



 **e:MIND**

INSTRUCTOR GUIDE

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# instructor guide

# Introduction

## Introduction

Welcome to the re:MIND Instructor Guide. The instructor guide is designed to be a comprehensive tool for facilitating the course. Thoroughly reviewing this document, as well as all related course materials and resources, will prepare you to teach the course.

The format for each page of the main instructional content is listed and described below. This information is provided so you can utilize these elements appropriately and effectively as you prepare to teach. Due to the nature of this course and the potential for students to share private and/or sensitive personal information, prior to the chapter specific information, you will find some general tips guidelines related to managing discussions with students.

## Chapter Summary

This section includes a quick summary of the chapter.

## Chapter Key Vernacular

Highlighted vocabulary words from the text are provided to familiarize you with vernacular students are expected to understand.

## Chapter Key Concepts

A summary of each key concept from the chapter is provided to facilitate understanding.

## Additional Features

This is a list of interesting and supporting content that is presented to the student in feature boxes throughout the chapter.

## Conversation Starters

Conversation starters can be used for in-class discussions, as online discussion assignments, or as short reflection assignments. Each conversation starter includes:

- » Questions to ask the students
- » An explanation of why the topic is important
- » Examples of good student responses
- » How engaged vs. disengaged students may respond

## Student Activities

A description of each activity from the chapter is provided. Each description includes:

- » A summary of the activity
- » How the activity should be graded (Auto-Graded or Instructor Graded)
- » The purpose of the activity
- » What goals the activity seeks to achieve
- » The final outcome of the activity

## Notes for Grading

Any grading notes to facilitate grading are included.

## Companion Workbook Activities

The purpose of the re:MIND Companion Workbook is to provide the student with guidance and writing prompts for identifying and working through their personal narratives. Specific activities are provided for each chapter so that the student can work on their narratives as they learn the different concepts and steps of the re:MIND methodology. Although the instructor is provided information for each workbook activity in order to help guide students, ideally the workbook activities are not meant to be graded and should remain private to each student so as not to add additional stress; this also allows students to feel free to be as honest with themselves as possible. To provide accountability, the students will be assigned a reflection at the end of the course where they must summarize their experience with the course.

# Course Description

re:MIND helps prepare students to navigate the college environment with a positive mindset, especially when faced with difficult obstacles on their path to graduation. re:MIND liberates students from disempowered personal narratives increasing their likelihood of practicing resilience and perseverance in the face of academic, social and financial challenges.

With a focus on seven non-cognitive competencies that lead to success, re:MIND uses the power of personal narrative to unlock student potential.

## Discussion Guidelines

### Personal Responses

Throughout this course, students will be learning a lot about themselves as they apply the concepts to their own lives. To ensure that their personal boundaries are honored, the conversation starter topics should be more “academic” in approach; that is, rather than having students share too much personal experience and information, discussion of the material should be more abstract. The individual student activities and Companion Workbook assignments will support students opportunity for more in-depth self-reflection and personal growth through direct application of the content and material. For this reason, students should exercise personal boundaries in the discussion posts by not disclosing too much personal information beyond what the “example” answer demonstrates.

Clearly inform students that the discussion posts are not the time to share too much personal information, examples, or reflections. However, because this course can feel so personally relevant, students may share too much. If what they share is too personal in nature, or has the unintended consequence of making other students uncomfortable, privately thank the student for his or her participation and then remind them of the guidelines. Here is an example of what you might say:

“It sounds like this material is resonating with you, which is important. I appreciate your willingness to participate so openly. Because this course is so meaningful to so many students in so many different ways, in an effort to honor everyone’s boundaries, this course is intentionally structured so that your personal reflections are expressed in personal activities and assignments, while the discussion boards are reserved for a more abstract and academic analysis of the material. You are clearly having some significant insights; I suggest you save these in your journal and refer to them for upcoming assignments.”

If what the student is sharing in the conversation starter discussions concerns you in terms of potential mental health related concerns (depression, anxiety, mood disorder), you may also want to say this:

“From what you are sharing, I am wondering if you might also benefit from additional support. It is not uncommon for students to be grappling with issues like depression and anxiety. If you feel you may be too, one of the wisest steps you can take is to reach out for help. Here is a phone number/website that many students find useful.”

