Investing in our Psychological Capital

Unlocking the Key to Workplace Well-Being

THEMES

adversity, agreeableness, anxiety, burnout, catastrophisation, collaborative overload, conscientiousness, courage, cynicism, decompression, emotional reasoning, emotional exhaustion, empathy, engagement, extraversion, failure, fairness, fatigue, happiness, helping, hope, hyper-sensitivity, identity management, incivility, insight, joy, neuroticism, optimism, overload, perfectionism, performance zones, perspective taking, recovery, rest, resilience, risk minimisation, rudeness, personality, rumination, selflessness, sleep hygiene, stress triggers, self-efficacy, self-worth, social-emotional competencies, values, workaholism..

When lacking the psychological capital to meet workplace demands people look to their leaders to reduce them. This unfairly shifts the burden for workplace well-being and mental health onto leadership teams and leaders when there is much teachers can do to protect themselves whilst at work. For example, some personality types are far more predisposed to burning out than others and many of those personlity types are attracted to teaching.

If you are seeking to fill your peoples' kete's and tool kits with deliberate actions supporting well-being and mental health in your school, this might just be part of the solution you're seeking.

• Participants will use a global gold standard diagnostic tool to identify degrees of workplace stress & anxiety.
• Facilitation and learning is based on participants' data so that no workshop is ever the same (the most typical themes are noted above).

Participants are provided diagnostic tools to gain insight and self-awareness, and means and meta-cognitive strategies ensuring they are able to take the best possible care of their mental health whilst at school whilst preventing stress from bleeding over into their personal lives.

Providing teachers with the opportunity to measure workplace stress and anxiety levels allows particpants to identify if they are in dangerous zones, or close to them, and through self-monitoring, change how they work without impacting adversly on learning outcomes or the quality of their work. For those who are at no risk, they will know how to stave off future risks.

What are people saying about our programmes?

"It's the first time I've done PD where it has been all about me. Thank you Tony, what a gift you have given me ... my life back." Sue Howard, Teacher – years 5/6.

"I loved how you made me think, challenged my thinking and made me question every decision I make." Danielle Donehue, Teacher- years 5/6.

"Tony, the professional learning you provided has been so powerful and profound for our pilot group that we are seeking ways for you to work with our teachers who have not yet had an opportunity." Mike Anderson, Principal.

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Parent-Teacher Meetings

Going Beyond Communicating What Parents Want to Hear.

THEMES

apologising, authority, catastrophisation, comparison, conflict, courage, decision pathways, deflection, diluting, emotional reasoning, empathy, expectation setting, eye-contact, framing, guilt, helplessness, honesty, impact, inconvenient realities, intent, messaging, meta-cognition, personalisation, perspective taking, preparation, professionalism, purpose, psychological safety, self-regulation, shame, situational awareness, simplifying, social complexity, social equilibrium, stressors, sugar-coating, teacher self-efficacy, well-being.

Of all the conversations teachers are involved in throughout a year none has greater potential to progress learners' outcomes than those they have with parents at Parent – Teacher meetings, yet most teachers are provided no professional development or learning on how to facilitate these meetings effectively.

Parent – Teacher meetings provide unique challenges. They are short, there is little time to build rapport (and if you do try there's very little time left to talk about anything else), and they are formal.

Situationally, these forums require teachers to move from teacher of students to leader of parents. Successfully switching, teachers pull parents into their worlds of teaching, curiculum, pedagogy, data and improvement and yield considerable influence. Failing to do so, teachers get dragged into parents' worlds.

Learn strategies, tactics and meta-cognitive solutions allowing teachers to take hold of Parent-Teacher meetings and to communicate unpalatable and potentially painful information in ways minimising offence, indignation and resentment whilst avoiding the traditional conversational traps of sugar-coating, diluting, deflecting, back-tracking, apologising, avoiding or withdrawing.

If you're seeking professional learning for your staff or leaders focusing on well-being, teacher leadership, advancing outcomes for learners and develping partnerships between home and school, this in-school workshop, facilitated to meet your unique context, might be part of the solution you're seeking.

What are people saying about our programmes?

"Tony, the way you challenged our thinking and made us think about how to be effective has been a revelation … the ideas you present are so different from mainstream PD providers and whilst I know some people are uncomfortable with that, the thinking and ideas you share make so much sense and so much of a difference. Why aren't there more people like you giving the same messages and making the complex so much easier to confront. Thanks once again – participants are saying it's the most compelling PD they've ever had with many a-ha moments!"
Dy Stokes, DP, Paparoa Street School, Executive Committee Christchurch Senior Leaders Network

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Leading Teacher Aides & Learning Assistants

Using Language, Rituals & Routines to Ensure Teacher Aides & Learning Assistants Impact on Learning.

THEMES

authority, autonomy, collaboration, communication, consultation, defensiveness, dependence, expectation setting, help seeking, inappropriate behaviour, inclusion, independence, influence, initiative, interdependence, learner outcomes, partnership, preventable failure, professionalism, reassurance, reframing, self-authoring, self-efficacy, situational proprierty, transacting, understanding information, unwanted help, vital practices, workplace relationships.

Teachers are responsible for the outcomes of all learners yet when it comes to learners with additional learning needs their influence comes in more unfamiliar hands-off ways, through learning assistants and teacher aides.

This requires a shift in thinking – from teacher to leader – but teachers fall into these leadership roles when they may not necessarily be mature enough to lead, when they may not themselves be confident in their own teaching ability, when they may lack teaching experience, or when they may not be interested in pursuing leadership at all.

