Transforming the Emotional Load: Making Transitions

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Developing A New Relationship With Work
Resilience – An Internal Representation of an External Circumstance

How aligned are you?

External
- Others’ Expectations
- Behaviours/Events
- Effects of Pandemic and Lockdown

Internal
- Mission, Values, Beliefs
- Thoughts, Feelings, Self-Compassion
Recovery – What do we need to recover from?

What have we been attached to?

What serves us to continue to be attached to?

What is no longer supporting us and we need to release?

- Loss of previous ambition
- Loss of curriculum
- Loss of learning
- Loss of purpose
- Loss of security
- Loss of connection
Letting Go of “False Solidity”

( Michael A. Singer  “The Untethered Soul”)

• What now provides me with security and reassurance? What is my foundation?

• What do I recognise and accept is impermanent?

• Which of my beliefs and assumptions do I have to let go of now?

• What can provide me with a more resourceful focus as move forward?
How Can Our Grief Can Be Transformative?

IMPOSED
• Acknowledging the loss
• Acknowledging the feelings that go with the loss
• Speaking to others about it
• Noticing the differences – noticing the “gains”
• Journalling - Writing to who you were before lockdown

NEW EXPECTATIONS:
• What do others expect from me?
• What can I do about this situation?
• What can I expect of myself?
• How much energy and time will I need to get this done?

NEW OPPORTUNITIES:
• What is my learning from this?
• Who am I that notices this?
• What could this lead to for me?
• How does this contribute to my mission? To who I am?
Making some helpful assumptions about the situation....

We don’t have all of the answers.

We have some of the answers.

No one person has all of the answers.

We’ve never had all of the answers...
### What we Know vs What we Don’t Know Yet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What we know</th>
<th>What we don’t know</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Return for staff in June</td>
<td>• What it will feel/sound/look like</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Return of pupils in August – 11&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; August</td>
<td>• How it will work when the children are in</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Blend of in-school and in-home learning</td>
<td>• How much the workload will be initially, gradually, over the first month, the next month etc</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Guiding principles for return – Safe, Fair and Ethical, Clear, <strong>Realistic</strong> – balance and trade-offs</td>
<td>• How many staff will be in school each day</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Implementation of measures: e.g. seating 2m apart; teachers in smaller groups; use of outdoor space; etc</td>
<td>• How safe I will feel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consistency across schools desirable but each context differs</td>
<td>• How children will respond to new circumstances</td>
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<td>• What expectations the parents will have in these new conditions</td>
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**How can we respond resourcefully for ourselves?**
“My Wellbeing is wrapped up in Your Wellbeing, and Yours in Mine”

Guiding Principles – Safe; Fair and Ethical; Clear; Realistic:
- Some staff more “available” to be in school?
- Some staff providing more resources/learning from home in blended learning approach?
- Consistency? What does this mean for us?

Education and Skills Committee 5th June
- Level of communication with parents
- Expectations
- Workload – what is essential now?

Basic Need for Self-Protection can lead to Avoidance and Safety Behaviours
- Stress Response – “I need to feel safe”
- Safety Behaviours – e.g. become defensive; become isolationist; go on the offensive

Basic need for Connection and Expression to Counter Emotional Load or Isolation:
- Staff Time dedicated to talking through issues and emotional impact
- Safely, Transparency, Non-judgement, Unconditional Positive Regard, Curiosity, Empathy.
Responding to the stress response resourcefully

- Acknowledge and recognise triggers
- Start with the end in mind – what is the desired outcome?
- Reduce the “external” load – start with small stuff
- Reduce the “internal” load – perceptions, thoughts, feelings
- Taking care of the 3 R’s – Rest, Recreation and Relationships
Has anyone ever been to the future?

Michael Neill – “Creating the Impossible”

“The Mind = A Virtual Reality Generator”

“100% of our experience is created from inside our minds.”

Preparing for the Journey Ahead....

“We will never know this little again”

Here’s what I know about the future: it happens as a result of what we do today.
“Don’t Settle for Rolling the Boulder” – Hess (2013)

• Story of Sisyphus
• Is it the boulder or the mountain?
• Boulder-rolling strategies e.g. different pedagogies, collaboration, coaching, capacity.
• No-one mentions the mountain!!

• Fullan and Hargreaves – What’s Worth Fighting For?
• Response? “So long as it makes sense for the school, system and pupils.”

