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Mr. Tom Singletary
London, England

INTRODUCTION BY THE EDITOR

Welcome to the twenty-ninth issue of the *BU Journal of Graduate Studies in Education*, devoted to rural, northern, and Aboriginal education. Our authors for volume 13, issue 4, are current BU Faculty of Education graduate students who have focused their writing on educational issues that have personal relevance. I thank these educators for creating special interest articles that address topics of concern from their own perspectives.

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Special Interest Articles

Addressing Grief in the Classroom: A Complicated Equalizer

Kristyn Eftoda

Abstract

Grief is a complicated equalizer and a personal reaction to loss. Losing a loved one is a universal experience, but fear keeps grief quiet and misunderstood. When teachers not trained in death education, it can affect children's grieving process. When grief is not processed in a healthy way, the parasympathetic nervous system is activated, affecting a child's learning and mental health. Anxiety, depression, and other mental health concerns can present themselves without the help of practices that support emotion regulation and personal grief expression. Schools need bereavement-trained teachers, death education, emotion regulation practices, and counsellors trained in play-based therapies to support grieving children.

Almost everyone will encounter some type of bereavement and grief in their lifetime. Bereavement is undergoing the loss or death of a loved one (Brown & Goodman, 2005), while grief is the natural, internalized reaction one has to a loss (Costelloe et al., 2020). A child's conceptual understanding about death can result in misconceptions that may be incorrect, unhelpful, and detrimental to the grieving process (Stylianou & Zembylas, 2018). Therefore, it is important that teachers have training and support in bereavement and loss, provide death education to all students, and foster a sense of community in the classroom that provides grief support from peers. Grief can interfere with children's ability to learn emotion regulation skills and to practice self-control, directly affecting their mental health and emotional wellbeing (McLafferty, 2020). Classroom-based programs or practices that teach and model emotion regulation, such as The Zones of Regulation, mindfulness, and yoga, can prepare students for a range of grief emotions and provide grieving students with vocabulary and strategies to cope. About 20-25% of bereaved adolescents develop mental health problems, including internalizing disorders such as depression, following the death of a parent (Stikkelbroek et al., 2016, p. 55). Establishing a connection with a school or divisional counsellor who can counsel with age-appropriate play-based therapy is necessary in supporting these grieving students beyond the classroom. Bereavement and grief training for teachers, teaching and practicing emotion regulation in the classroom, and providing individual play-based or music therapy in the school will provide a secure, supportive place for grieving children to process all their feelings (The Dougy Center, n.d.).

Addressing Grief Misconceptions and Death Anxiety: Teacher Training, Death Education, & Peer Support

It is estimated that 5-15% of children will bereave a significant loved one before 18 years of age (Chen & Panebianco, 2018, p. 152). Therefore, it is likely that all teachers will provide care for at least one grieving child in their career (Carrington, 2019). Teachers who intentionally create a significant protective support by listening and responding with empathy can be a positive force (The Dougy Center, n.d.), especially if the child's caregiver is depressed or emotionally unavailable (Stikkelbroek et al., 2016). Unfortunately, due to curriculum pressures and a lack of training in bereavement and loss, teachers often take a reactive rather than proactive approach to grief (Costelloe et al., 2020). For teachers to feel comfortable and confident supporting grieving students, they need direct purposeful training on grief and the grieving process. Death education integrated into the curriculum, with a focus on peer support, is an essential component that normalizes death and provides a classroom of support to grieving children. Grief is learned through observation and can be interpreted individually (Heath & Cole, 2012). Schools can have a monumental effect on grieving children, by providing well-trained teachers with the empathy and knowledge to teach death education and promote peer support.

Children's grieving process depends on their age and conceptual understanding, which usually matures around the age of seven when they can comprehend the permanence and universality of death (Costelloe et al., 2020). Many children develop their own set of misconceptions, which may lead to behavioural and psychological symptoms (Chen & Panebianco, 2018). For example, my young children have blamed themselves and blamed others close to them, following the death of their father. My two youngest do not completely understand the permanence of death, and I fear they may mistake it for abandonment in the future. My husband died suddenly, leaving all of us in shock with no chance to say goodbye. As a result, my children have ruminated on the loss and created fantasies about the death. Losing one of their primary caregivers has led to a change in routine, decreased the emotional availability of other family members, and created new fears and worries. This loss may lead to anxiety, confusion, and pathological symptoms that may or may not require treatment, as they struggle to navigate the grieving process (Chen & Panebianco, 2018). In some instances, school may be the only safe place where a grieving child feels a sense of normalcy. However, many teachers do not know how to address grief in the classroom (Stylianou & Zembylas, 2018). If children are not equipped with the correct information in a proactive manner within their haven, they may develop death anxiety and death denial.