### Transparency

One of the most important facilitation skills for an instructor is transparency; that is, sharing the reason behind questions and activities so that students understand what’s in it for them in their learning process. Transparency supports students in understanding both how to engage in the discussion and connect the dots so they understand what the activity is designed to achieve as they learn the material. In each of the conversation starters, we have included transparency as a key element by including a “Why it Matters” section. As in all discussions, continue to return to transparency. Students can much more easily connect with questions when they understand the “why.”

If students are struggling, continue to share the “why” to help connect them. You can also share the example answers provided in each conversation starter discussion. These examples demonstrate what information a student would include in a complete answer. An engaged student will give answers that are clear and similar to the examples. The student followed the instructions and format, and provided original comments and thoughtful observations that show both an understanding of the material and the ability to follow your instructions.

An unengaged student will provide less than optimal and often short answers. Provided in each conversation starter are guidelines for how to address these students, and it often involves referring them to the example answers.

Students might also raise red flags in their responses that could include statements that are overly harsh, self-berating, or abusive, or they contain profanity. Should this occur, remind them of the guidelines for discussions, but also provide resources if you believe there is concern for their mental health. This might sound like this:

“I see this is bringing up a lot for you. These kinds of questions can be really hard and I appreciate your honesty. As a reminder, when engaged in group discussion, an important guideline is to avoid using profanity. It is clear that currently your self-talk, like many other students’ self-talk, is extremely self-critical. You are not alone, which is why this course is so helpful to so many. When our self-talk is critical to this degree, it is often a wake-up call to reach out for extra support. It takes a lot of courage to share so openly, as you have. I encourage you to consider exploring this resource, if you’re open to it.”

## Discussion Board Etiquette

Instructors may also wish to share rules, guidelines, and other expectations for how students respond in conversation starter discussions and in activity answers. Following are some resources you may want to explore:

- » [Discussion Board Instructions Etiquette, and Netiquette](#)
- » [15 Rules of Netiquette for Online Discussion Boards](#)
- » [Online Discussion Etiquette Guide](#)

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## introduction to the **POWER of STORY**

In this chapter, the student is introduced to the concept of personal narrative and narrative-based coaching. Seven non-cognitive abilities (The Big 7) are identified as being important abilities for their success now and in the future. An overview of the re:MIND methodology is provided to highlight what the students will be learning as they move through the course.

### Key Vernacular

- Non-cognitive Competency:** the attitudes, behaviors, and strategies which facilitate success in school and workplace, such as motivation, perseverance, and self-control
- Personal Narrative:** the story you tell yourself about yourself and who you are
- Live Down:** to live to a lower expectation than you are capable of because it has become part of your personal narrative
- Narrative Coaching:** an approach that actively engages you in a process of examining your beliefs about who you are and what you see as possible
- Hero Book:** a document that invites students to “author” their own story as they challenge obstacles in their lives
- Mindset Problems:** internal problems based on personal attitudes, opinions, feelings, perspectives, and belief systems
- Situational Problems:** external problems based on situational factors outside of oneself, like finances, physical health, and academics
- Problem-Saturated Stories:** when problems achieve and maintain dominance in our lives

## THE BIG SEVEN NON-COGNITIVE COMPETENCIES

The following non-cognitive competencies represent a starting place for updating a more empowered personal narrative in the face of common student challenges. All non-cognitive competencies are important to develop, but the following seven have been identified as especially important as students work to respond to the social, emotional, financial, and academic challenges, opportunities, and struggles they may encounter. Growth mindset will serve as the frame or container through which the cultivation of the other six non-cogs should be practiced.

1. **Confidence:** The feeling or belief that one can rely on someone or something; firm trust.
2. **Resilience:** The capacity to recover quickly from difficulties; toughness.
3. **Self-Advocacy:** The action of representing oneself or one's views or interests.
4. **Emotional Intelligence:** The capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically.
5. **Perseverance:** Persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.
6. **Self-Control:** The ability to control oneself—in particular, one's emotions and desires or the expression of them in one's behavior, especially in difficult situations.
7. **Growth Mindset:** The belief that abilities can be developed through dedication and hard work—brains and talent are just a starting point.

