

Maine Resilience Building Network

Professional Development * Events * Resources * News

MRBN Newsletter Resources & Good Works July 2021

A Note From Kini

Over the past year, the MRBN team has had the good fortune of connecting with Gordon Flett, a researcher and writer from Canada. His mattering work speaks to the value of authentic connections and positive outcomes that result from valuing another human being. You may know his name and know about his research through MRBN's Cultivating Youth Mattering initiative. The link between mattering, social connectedness, and wellbeing plays a large role in the life of our youth thriving. Dr. Flett will join us this fall for a virtual event to discuss the mattering research.

This summer I have been able to spend time outside visiting some of my favorite communities and places in nature. Connecting with someone on a path, a dock or in a community, reminds me there is an abundance of kindness out there as well as numerous community assets. How can we come together to rebuild more resilient and equitable communities so they become an extension of our front porches and yards? We all are part of the solution.

Invite your colleagues and community leaders to join you at the Mattering Event with Dr. Flett on October 6th to learn more about the research on the links between social connectedness, individual wellbeing and flourishing communities.

MATTERING IN THE COMMUNITY: A PATHWAY TO YOUTH RESILIENCE AND ADAPTABILITY

Join us for this professional development opportunity with Mattering researcher Gordon Flett!

Dr. Gordon Flett will delve into what it means to matter to others, and the benefits that result from personal and community efforts to grow a sense of mattering among children and adolescents.

A panel of experts will discuss efforts to increase Youth Mattering in Maine.

This professional development opportunity is suitable for people from all sectors, including public health, behavioral health, education, government, and business.

Gordon Flett is a Professor in the Department of Psychology at York University in Toronto where he has served as the Director of the LaMarsh Centre for Child and Youth Research. Dr. Flett is known for his influential research on personality in health and mental health. Recently, Dr. Flett has worked on the promotion of resilience in collaboration with school boards in Ontario with an emphasis on the psychology of Mattering as a positive force in the lives of children and adolescents. He is the author or co-author of over 250 journal articles and 10 books including *The Psychology of Mattering: Understanding the Human Need to be Significant*.

Mattering in the Community: A Pathway to Youth Resilience and Adaptability

Kini

Kini-Ana Tinkham is the Executive Director of the Maine Resilience Building Network. She would love to hear from you!

kini@maineresilience.org



**October 6
1-2:30pm**

**MRBN member: \$15
Non-member: \$25**

[Click here to register for Mattering in the Community: A Pathway to Youth Resilience and Adaptability](#)

JULY FOCUS: SELF-CARE AND RESILIENCE

Instead of holding a network meeting in July, we encourage you to take time for self-care and resilience building. We invited Lee Sowles, founder of Kind Mind, to share some suggestions.

By Lee Sowles, Kind Mind

In our professional world, we focus on our clients needing resilience. The truth is, many of us suffer from anxiousness, depression, and low self-esteem (to name a few), but we don't pay attention to our own needs.

Kind Mind offers a community-based approach to support all ages. The intention is to produce sustainable change in how we ALL feel, more resilient and content within ourselves. This makes teaching resilience to those we serve more authentic.

Here are a few simple practices for you:

Be With Quiet

We have opportunities for quiet connection, but condition ourselves to be productive and distracted. This limits our ability to connect with ourselves, one another, and the world around us. Connection builds resilience.

Practice:

Notice opportunities for quiet. Here are some examples where we often fill the space:

- Waiting for someone at a restaurant, or for an appointment (phone scrolling, being "productive")
- Driving with your kids or partner (forcing conversation when the other wants to be quiet)

What is your urge in that moment? Are you distracting out of habit, discomfort?

Try to resist the urge to fill the space. See what happens when you simply sit quietly.

How this builds resilience:

- Soothes and rests your nervous system (mindfulness)
- Builds self awareness and emotional awareness
- Models for children that it is healthy and okay to be still and quiet

Lean Into Awe

Think about a time when you heard a song that gave you goosebumps. Or when you stood next to something larger than life and your stomach felt light. Or when you saw something so beautiful your jaw dropped.

This is the emotion of awe and when we really feel it, our bodies grow healthier and more resilient.

Practice:

Notice the emotion of awe. Really feel it in your body, when you notice. Seek opportunities to feel awe (a breathtaking view, a song, a human connection that melts your heart).

With Children:

- Notice when your children feel awe and don't interrupt.
- Join your child and experience it together (quiet connection!).

Kind Mind is a social emotional learning program that builds resilience for school age children and families. To learn more, visit www.kindmindededucation.com.



MEET THE NEWEST MEMBER OF THE MRBN TEAM!

Hello! I'm Sultana Khan and I'm the new part-time Special Projects Director at MRBN. If my name sounds familiar, you might recognize me from MRBN's Racial Equity series, which I created and facilitated last fall. Or you might know me from my time as a columnist at the Portland Phoenix, where I wrote about allyship and social justice. I'll be bringing more of that same lens to my new role at MRBN, along with more than a decade of youth development experience. I'm so excited to be able to contribute to MRBN's mission by expanding upon a framework that focuses on creating more equitable systems for all of us, especially children and young people in Maine who might need a little extra scaffolding.