Providing teachers with knowledge in the form of grief and bereavement training would empower teachers to provide proper support for grieving students. Teachers then become an important link with counsellors and therapists, because they can watch for signs of isolation, declining grades, and other changes that may require referrals (Dyregrov et al., 2015). With proper training and background knowledge, teachers understand how grief contributes to learning difficulties at different stages in the grieving process, and how it affects different age groups in terms of attendance, schoolwork, and concentration (Reid, 2002). Teachers want to become more mindful of typical grieving responses, find confidence in their approach to individuals, and recognize symptoms of chronic grief. The topic of grief in the school should be included in professional development, planning days, and staff meetings because it deserves an exclusive focus, apart from general psychological problems. For students to feel equally supported and achieve academic success, all teachers must agree upon special consideration for a grieving child (Dyregrov et al., 2015). Teacher training would provide consistency in availability, communication, and emotional support between different teachers of bereaved students. Supporting teachers and providing a solid response plan for grieving children may reduce the stress in staff and children, relieve suffering in the bereaved, and result in positive experiences despite the traumatic situation.

Educating children about the grief process, helping children to express all feelings associated with grief, and understanding common misconceptions about death, are all integral in supporting children in grief (Heath & Cole, 2011). When students were interviewed about returning to school following a parental death, many felt that school was not effective in listening, acknowledging their loss, discussing support with their peers, and offering death education (Holland, 2003). I was on a maternity leave when my husband died and was able to home-school my son every second day to provide him with opportunities to read, listen to music, and watch movies that showed grief reactions. Not all adults are so fortunate or have the emotional resilience to provide this support. Death education is a pro-active approach to helping children develop healthy and well-informed opinions about death, become more empathetic to others, and develop coping skills for future bereavement (Ayyash-Abdo, 2001). Classroom teachers, rather than specialized guest teachers, are the best equipped to provide death education to children because they are well-known and trusted by their students, know each child individually, are familiar with the culture in their classroom, and are trained in a variety of effective pedagogical practices (Reid, 2002). Grief and death can either be directly taught in the school curriculum, by addressing how change and loss affect a person's life, or indirectly integrated through a spiral curriculum, in response to questions being asked in the classroom about death and dying (Stylianou & Zembylas, 2016). Teaching death education in a group classroom setting can provide honest information, confront distortions in understanding, and help children to reframe their thought process about death and grief (Register & Hilliard, 2008). Advocating for death education integration into classroom curriculum is important because school

counsellors and classroom teachers do not always have the time to provide individual support to grieving students.

It is imperative that schools intervene with bereaved students, and strengthen their social connectedness with their peers in order to reduce isolation and encourage emotional expression (Heath & Cole, 2011). Peers and teachers can offer profound emotional support to grieving children by helping them ease through transitions, supporting their return to regular activities, and standing beside them as they cope with their grief (Reid, 2002). Peers often want to express their support, but do not know how. Teachers can facilitate these support opportunities by designating a specific area for students to express their compassion for their classmate with cards or pictures. My son and I appreciated the notes that were sent home from his peers, and we were especially comforted by the monthly cards and gifts that came from a group of educators and their families in our village. Teachers can integrate death education and peer support into their curriculum by modeling coping strategies, providing opportunities for students to express sympathy and memorialize the deceased, and sharing stories about death using bibliotherapy techniques (Heath & Cole, 2011). Reading carefully chosen stories in the classroom is an inclusive opportunity to ask questions about and discuss death, model behaviors expected with grief, and reduce feelings of isolation in the grieving child. Bereaved children appreciate the comfort and helpfulness that peers can provide to alleviate some of their suffering.

A person's first response to trauma or grief will often be either to shut down or to act strong and isolate. However, connection is essential because grievers require others to lean on while processing their emotions (Carrington, 2019). Children suffering from trauma or loss need the school to act as a village and recognize that they are not operating from a regulated space. Grief is not a problem to be solved, but a process to be supported. It is essential that teachers have sustained training and support to find the most appropriate pedagogical approach for dealing with the topic of death in the classroom (Stylianou & Zembylas, 2016), while also being aware of their own personal responses to loss (Reid, 2002). Teachers can teach students how to support themselves and others who are grieving by showing children that death and grief are ordinary topics that can be discussed naturally. Death education should be common practice, providing concrete death information to young children in a direct and pro-active way in order to dispel fears, confusions, and misconceptions that may negatively impact them as they grow up (Chen & Panebianco, 2018). Since many of our students do not know how to respond to others in grief, teachers must provide them with a script and permission to connect with their grieving peers (Carrington, 2019). Death education, peer support, and teacher training in bereavement and loss will lessen death anxiety in the classroom and minimize death misconceptions for grievers.