## THE re:MIND METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides an overview of the re:MIND methodology. The goal of re:MIND is to provide a strategy to students that enables them to grow in their self-belief and in their mastery of the Big Seven non-cognitive skills. Each chapter covers a step toward creating a game plan for successfully navigating the various challenges of school and life:

**Identifying Problem-Saturated Stories (Chapter 3):** Students will be introduced to the concept of “problem-saturated stories,” with a focus on mindset problems—things like fear, stress, avoidance, worry, anger, procrastination, and blaming. They will learn how to identify their own problem-saturated stories and understand the underlying issues that could keep them from successful outcomes.

**Managing Feelings and Emotions (Chapter 4):** Students will learn to identify, acknowledge, and accept the feelings and emotions that are a part of problem-saturated stories and learn how feelings and emotions can affect their personal narratives. They will be taught techniques for managing emotions and feelings to help keep them from becoming bigger issues.

**Practicing Cognitive Reframing and Externalizing the Problem (Chapter 5):** Students will be introduced to the concepts of neuroplasticity and cognitive reframing and will learn how to look at problems from different perspectives. From there, they will begin to practice the skill of externalizing problems as a step toward successful problem-solving.

**Identifying Exceptions and Recognizing Wins (Chapter 6):** Through the use of narrative coaching techniques, students will learn how to find exceptions to problem-saturated stories and recognize wins even when they feel immersed in challenges. At this point, the students will also apply the concept of cognitive reframing to their own personal narratives and learn how to mine their strengths.

**Knowing Your “Why” and Practicing Courage in the Face of Fear (Chapter 7):** Students will examine their values and get connected to their personal “why,” the underlying motivation that drives them forward and inspires them to succeed.

**Creating Your Game Plan (Chapter 8):** Students will create a game plan that can be applied to any existing or new problems that threaten to undermine them on their path to success.

# Additional Features:

## A Snapshot into Shifting Mindsets the Narrative Way: Three Student Stories

### Conversation Starter:

The following can be used as discussion board assignments or to help initiate in-class discussions.

#### Question 1

What are two examples of what you might face in the first few weeks of school that could be considered new or overwhelming? Share at least one reason for each example that highlights why the example would be new, overwhelming, or both.

#### Why it Matters

It's important to be able to anticipate new circumstances that students will be encountering and to normalize feelings like overwhelm as they face experiences and expectations that are new to them.

#### Example Answer

"The first example that comes to mind is living with a roommate. The reason this feels both new and overwhelming to me is because I have never shared a room with someone I did not know. It feels overwhelming because I worry that we will not get along and that this will play a big role in my adjustment to college life.

"The second example is having a lot more freedom, which just feels new and I am actually excited about. The reason it feels new and exciting is because at home my parents dictated the rules and my schedule. Having more freedom feels more new than overwhelming because I am excited about being more in charge of my own time and routines."

#### How Students Might Respond

**Engaged Student:** Students who are engaged will provide full answers similar to the example and include original thoughts to represent their answers.

**Disengaged Student:** This first question is straightforward and does not allow much room for disengagement other than not answering the questions fully (not providing two examples with at least one reason why it would be new, overwhelming, or both). If a student does not answer the question fully, simply refer them to the example answer.

#### Question 2

Review The Big Seven non-cognitive competencies. Choose one of the competencies and provide an original example (one not shared in the book) that demonstrates in detail what practicing that competency might look like for a student.

#### Why it Matters

A student's ability to begin to connect to The Big Seven non-cognitive competencies will provide a good foundation for connecting with the material to come.

#### Example Answer

"Self Control: A student sets his alarm clock an hour earlier so that he can prepare for his exam, rather than sleeping in like he normally does. When the alarm goes off, he turns it off instead of hitting the snooze button, gets ready, and walks to the library to study."

#### How Students Might Respond

**Engaged Student:** Students who are engaged will provide full answers similar to the example and include original thoughts and details to represent their answers.

**Disengaged Student:** A disengaged student might pull an example right from the book, or give an example that displays minimal thought or detail, like "Growth mindset: not giving up when an assignment is hard." Should you get these kind of answers, encourage the student to create more of a story for their response; that is, provide more detail, like one would if creating a story about an actual student, rather than simply providing a definition of the competency.