• **How can we use policy and the school recovery plan to support our own individual recovery?**
What is the mountain? What are our boulders? – Moving away from Sisyphus

We might know “the mountain”
- Excellence and Equity

The current “boulders” - Knowing the right “boulders” at the right time!
- Recovery Plan
- Teachers on rotas
- Less pupils in each day
- Online learning
- Planning for blended learning
- How to rest and recover as we “recover”?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>What is realistic?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Energy</td>
<td>What is worth investing in?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nurture</td>
<td>What do I need to feel good?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inhibitors</td>
<td>What am I conscious of that prevents my achieving this? What can I do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utopia</td>
<td>What is my vision of having achieved this? Start with the end in mind?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steps</td>
<td>What do I need to keep moving forward? How do I commit and stay accountable to myself for achieving this?</td>
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Productivity – What does this mean for me and my learners now?

What is at the core of my workload now?

What is essential? Have I written/drawn this out somehow?

Once I have done this, what is really core? What can I drop because it really is not essential?

How will I communicate my core workload to others?

What information do I need to make pupils, parents and colleagues aware of?

What matters to each of them? What matters to us as a team? What matters to me as an individual?
Professional Trust – Rowe (2005)

- Trust is an essential component of being a professional
- We are all involved in relationships of trust
- Trust involves risk
- Professional trust built upon legal and moral legitimacy
- Professional trust involves information (impersonal e.g. curriculum) and judgement (personal e.g. own set of values, beliefs, expectations)

HT1: Focus on parental expectations

HT2: Focus on nurturing environment

HT3: Focus on staff wellbeing
What is Your FISBE?

F – FOCUS

IS – INNER STATE

BE - BEHAVIOUR

Finding Ways to Soothe Myself

[Diagram showing Emotional Regulation Systems with Drive System, Soothing System, and Threat System]

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What is my overriding feeling that I am experiencing about returning to my workplace following lockdown?

1. Anxiety about not feeling safe.
2. Exhaustion at having to think about new routines.
3. Overwhelm at starting over again.
4. Excitement at being in a routine and seeing pupils and colleagues again.
5. Enthusiasm at doing work differently and seeing pupils.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>Where am I getting “stuck” in returning to work?</td>
<td>An anxiety about my safety?</td>
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<td>Guilt at having to continue to shield?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Hostility at having to do more work than others e.g. blended learning in upper stages?</td>
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<td>Overwhelm at all that will have to be done?</td>
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<td>Lethargy and overwhelm at the thought of another transition?</td>
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<td>Feeling of “efforting” to come out of established routine of lockdown?</td>
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<td>Defeatist at having to “start all over again” and throw out the previous plans, goals?</td>
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<td>Frustration at others’ anxiety?</td>
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<td>Worry at the lack of clarity?</td>
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<td>Mental and physical exhaustion at the thought of starting up again?</td>
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Just Feeling It! – A 3-step model to process and release “stuck” emotions

Allowing “what is” and ....
- not trying to change anything,
- providing a compassionate, comforting presence
- allows people to process and release our emotions and feelings
- get unstuck and move forwards.

Not counselling – only coaching

The 3 A’s
- Awareness – “What are you feeling right now? What else?”
- Acknowledge – “Where in your body do you feel it? What is it like?”
- Allow – “This takes courage. Welcome up those feelings. Avoiding them keeps them stuck.”

“How do you feel now?”
Reconnecting with What and Who Matters Most

New learning,
New connections,
From a place of our “Mind-Hearts”
Love, Compassion, Kindness
### A Reflection Tool – Lessons from Lockdown

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<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Comparison</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What mattered to me before lockdown?</td>
<td>Vs</td>
<td>What matters to me now?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What did I believe that my learners needed before?</td>
<td>Vs</td>
<td>What do I believe my learners need now?</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do I now believe that my learners need?</td>
<td>Vs</td>
<td>What can I realistically provide now?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Which values and beliefs now inform my actions as I proceed?</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is my (renewed or) new mission now as I proceed?</td>
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CAMHS – www.camhs-resources.co.uk

Breathing Space – www.breathingspace.co.uk – phone: 0800 838587

Mind UK – www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk – phone 0300 3231545

Scottish Women’s Aid – https://womensaid.scot/contact-us/ - phone: 0800 027 1234

Samaritans - www.samaritans.org 116 123