Addressing Grief & Emotion Dysregulation in the Classroom: Mindfulness, Yoga, & The Zones of Regulation

Grief can leave a traumatic impact on a child, heightening social, academic, emotional, and behavioural issues (Carrington, 2019). The death of a loved one can negatively influence a child's emotion regulation skills, ranging from a constant feeling of sadness to intense anger and a lingering sense of dread or fear. Supporting grieving children's emotional expressions and normalizing their feelings helps children feel connected. Actively processing emotions through physical yoga practice and mindfulness creates a foundation for self-regulation; it is empowering for grieving children to know that they can feel, process, and withstand any emotion (Cook-Cottone, 2017). Mindfulness may reduce anger and aggression in these children, because it invites students to practice responding with intention, rather than automatically reacting when difficult emotions develop (Cardinal, 2020). Self-regulation programs such as The Zones of Regulation teach students how to recognize and communicate their feelings in a safe and non-judgmental manner by categorizing the feelings and states that they often experience (Kuypers, 2011). Teaching emotion regulation skills and practicing mindful awareness are essential to supporting all children, especially grieving children, who are in a heightened state of emotional arousal and exhaustion.

Emotion regulation refers to the ability to regulate positive and negative emotions, and manage how they are expressed (Schlesier et al., 2018). It plays an important role in a child's social skills, cognitive development, and ability to learn (McLafferty, 2020). Emotions and learning are interconnected: the learning process is compromised when emotions overwhelm and highjack the brain, resulting in distress, anxiety, and a limited ability to concentrate (Djambazova-Popordanoska, 2016). The bodies and minds of children who have experienced trauma perceive constant threats and are in chronic reactive mode (Carrington, 2019). The sympathetic nervous system becomes highly activated when cortisol increases, resulting in emotion dysregulation and fatigue. Children's mental health and academic achievement may be seriously affected when they cannot regulate emotions efficiently. Chronic emotional frustration may make it difficult to stay on task and complete work on time, resulting in lower academic engagement, motivation, and success (Schlesier et al., 2019). Teachers are the ones who support bereaved students daily, but they are not trained in bereavement and loss. Teachers may also experience an overwhelm of worry, guilt, and sadness, resulting in emotional exhaustion and limiting their ability to co-regulate with the grieving child.

Yoga and other mindfulness practices can provide preventative care by teaching self-regulation to students and teachers, and prescriptive care by supporting students who are at risk or in need of intervention (Cook-Cottone, 2017). It seems only natural that mindfulness be a support to grievers since grief is a natural human experience that causes suffering, and mindfulness is a practice that aims to reduce suffering (Stang, 2018). Both mindfulness and grief create transformation: grief forces change, while mindfulness invites the griever to acknowledge the change with mindful acceptance rather than resistance. Practicing mindfulness and yoga has been my life preserver in bereavement. For a year, my son struggled with emotion regulation, and exhibited a fixed mindset in a large school that was only beginning to explore mindfulness. When he returned to a smaller school where teachers and students practice mindfulness regularly, his inner dialogue began to shift, and he became more self-compassionate and aware of the choices he had in response to triggers. Mindfulness can be defined as being present in the moment with all of one's senses (Stang, 2018). It invites the griever to live in present awareness with the loss, and prevents avoidance of pain, overindulgence in suffering, and the need to fix. Mindfulness and yoga encourage students to practice perseverance and use grit, because they are asked to work outside their comfort zone, stay focused on difficult tasks, and cope with feelings of frustration (Cook-Cottone, 2017). Students learn mindful awareness of their body sensations, breathing techniques to focus on the present moment, and ways to replace negative inner thoughts with empowering self-talk. If children can calm themselves by breathing, they can begin to function in the social engagement part of their brain and make aligned choices.

The Zones of Regulation is a curriculum that uses a cognitive behavior approach to teach students the skills necessary for self-regulation (Kuypers, 2011). Self-regulation refers to regulating sensory needs, emotions, and impulses in order to reach goals and behave appropriately in any given environment. Adopting this curriculum into the classroom for all students will support the griever directly and prepare other students for their future grief experiences, by helping them become more aware of the tools they can use to self-regulate. Emotion regulation is one of the components of self-regulation that grieving children struggle with. My son could move from one state to another in an instant due to the trauma response in his amygdala from grief. He often felt out of control, and that scared him. The Zones of Regulation played a role in my son's education and my teaching career. This prior knowledge gave our family a common vocabulary that grounded him and brought him back to awareness. The Zones of Regulation addresses objectivity, motivation, and understanding other perspectives, which are all important for emotion regulation (Kuypers, 2011). The lessons in the program teach students to recognize when they are in states or "zones," leading to better self-control and problem solving. The zones are represented by different colors, which are very relatable when asking children to describe the color of their emotions in grief. My younger daughter is now becoming efficient at regulating by using the colors to recognize and describe her emotions. Through the different activities, students are given strategies to stay in a zone or help them move towards another zone by using sensory tools, calming practices, and cognitive

approaches (Kuypers, 2011). The program was initially designed only for students struggling with self-regulation and mental health disorders, but it has become apparent that all people can benefit from this program, especially grieving children.

