If You Can’t Fail, You Can’t Succeed: How to Practice Risk

Overview
We have become a risk-averse society, prioritizing safety above all. If we want to achieve success, we must first make friends with failure in order to develop resilience and perseverance. This session looks at risk and encourages you to model these skills for your students by openly discussing failure.

Critical Components
• Create a safe space
• Hold loosely in the beginning
• Model risk (vulnerability is brave)
• Go straight into the hard stuff
• Separate value from performance

Classroom Strategies
• Study famous failures who eventually succeeded to show your students the “behind the scenes” of what’s really at stake when you risk
• Design projects where students can safely experience failure
• Document the journey, noting each setback and milestone
• Reframe how you understand failure
• Diversify and gather a supportive team
• Feel the emotions around failure and success
• Done is better than perfect

Resources
• Dr. Kristen Neff – selfcompassion.org
• Brene Brown – brenebrown.com
• Carol Dweck – mindsetonline.com