



March 2022

"Each day in our world, beauty is born anew. It rises transformed through the storms of history."
- Pope Francis

St. Cat's Counseling

Letter to Families

We are one weekend away from beauty being born anew. (to steal from Papa Frank). These big changes always lend themselves to some fruitful SEL classes. This week, we have been engaging in discussions about next Monday, when the mask mandate will be lifted and masks will become optional. We tried to externalize and depersonalize our fears, while simultaneously share in hope. Our students' honest opinions and introspection have ranged from worries to excitements. Reflecting has offered us a great opportunity for embracing differences in opinion and our human ability to be with one another in our discomfort or unsureness through kindness. Without that kindness, we would remain stagnant.

Houston Kraft, a founding member of Character Strong likes to say, "We must practice the messy, uncomfortable practice of kindness." If done with intentionality, kindness stops being random. This makes it not easy, but deeply important and much more impactful than simple tolerance. Monday is an excellent time for our kids to show up and practice that kindness, where they can show up and treat people with encouragement to show their full selves. We really can't fail here, unless we decide to not show up together and intentionally.

This time of the year gives me great excitement and life: spiritual rejuvenation through lent, an extra hour of daylight coming in a couple of days, flowers popping out of the ground, and of course, (for all of us Zag teachers), watching Gonzaga during March Madness. We can only increase this joy by sticking together as we move forward with intentional kindness on Monday. I can't wait to see smiles on Monday, but I especially can't wait to see how we continue to show up and practice kindness with one another.

Wishing you all a happy spring and a blessed Lenten season full of mental peace. As always, Go Zags!

Kevin Ward, School Counselor kward@stcatherineschool.net

Updates From My Office

- **St. C's Parent-Counselor Learning Sessions**

Coming back this Thursday, April 7th! Join me on Zoom to discuss "What Do You *Really* Need?" Here are the details:

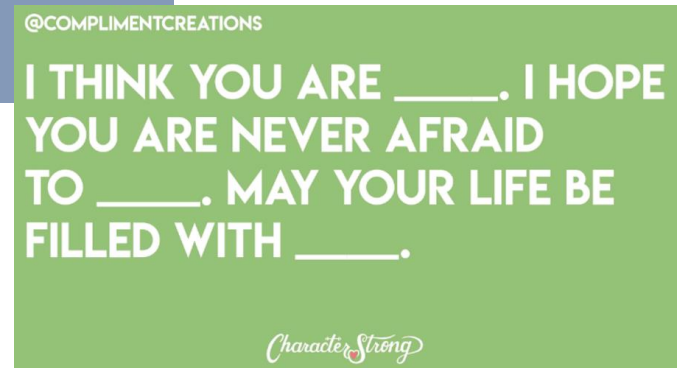
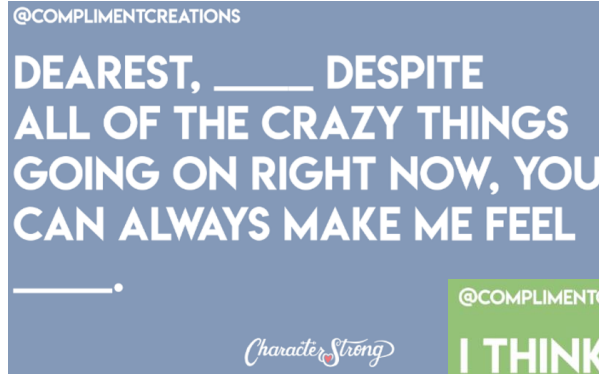
- We will be discussing the 5 basic needs all humans share, and how to help our children recognize and then ask for what they need. Here are the details:

Resources of the Month

- Each day in class as we work on mindfulness, I try to remind the kids that mindfulness is more accessible than they think, and truly quite enjoyable! Click on the purple Hallow logo to watch a fun ad about what the app can offer you and your children this Lent. They have bedtime stories to help with sleep, too!
- Fun resource for all the dad's out there! This site creates videos with interesting perspectives and takes on parenting. Check 'em out and see what you think! [Dad Saves America.com](http://DadSavesAmerica.com)
- As I mentioned in my first parent-learning session, proper validation is HARD! Luckily, sometimes pop culture can provide us with quality lessons that make concepts like validation easier to grasp. I stumbled upon this lesson from Everybody Loves Raymond the other day, and thought it was fun and worth the share. [Everybody Loves Raymond Uses Active Listening](#)
- From Blissful Kids: [How to teach loving-kindness meditation to children for increased wellbeing and resilience](#)
- Big Life Journal Monthly Resources:
 - [Big Life Journal - The New Sibling Kit](#)
 - [Creating Positive Morning Routines](#)
- What is going on in Ukraine is heavy, confusing, and scary for many kiddos, (and adults). We need to care for our spirituality sides through prayer, but also our mental and emotional sides. [Helping Kids Navigate Scary News Stories ... PBS KIDS for Parents](#)
- As we slowly approach summer, (crazy to think), here is an article to help consider what camps might benefit your energetic and creative child: [Why Summer Camps Work For ADHD Kids: Activities & Friendships \(additudemag.com\)](#)
- "Today has been unacceptable, but the season has been very acceptable." Whether or not you like Duke basketball, I think Coach K taking accountability can serve as a nice model for our kids. It is incredibly difficult to admit wrong-doing, but we feel a wave of confidence to make things right once it is done. [Coach K's Speech](#)
- Some fun ways to increase your child's emotional IQ! [Teach Your Children to Identify, Label, and Express Their Emotions \(anxietyreliefproject.com\)](#)



In preparation for masks becoming optional, we worked on compliment creations from Character Strong. Remember, Kindness is a skill we must practice! There is often a gap between what we believe and what we do. Embrace the goofy, awkward fun of a compliment creation with your family!



- **Mental Health Professionals Resources:** If you are struggling to find mental health resources in the city, you are NOT alone! Mental health resources are more in demand these days, but you can still put your name on waiting lists, and check in periodically for new resources. Here is my updated list (updated 3/2/22):
 - [St. C's Mental Health Referrals](#)
 - Low cost from NAMI Seattle: [Low Cost and Sliding Scale Psych Providers](#)
 - Emergency lines from NAMI: [NAMI Helplines](#)

[School Counselor Home Page](#) – My page on the school site is the place I house all these resources and more. Updated regularly!

As always, remember that it shows strength and courage to ask for help or advocate for the mental health of someone else. You can save these numbers to be prepared:

Crisis supports are available if your student is concerned for themselves or others. [Teen Link](#) can be reached daily from 6-10 PM at 1-866-833-6546; the following resources can be reached 24/7 365 days a year: [Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#): 800-273-8255 / Worried about someone on social media? [Support on Social Media - Lifeline](#); the [24-hr Crisis Line](#): 1-866-427-4747; and the [Crisis Text Line](#) can be reached via SMS 24/7— simply text “HEAL” to 741-741.

If you have any questions, concerns, or you think someone needs help, please reach out to me and we can discuss how and when to reach out.