Grief and loss trigger a chronic stress response in the amygdala, affecting responsible decision making, planning, and emotion regulation (Cardinal, 2020). Children, especially those who are grieving, need direct instruction on emotion regulation, because they are often operating in the parasympathetic nervous system and need support in awareness and thought patterns. Emotionally competent students, those who can regulate and express their emotions well, have a higher self-esteem, quality peer relationships, and more positive outlook on life, even in negative situations (Djambazova-Popordanoska, 2016). Mindfulness-based techniques and yoga practices have been known to reduce the physical symptoms of grief, calm the mind and regulate emotions, improve self-awareness and self-compassion, and make meaning of loss to move forward (Stang, 2018). The Zones of Regulation provides direct instruction on teaching students to notice the behaviors expected in given circumstances, then determine how they will manage their behavior while in different zones (Kuypers, 2011). The four zones are not labeled good or bad; it is understood that everyone will experience all zones. Self-regulation and emotion regulation programs and practices being directly taught in the classroom, such as mindfulness, yoga, and The Zones of Regulation, are pro-active solutions to supporting dysregulated and grieving students.

Addressing Mental Health Issues Related to Grief: Play-Based Therapy & Music Therapy as Intervention

Grief misconceptions and emotion dysregulation, along with poor concentration in school, lower self-esteem, and lower school attendance, may create a spiral effect that negatively impacts a child's mental health (Burrell et al., 2020). Children who struggle regulating their emotions have a poor emotional well-being that may cause distress, anxiety, depression, and poor academic achievement (Djambazova-Popordanoska, 2016). They may isolate from their peers because their low self-esteem may result in feeling misunderstood, unconfident, and detached. The most explicit component to supporting a grieving child is a connection with a school counsellor or division-wide therapist, who can make future referrals and provide age-appropriate play-based therapy for children to express their feelings. For young children, play therapies with a trusted counsellor are commonly used grief interventions, because play is the most natural form of learning and communication for young children seeking to understand the world around them (Chen & Panebianco, 2018). Older grieving children may benefit from music therapy to deal with difficult life experiences by exploring their emotions, thoughts, and behaviors in a safe and structured environment through improvisation and creativity (Register & Hilliard, 2008). Direct support and acknowledgement of bereavement from a teacher and trusted school or divisional counsellor will positively impact a child's coping skills.

Children are at high risk of developing mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and somatic issues when they experience a traumatic death, have a close relationship to the deceased, and have poor coping strategies (Brown & Goodman, 2005). One year after the death of a parent, 19% of bereaved children will experience substantial impairment in functioning because of challenges such as posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and childhood traumatic grief (CTG) (LaFreniere & Cain, 2015, pp. 246-247). Children and teens who experience the most severe trauma may show high PTSD symptoms because they cannot comprehend what is happening and may have inadequate support (Carrington, 2019; Heath & Cole, 2012). When my husband died over 20 months ago, I used many supports and early intervention programs, yet my oldest son still struggled. He was exhibiting a decrease in self-esteem, happiness, and school success, which led to an onset of anxiety, anger, fear, and social issues. His teacher was supportive, and I was made aware that he was struggling to concentrate and distracting himself from academic tasks. However, I was not mindful that he was avoiding talking about his loss. My child experienced one of the most distressing experiences a child may have, and did not feel comfortable talking to his teachers and classmates about it. I was at home with my two younger children and struggling with anxiety, depression, and

PTSD at the time. Looking back, I wish I would have connected with his counsellor to ensure he was expressing his grief at school, but I was doing the best I could, and the school did not express concern at the time. When children are grieving the death of a parent, they are at high risk of exhibiting internalizing problems within the first two years and mental health problems by age 19 (Stikkelbroek et al., 2016, p. 58). If schools or teachers are not aware of these problems, grieving children may not receive the mental health support they need.

Students should be given many opportunities to express their feelings through drawing, coloring, writing, or playing. Asking children to reflect on the hardest parts of their loss and the best parts of the loved one may create a safe place for the students to work out their feelings (Carrington, 2019). This is a worthy goal, but not always possible within a teacher's day. Therefore, it is essential for school or divisional counsellors to form a strong relationship with a grieving child and provide targeted emotional interventions when necessary through play-based therapy, talk therapy and music therapy (Ayyash-Abdo, 2001). Children use play as a mode of communication to demonstrate their anxieties and confusions with a trusted counsellor. A variety of play materials are important for the children to act out their fears, worries, and version of the death, including art supplies, blocks, dolls, puppets, rescue vehicles, and medical kits (Boyd Webb, 2011). My son and daughter both attend private play therapy where they work through their grief reactions with toys, bringing order to the chaos of their thoughts, re-joining the parts of their grief puzzle, and providing a feeling of safety and security. Having a trained play-based therapist or counsellor within a school or division would provide all grieving children access to effective intervention for their social-emotional well-being because it helps them to understand death, normalizes their grief reactions, and encourages expression of their grief (Chen & Panebianco, 2018). A child-friendly treatment, such as play therapy, can improve children's emotional healing and coping skills to move them towards a calm and peaceful resolution in their grief.