# Student Activities:

These activities provide students the opportunity for more in-depth self-reflection and personal growth.

## MINDSET INVENTORY

Auto-Graded Activity

Students will complete the online Mindset Inventory Assessment at the beginning and conclusion of the course.

### Purpose

The Mindset Inventory uses a set of scale-based questions related to the seven non-cognitive skills to assess the student's strength in each skill area. Students are provided a report that indicates their strength level in each skill and advice on how to move forward in each area.

### Goals

- » Assess strength level in each of the seven non-cognitive skill areas.
- » Provide a baseline to compare against when the assessment is re-taken at the end of the course.
- » Provide an introductory understanding of the skills that are considered to be the most fundamental in future success.

### Outcome

The student will have a basic understanding of what each of the seven non-cognitive skills are and a baseline competency is established for comparison at the end of the course.

### Notes

This is an auto-graded assignment. Full credit is given for completion of this activity.

In this activity students will recall a time when they have “lived down” to a personal narrative. Students will complete a sentence that begins with “I always...” or “I never...” Using examples either inside or outside the academic classroom, it should include the following:

- » An example of when the sentence was *true*
- » An example of when the sentence was *false*

Finally, students should explain how the “I always” or “I never” statement could be disempowering them.

### Purpose

This activity introduces the students to the concept of self-talk, personal narrative, and how their statements about themselves could be influencing them. This acts as a starting point for the work the students will continue to do in more depth as they move through the book.

### Goals

- » Illustrate the concept of personal narrative and “living down” to a narrative.
- » Help the students start to become aware of their self-talk.
- » Introduce the concept of identifying exceptions, which is further discussed in Chapter 6.

### Examples

- I always stumble over my words when I speak in front of strangers.
- I always wait until the last minute to start my homework.
- I always avoid speaking up in class.
- I always get angry when I have to sit at a red light when I am running late.
- I never seem to get any place on time.
- I never remember any of my passwords.
- I never am able to share my feelings.
- I never am able to get up early.

### Outcome

Students will be more aware of the statements they use to talk about themselves and start to think more critically about how those statements could be affecting their personal narrative.

### Notes

Because people are so accustomed to identifying times when things aren’t going well, it can be a heavy lift for some students to start practicing identifying times when things did go well, or when they “DID NOT live down to a narrative. If students are struggling to remember a time when the sentence they chose was not true, invite them to identify even small wins. For example, if they struggle with punctuality, allow them to celebrate a win if they got somewhere ten minutes late, rather than their typical half an hour. Progress is better than perfection. Share that statement: “Progress is better than perfection.”

If it feels appropriate, you can ask students how they were able to escape the power of a negative narrative in the examples they shared. What you might notice if and when you do this is that students will make the “win” contingent upon the circumstance, rather than as a result of their doing (i.e. their roommate happened to make a lot of noise that morning, so they got up earlier than they normally would, which got them going sooner). Should they do this, point it out and ask them to also consider what they brought to the “win” as well. If again they struggle, explain that this is normal, and something they should start to pay attention to as they progress through the course.

# Companion Workbook Activities

These Workbook activities provide the student with guidance for identifying and working through their personal narratives.

## “WHO AM I TODAY?”

### Non-Graded Activity

On a daily basis, have students answer in one sentence the question “Who Am I Today?”

This activity will begin to get the students engaged with the concept of personal narrative and help them create a sense of accountability early. As students move through the next chapters, this requirement will grow to include additional questions and answers as they learn the material. Each additional question will begin the student process of exploring their own stories and shaping their own narratives—evolution, based on their understanding of the new material.

### Goals

- » Show daily engagement with the course.
- » Help identify any potential harmful thought patterns early.
- » Start giving the student a sense of how they think about themselves, manage their feelings, and explore new relationships.

### Examples

Today I am a student.

Today I am tired.

Today I am overwhelmed.

Today I am a good friend.

Today I am someone who took a risk.

Today I am homesick.

### Outcome

To show the progression of the student’s thought patterns and how they view themselves from the beginning to the end of the course. Ideally, as they learn new concepts in each chapter, how they respond to “Who Am I Today?” will shift to reflect what they have learned. Although this daily task will remain quick and not require much time, over the course or the class there will be additional prompts to assist students in assimilating the material and expanding their narrative.