Previously I served as a Program Officer at the Maine Youth Action Network (MYAN), where I spent several years traveling all over Maine, supporting young people and their adult allies as they worked to build healthier communities. From Fort Kent to Dover-Foxcroft to Indian Island to Machias to Sanford, you might have seen my little manual transmission black Honda Fit chugging along from school to school as I met with Gay- Straight-Trans Alliances, Civil Rights clubs, and other impactful youth groups, in addition to creating and facilitating trainings for community members. I was blessed to see so many of Maine's unique communities in a way so few people get the chance to witness--I also ate a lot blueberry pie along the way, for science of course, and while I can't name a favorite spot for fear of retribution, I can say that wild Maine blueberries are officially my favorite summertime snack.

Before my time at MYAN, I lived all over the country and worked as a national security correspondent (for one of the world's most notorious websites), a bartender, a teacher, a camp counselor, a landscaper, an event planner at the Kennedy Center in Washington D.C., a public affairs lackey, and a property manager, among other jobs. My strong sense of justice and my drive to understand how things function led me to equity and adult education many years ago and I continue to do that work separately from MRBN through my consulting business.

You can most often find me reading a book, hiking, playing in my garden, or splashing around in cold bodies of water with my two beloved rescue dogs. I'm working on a book of essays about mental health, due sometime within the next decade. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me if you want to connect, ask for resources, or share a great local swimming spot. I can't wait to meet you!



The Bangor Daily News published an opinion article by MRBN Executive Director Kini-Ana Tinkham and Board President Leslie Forstadt. The article urged state and county leaders to consider the role of primary prevention in Maine's pandemic recovery plan.

"Repair is necessary. But when it comes to the pandemic's toll on Mainers' mental health, it is crucial to include prevention in the recovery plan. Without it, we perpetuate the cycle of repair —

endlessly dealing with mental and physical health issues after they occur. We need systems and policies that prioritize primary prevention," they wrote.

[Click here to read the OpEd](#)

Kini also spoke with reporter Stephanie Wittenbach from ABC7/Fox22 for a story about Mattering and youth mental health. Thanks to Shannon Fowles for sharing her perspective as well! [Watch the story here](#)



SUMMER IS A GREAT TIME TO WORK WITH US TO DESIGN A TRAINING FOR YOUR GROUP OR BUSINESS!

The Maine Resilience Building Network offers a range of professional development and training opportunities intended to build skills and knowledge about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), protective factors and resilience, trauma-informed care practices, individual and organizational wellness, and other topics that improve the wellbeing of all community members. All trainings are evidence-based, trauma-informed, and tailored for the audience.

MRBN provides trauma-informed system technical assistance to organizations and communities, including awareness training, policy and practice review, and practice implementation. MRBN takes a strength-based approach which is grounded in cultural humility and a strong recognition that positive experiences and environments are essential to the health and well-being of systems.

Sometimes, the best person to help a group understand ACEs and resilience is someone who is already connected to the community. MRBN'S Community Resilience Facilitator (CRF) program was created in response to requests for local training and technical assistance from schools, healthcare practices, community collaboratives, and others across the state.

CRF presentations cover three main topics: the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study, brain development and how brains are impacted by toxic stress, and resilience building and protective factors that help buffer the impact of ACEs. All presentations include statewide data on ACEs in Maine. Participants leave the session with a fuller awareness of the risks of early adversity and the benefits of relationship-based resilience.

For more information about MRBN trainings, including fees and scheduling, please contact training@maineresilience.org



Healthy Communities of the Capital Area (HCCA) is a coalition of local people who work to improve the health and quality of life in Kennebec County. The public health nonprofit's primary areas of focus are healthy eating; being active; preventing alcohol, marijuana and other drug misuse; and reducing tobacco use and exposure.

HCCA supports several projects aimed at reducing the impact of tobacco use and exposure on populations with health disparities, including members of behavioral health populations, pregnant

and parenting women; and the LGBTQ+ youth.

Joanne Joy is the senior program manager of Substance Use Prevention, Tobacco Use and Control, and Youth Engagement. She points with particular pride to HCCA's LGBTQ+ work, including a partnership between HCCA and OUT Maine.

"We know LGBTQ+ kids have more stressors than their non-LGBTQ+ peers. They are more likely to use tobacco and substances like alcohol and marijuana," Joy said.

The [LGBTQ+ SupportMe Network](#) offers resources for parents and other adults to support youth in creating safe spaces and preventing substance use.

Joy says being part of MRBN has helped shape HCCA's thinking. "Helping kids thrive is our focus. And Mattering is a big part of that."

To learn more about Healthy Communities of the Capital Area, [visit their website](#).

*If your organization has a MRBN membership, we'd love to shine a spotlight on your good work!
Contact [Maureen O'Brien](#).*

Support our work and strengthen your connection to MRBN
(and gain access to member events and discounts!).



[Join MRBN](#)

The Maine Resilience Building Network's mission is to promote resilience in all people by increasing the understanding of the impacts of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and the importance of building resilience through protective factors such as positive relationships.

amazonsmile

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