Many older children struggle to verbalize the chaotic emotions of grief through language and play. Offering musical dialogue as a form of emotional expression can support autonomy, self-expression, and identification, while also teaching decision-making skills (Register & Hilliard, 2008). Music therapy is one of the two most promising models for working with grieving children (Chen & Panebianco, 2018), yet it is not often available in rural communities. My children use a listening program with their play therapist called Safe and Sound Protocol (SSP), which is a physiological therapy that uses different songs and tones to stimulate the vagus nerve and give cues of safety to the nervous system (Integrated Listening Systems, n.d.). It uses the science of neuroplasticity and bottom-up solutions to help children become more resilient, aware, and regulated. Such a program could be used with grieving children in all schools with the proper training. For older children and teenagers, music therapy in school seems less threatening than talk therapies and provides an appropriate starting point to help them seek further support in the community (McFerran & Hunt, 2008). Teenagers have a desperate need to belong, but grief is often a very isolating process. Music therapy is one support that may not threaten their developmental need for autonomy and belonging, but encourages them to process their grief and express their feelings. This approach invites students to discuss grief and all the unpredictable feelings associated with it, validating their emotions, and giving them a sense of control by creatively expressing themselves through song.

A child whose parent dies suddenly may also have suicidal thoughts, achieve lower grades, and be less likely to graduate with future career aspirations (Burrell et al., 2020) because depression and anxiety can directly impact academic success (McLafferty, 2020). Individual counselling, play therapy, and bibliotherapy can all be early intervention strategies to facilitate mourning and prevent depression and other future mental health problems (Ayyash-Abdo, 2001). Having a trained play-based therapist in a school or division, who could provide physiological therapies such as SSP, would be ideal for supporting young children with any type of trauma or loss. Music therapy for teenagers and older children promotes grievers to feel successful and comfortable while making decisions, problem solving, and expressing their emotions with validation (Register & Hilliard, 2008). Communication with family and referrals to private counsellors or bereavement groups can also help grieving children feel supported by a village of people. I have witnessed first-hand with my son how

care, availability, and communication from a counsellor or therapist are significant principles when supporting a grieving child with anxiety.

Conclusion

Grief is a universal but complicated equalizer (Carrington, 2019). We will all lose a loved one, but how we respond to that loss is deeply personal. It takes a village to support the conceptual understanding, academic success, emotion regulation, and mental health of grieving children. School must act as a village, a refuge, and a crucial element in a child's world when bereavement affects their life (Reid, 2002). The greatest gift a grieving child can receive is a teacher who will listen, sit with the child's pain, and encourage the child to talk about the loved one. The staff in my son's school do just that and so much more. The teachers continue to educate themselves and the students on grief and grief reactions by willingly opening class and peer discussions about change and loss, practising mindfulness and yoga, and using The Zones of Regulation program. My son and daughter participate in child-directed play therapy and SSP outside of the school system, and the effects on their mental health are profound. It is important to advocate for specialized music and play therapists in schools or divisions, in order to provide this care to all grieving students in a safe and comfortable environment. A broad range of coping mechanisms is important, because the grieving process is so individual and there are many stages of conceptual understanding in grief (Register & Hilliard, 2008). Caring and well-trained adults to teach death education and peer support, instruction in emotion regulation and mindful practices, and age-appropriate play-based or music therapy are all valuable supports that should be a priority for grieving students in all schools.

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Barriers to Indigenous Perspectives in Education

Penny Wilson

Abstract

Educational outcomes for Indigenous students in Manitoba are poor. In response, educational policy across Canada is evolving to incorporate Aboriginal, Metis and Inuit perspectives into curriculum to support positive change. Years into this effort, we can identify common barriers. Undoing generations of cultural suppression will be a slow process. Implicit bias, fueled by a lack of awareness of complex and interconnected Indigenous issues creates racial blindness, a crippling obstacle in understanding Indigenous issues. Changing the English Canadian narrative of today's education system will involve difficult conversations around privilege and viewpoint. Hiring and empowering Indigenous educators enables internally proliferated resources. Access to regional professional development on Indigenous issues needs to expand.

