teaching philosophy."

"From the moment I started collaborating with my coach, I felt I had the opportunity to sort out my thoughts and ambitions to choose a logical path to develop as a teacher, worker, and person. I started to believe in myself and my capabilities. My coach offered many suggestions, but I made my own decisions about what, if anything, to change, when and how. I felt responsible for my professional development and did not relinquish control to any colleague. We were both very committed during the process. We communicated freely and respectfully. Our relationship was trusting and open, and we both saw mutual benefits. I believe that open and friendly communication was key to maintaining a harmonious and fruitful relationship."

Brainstorming

"I was convinced that group brainstorming, where all the experience and creativity of everyone in the group is applied to a problem, would be perfect for the task at hand because, if one member got stuck on the idea, another teammate could take it to the next."



OPEN THE BOX AS A GESTURE OF CARE: BUILDING TEACHER WELL-BEING FROM THE COMMUNITY

With this document, we open a wide door towards a path that must continue and grow with each one of you, teachers and agents of change. We trust that this *Teacher Care Toolkit* has been a valuable resource and an encouragement to strengthen the integral well-being of each educator and their educational communities. The labor of teaching, with its complexities, challenges, and satisfactions, is a collective task that demands not only professional skills, but also a deep commitment to mutual care and building solid bonds between people.

This closing is, in fact, the beginning of an invitation: to open this box again and again, to explore its contents, and to fill it with new experiences, practices, and reflections that allow us to nourish a common heritage in continuous renewal. As Nel Noddings, a leading voice in the ethics of care, reminds us, "care is an active practice that requires presence, response, and responsibility towards others" (Noddings, 2013). In teaching practice, critical reflection and self-care are two sides of the same process that sustains and transforms our educational communities.

Following this line, bell hooks reminds us that "reflective practice is an act of love, a form of self-care that revitalizes the educator and strengthens their commitment" (hooks, 1994). Caring for oneself and others is not an isolated act, but a living cycle that feeds teaching and learning.

For this reason, we invite you to see this publication not as an ending, but a beacon that remains lit to illuminate new paths. Opening the box is a gesture of care and ongoing commitment, a call to keep the conversation alive, to renew bonds and to build, together, spaces of collective well-being that sustain the work of teachers and human development.

The future of education is built with teachers who support each other, listen to each other, and grow in community. May this conclusion be the threshold to new questions, new learning, and new commitments that keep the cycle of care alive, for only in this way will it be possible to build a truly humane, caring, and resilient school.

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