Working closely with leaders, teachers and teacher aides in Special Education and mainstream settings over the last 2 decades, we have synthesised what those teachers who consistently develop and maintain highly effective working relationships with their in-class adult assistants do. It comes down to a few vital practices - high impact rituals and routines - and their use of language.

Leading adult helpers does not have to come down to trial and error and teachers do not have to be involved in extensive leadership development programmes to become more effective in these roles. Teachers can learn on-the-job, they can drive their own learning and improvement, and they can learn to yield significant influence.

If you are seeking to fill your teachers' and leaders' kete's and tool kits with deliberate acts of teacher leadership to improve inclusive education and outcomes for your learners across your school, this might just be part of the solution you're seeking.

This is an in-school leadership development opportunity facilitated to take into account your school's and teachers' unique contexts.

What are people saying about our programmes?

"We've noticed most of the team you worked with chatting about the experience as 'the best day's PLD I've ever had,' and other similar comments. As we've come to expect after a day with you, our staff are inspired!
Susan Jennison, Principal, Westburn School

Tony, you were an absolute asset … you gave me some wonderful tools and insight. It was such a valuable and memorable PD session. By far this is the best PD I have taken! Thanks again.
Juliette McKelvey, Teacher, Westburn School

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Pushing Back on Pushy & Demanding Parents

Parent – Teacher Meetings:
Going Beyond Communicating
What Parents Want to Hear.

THEMES

agreement, anxiety, assertiveness, attacking, authority, avoiding, being heard, catastrophisation, cognitive dissonance, ettiquette, communication, competing needs, conflict, controlling, courage, deflection, disagreement, emotional reasoning, empathy, expectation setting, helping, helplessness, honesty, humility, labelling, learner outcomes, masking, partnership, perspective taking, professionalism, psychological safety, reframing, relationship building, retreating, shifting the burden, socialisation, stress, teacher self-efficacy, victimisation, well-being, withdrawing.

Failing to jump from teacher of students to leader of parents, teachers can often find themselves in unfamiliar and unwanted roles acting as unqualified counsellors, coaches, mentors and confidantes to emotionally needy parents.

Making the same mistake with pushy and demanding parents, teachers can fall into the trap of over-promising and taking ownership of issues over which they have no authority or ability to influence.

Over the last 2 decades our research reveals the strategic objective of most teachers when establishing relationships with parents and when interacting with them is to be liked; the primary objective in difficult parental situations is to get out of the conversation being liked, and the two most common tactics deployed are agreement and deflection. Rather than pulling parents into the important world of teaching, learning and progress, this cocktail emboldens parents to pull teachers into their domestic affairs, trials and tribulations.

Using meta-cognitive strategies and easily deployed tactics and approaches, every teacher can confidently and easily switch from teacher to leader and find the sweetspot where challenging and unreasonable parents become influenceable. Achieving this is the basis for progressing outcomes for many learners, and for many teachers, it's the basis for higher levels of joy and engagement, self-efficacy and well-being.
If you're seeking professional learning for your staff or leaders focusing on well-being, teacher leadership and advancing outcomes for learners, this focus area might be part of the solution you're seeking.

What are people saying about our programmes?

"Tony, the way you challenged our thinking and made us think about how to be effective has been a revelation … the ideas you present are so different from mainstream PD providers and whilst I know some people are uncomfortable with that, the thinking and ideas you share make so much sense and so much of a difference. Why aren't there more people like you giving the same messages and making the complex so much easier to confront. Thanks once again – participants are saying it's the most compelling PD they've ever had with many a-ha moments!"
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Equipping Our People for Disruption & Change

Going beyond surviving to thriving during times of uncertainty & upheaval.

THEMES

acceptance, adaptation & improvisation, anger, anxiety, authority, consistent messaging, competing needs, courage, defensive thinking, denial, emotional reasoning, reframing, greenfield thinking, helping, helplessness, honesty, hope, inconvenient realities, informed optimism, informed pessimism, perspective taking, professionalism, psychological safety, resilience, situational leadership, stress, uninformed optimism, uninformed pessimism, shifting the burden, victimisation, well-being, wishful thinking.

When disruptions occur people can be thrown out of equilibrium.
• A new building project can dislocate the natural day-to-day ebb and flow of a school. Routines are disrupted, learners' behaviours can change and parents can become anxious.
• An unexpectedly disappointing Education Review Office review requires the coming together of teachers rather than fragmentation driven by denial, disbelief and anger.
• The departure of an established principal after many years of service creates uncertainty and insecurity.
• Grieving for a lost past makes it challenging to implement required structural and systems changes required to remain effective when rapid roll growth occurs.
• A principal new to their position creates ripples by making unpopular and difficult trade-offs.
• A special character school is required to relocate to other buildings because of changing diocese cirumstances.
• Restructuring of the administration area creates tension, conflict and anger.

During times of change people can be unwittingly and unintentionally left to survive – not thrive - and leaders learn to live with and to tolerate others' resentment and bitterness. It doesn't have to be this way.

If you want your people to remain highly effective during times of significant disruption this one-day in-school workshop , facilitated to meet your unique context, may just be part of the solution you're seeking.

What are people saying about our programmes?

"If your success criteria is to make people think – you win!!!! – in spades!!! And challenge and provoke, and reflect and confront and trigger and inspire!!! All of the above. Thanks, thanks, thanks!"
Lynley Cummack, Team Leader year 1-2

"I am so glad I lifted my head above the surface … it so got me thinking about other ways of being that I hadn't had the time or thought to consider … Exciting times and I do not regret for a minute lifting my head before ERO strike next week!"
Kaye Brunton – Principal

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