Educational outcomes for Indigenous students in Canadian schools are poor. In Manitoba, non-Indigenous boys graduated in 2018 at a rate of 85.4%, compared to Indigenous boys at only 48.5% (Manitoba Education, n.d.a). This is an improvement from the previous generation when only 25% completed 12 or more years of school (Chan et al., 2012, Socio-demographic Characteristics section, p. 18). A continued lack of engagement with the educational system, a key component of economic viability, "isolates, underserves and undervalues" Indigenous students (Zinga & Gordon, 2016, p. 1090). In response, educational policy across Canada has evolved to incorporate Indigenous perspective into curriculum in order to address the need for supporting positive change in Indigenous educational outcomes. Circumventing barriers these will be the challenge of this generation. We are faced with the task of recognizing disadvantageous patterns that have played out for generations, and redeveloping a more humanistic practice that connects us to each other (Csontos, 2019). Recurring impediments in this evolution include implicit bias, racial blindness, a lack of awareness of complex Indigenous issues, interconnectivity of Indigenous issues, and a reluctance to recognize Indigenous viewpoints. Paths forward include hiring more educators that are Indigenous, increasing access to professional development on Indigenous issues, ensuring uniformly applied expectations among students, and building resiliency. Building local Indigenous community connections in conveying cultural content is a key focus moving forward.

Undoing Generations of Cultural Suppression

Generations of cultural suppression are not easily undone. Public schools and society set a frame through which students see the world. Up until 1951, the Indian Act made the practice of Indigenous cultural and spiritual ceremonies a criminal act (Simpson & Filice, 2016). Federal control over reserve communities forced secrecy to become part of common practice. Manitoba did not begin a policy change for Indigenous content until 1995 (Manitoba Education, n.d.b). Recognizing Indigenous culture as valid and essential to contemporary Canadian reality is an important step in acknowledging a different worldview. In our era, generations of suppression will not be balanced quickly.

For many past Metis, passing as white was an advantage on many levels. "Status" meant that one could not own land, or even vote until 1960. For parents during this time, perceived societal discrimination could interfere with employment opportunities. Catholicism, popular in Manitoba's Metis community, did not encourage Indigenous world views. Indigenous perspective was not supported in school curriculum. There were many disadvantages to being Indigenous, which were avoided if a person could "pass" as white. Recovery from a suppressive mindset will happen slowly.

Implicit Bias

Implicit bias affects everyone. In the teaching world, this manifests as being a stranger to each other's personal realities. As an educator who is Metis, I have seen alternate perceptions of what Metis means or looks like within my own teaching experience. When I present an unusual perspective, surprise or even questions about authenticity have arisen. This should be no surprise given that Metis identity has always been about bridging two worlds. Who is and is not Metis is hotly debated. It is revealing that fellow professionals feel entitled to measure quantum. How we frame our basic vision of reality is implicit bias, and it affects all that we see and hear.

Lack of Awareness of Complex and Interconnected Indigenous Issues

Racial blindness is a crippling obstacle to understanding Indigenous issues for our students. Defining racism as a narrow, personal experience between individuals is disarmingly myopic. Race and economic class define the educational experience of students (Brown & De Lissovoy, 2011). Truly appreciating the generational effect of colonialism, how it is manifest as control of governing power, material and natural resources – and entitlement as a daily replication across social and institutional settings (Gebhard, 2018; Madden, 2017) – is a key step to identifying and changing perspective. Until we can clearly see the problem, racial blindness will keep us from understanding and articulating Indigenous issues.

A lack of awareness of complex Indigenous issues influence personal perception. Systemic factors hold strong influence over how we all, staff and students, perceive reality. Ongoing colonial history, the profound influence of the Indian Act, Indigenous funding structures for healthcare and education, over exposure to poverty, and how Indigenous resources are distributed are complicated. A lack of awareness limits personal perceptions of many complex Indigenous issues.

The Indian Act is a powerful piece of legislation affecting every Canadian's life, and yet we do not teach it. Until 1951, it was a crime for First Nations person to leave reserve without a pass from the Indian Agent, hire a lawyer, or even own property. In an economy where wealth is anchored in land ownership, being barred form land ownership disenfranchised generations from accumulating wealth. We should be teaching about the Indian Act, and how it affects all Canadians.

Overexposure to poverty as a demographic means that many Indigenous issues are poverty issues. Forty percent of Indigenous children live in poverty in Canada (Canadian Poverty Inst., 2019, A Few Facts section, para 2). The insidious ways these social configurations bind and collaborate to replicate inequalities must be considered (Brown & Lissovy, 2011). Poverty issues are a significant Indigenous issue.

A lack of awareness of complex issues is an impediment to educators. Realities of on and off reserve Indigenous life are unfamiliar to many non-Indigenous people. The ongoing effects of colonialism, federal funding structures, and systemic over exposure to poverty are complicated realties. Personal perceptions framed by a lack of awareness of complex Indigenous issues is a significant barrier to Indigenous perspectives.

The interconnectivity of Indigenous issues means evolving education is only part of the movement needed to improving academic outcomes. Supports need to improve outside of the classroom, as well. For example, Horton et al. (2011) indicated recurring themes emerging in interviews with successful Indigenous high school students, including the vital importance of parental involvement, family and community trauma, cultural affinity within Indigenous families, local connection to cultural programs, the need for role models, destructive community divisions, and strong relationships with teachers. Most of these influences occur outside of the school building. Complex educational barriers require solutions that follow a path of partnerships among educators, families, and the aggregate community (Horton et al., 2011). The interconnectivity of Indigenous issues requires a complementary, community approach.

Reluctant Recognition of Viewpoints

A reluctance to recognize Indigenous viewpoints within the classroom is fueled by a lack of awareness. Today's education system evolved and is framed in an English Canadian narrative (Den Heyer & Abbott, 2011). A deficit of expertise, resources, and training in Metis, First Nation and Inuit perspective has made thousands of non-Indigenous teachers, constituting the vast majority of our education workforce, hesitant to engage (Gaudry, 2016; Milne, 2017). Fear of misrepresentation, appropriation, controversy, white privilege, and Indigenous privilege keep policy and practice distant cousins in many classrooms (Higgins et al., 2015; Kearns & Anuik, 2015; Scott & Gani, 2018). Reluctance to recognize Indigenous viewpoints continues to be a barrier to incorporating Indigenous perspective.

The idea of privilege of viewpoint, of white privilege and Indigenous privilege, is a circling conundrum. It encapsulates the core of the phalanx of barriers we encounter. Race conversations are emotionally volatile subjects, something most teachers avoid. White privilege is an advantage or entitlement bestowed upon an individual solely based on skin tone. Indigenous privilege is much the same. Challenging institutional racism will involve having difficult conversations around privilege and viewpoint.

An event that conveys a clear snapshot of the dichotomy generated by a reluctance to recognize Indigenous viewpoints occurred in 2020 near Duck Lake, Saskatchewan on the Beardy's & Okemasis' Cree Nation. The local governing health authority called RCMP to disperse a gathering, a Sundance, which is a sacred healing ceremony. Protocols were unintentionally broken by the arriving officers, and the right to conduct Indigenous-based healthcare was raised by participants. This interruption speaks to the right to gather for ceremony during COVID-19 restrictions, local awareness of protocols, and the institutional de-valuation of the ceremony itself ("Rising Tensions," 2020). Recognition of the Indigenous viewpoint would have avoided much unnecessary tension and anger between the community and the institutional systems meant to support them.

Pathways Forward

In years of implementing policy change towards Indigenous inclusion, we now have clear indicators of barriers and solutions. We have policy mandates for change. |It is in the enacting of that change we now labor. Pathways forward call for the hire and empowerment of more Indigenous educators, increasing representation and influence in schools. Professional development for the legions of non-Indigenous teachers now employed must become common, sensitizing classroom teachers to some level of Indigenous perspective. Schools can strengthen uniformity of applied expectations, and improve access to resiliency training. Addressing barriers with specific, achievable solutions will facilitate change.

Indigenous Hires

Hiring more educators that are Indigenous must be part of the solution (Gaudry, 2016; Milne, 2017, p. 11). The antidote to a lack of Indigenous perspective is as simple as employing and empowering educators with an Indigenous perspective. Indigenization of education will occur when more Indigenous community members come to the school and become involved (Pidgeon, 2016). In 2013, 12% of teachers identified as Indigenous in Manitoba. Additionally, around 45% reported a complete absence of professional learning activities regarding Indigenous perspectives offered by their division (Manitoba Education, 2013, pp. 8-9; Milne, 2017, p. 11). Hiring and empowering educators who are Indigenous enables internally proliferated resources, and local innovation of content. Indigenous educators on staff can naturally transition perspective within schools.

Chris Scribe exemplifies why hiring Indigenous educators is key to changing perspective. When COVID-19 restrictions struck, he created the platform Think Indigenous - Online Indigenous Education *K-8* Facebook page. This platform provides Indigenous learning opportunities for

students, teachers, parents and communities. Content on the site crosses multiple disciplines, and has attracted other Indigenous contributors from across Canada. Indigenous teachers can naturally connect Indigenous knowledge to curriculum (Lagimodiere, 2020). Gaining an Indigenous perspective happens successfully by hiring and effectively empowering people who genuinely have one.

Professional Development

Professional development on Indigenous issues should be standard practice. This should be a regional and local domain, because regional and local community diversity and connections must be developed. Several Canadian universities, such as Lakehead and Winnipeg, are now making Indigenous course work mandatory for more courses. Non-Indigenous educators can improve awareness of Indigenous issues through increased professional development.

Schools must strengthen uniformity of applied expectations. While the most desired teacher traits may be empathy and flexibility, inequitable treatment erodes morale (Zinga & Gordon, 2016). Successful completion of high school for many Indigenous students requires strong relationships with teachers, with an awareness of both cultural and intergenerational trauma (Steeves, 2020). Concurrently, authoritative leniency must be carefully wielded, lest lowered standards become a disservice to students "situating them outside of recognizable learner identities" (Gebhard, 2019, p. 903). Students and parents of Indigenous students report a real desire to see administrators and teachers consistently and uniformly enforce expectations across student populations (Zinga & Gordon, 2016).

Resiliency in students is a key component to staying engaged in education. Enabling resiliency is a long-term, subtle enterprise. School-based resilience programs that teach coping strategies are already in use. The highly structured PAThS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) program is used on an intervention bases in Manitoba, using a structured environmental and personal skills approach. Many other programs are available, and each has strengths and critics (Ecclestone & Lewis, 2014). Increasing awareness and access to resiliency programs should be a positive and achievable goal.

Conclusion

As provincial policy engagement unfolds, barriers to enacting meaningful Indigenous perspective in education across Canada are significant. Generations of cultural repression will be slow in reversing. Implicit bias frames how we interpret all that we see. Blindness to racialized structures and behaviours in our lives, lack of sensitivity to complex and interconnected Indigenous issues, and hesitancy to recognize Indigenous viewpoints are common in classrooms. A call is made towards hiring and empowering more educators who are Indigenous to ease evolution of our perspective, and a strengthening of access to professional development on Indigenous issues. Uniformly enforced expectations, and increasing access to resiliency supports are strong pathways to positive change. Building local Indigenous community connections in conveying cultural content is a key focus moving forward. Generations of Indigenous cultural repression will not be undone by ten years of real policy change and some professional development days. Evolution of curriculum to include Indigenous perspective will be the challenge of our generation.

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Dismantling Barriers to Anti-Racist Education

Sonya Williams

Abstract

Teachers desiring to address inequity within education must acknowledge the inconsistencies experienced by students who belong to historically marginalized or oppressed communities. Anti-racist education addresses conventions rooted in systemic or structural racism, colourblindness, and implicit bias, creating an environment that facilitates equity in education for all students regardless of race, ethnicity, or culture.

Anti-racist education acknowledges the inequalities experienced by people who do not implicitly benefit from current world systems, purposing to bridge that gap. This includes people who have been historically oppressed or marginalized because of race, ethnicity, or culture. In order to facilitate anti-racist education, teachers must be willing to accept that some of the significant traditions historically synonymous with education and simple existence, such as systemic and structural racism, colourblindness, and implicit bias, must be challenged in order to facilitate equitable education for all.

Systemic and Structural Racism

History is typically told from the perspective of the victor, and the current education system follows that same pattern. Eurocentric ideologies at the centre of educational frameworks determining students' learning at all levels (Abdulle et al., 2017) fail to account for all other racial and cultural ideologies represented in the society that same framework is presumed to serve. Forest et al. (2016) identified this conduct and its suggested application within educational systems as a barrier to educational achievement for racialized students. The omission of non-Eurocentric ideologies within educational frameworks sends the message that other cultural perspectives are not important.

Canada's continued identity as a multicultural nation is threatened when protected by educational policies that do not address the uncomfortable side of race and culture. Educational frameworks celebrating cultural diversity without addressing the realities of racial inequality are only superficial policies (George et al., 2020. These realities include the disproportionate number of racialized students who are labelled "at risk" or classified as and moved into special education centres without appropriate evaluations. Adjei (2018) referred to this "institutional disregard" as a way that policies, practices, and politics of the system are structured, failing racialized people by leaving them helpless within their own communities and rendering them as intruders in these environments (pp. 4-5). Students who experience this institutional disregard will inevitably believe that they have been betrayed and, in that context of distrust, will struggle to experience success.

Addressing issues rooted in history and tradition is a challenge. The educational system has always been an important key to growth and change, but on further review presents its own obstacles in facilitating growth and change for all people. George et al. (2020) highlighted that official school curricula "mutes, distorts, omits, and stereotypes the perspectives of racialized [people]" (p. 3), additionally suggesting teaching methodologies that are "individualistic, colourblind, and race-neutral" (p. 3). In a society that is so racially and culturally diverse and relies heavily on a strong educational system to guide and enlighten all minds, curricula should reflect the societies they serve.

Data are used as a significant instrument to measure success in schools. Carter et al. (2017) encouraged having conversations with students in order to determine whose needs are being met and whose needs are not, because examining schools' habits surrounding the practices implemented within schools is crucial, and then using the data to inform teachers of the disparities found between racialized and non-racialized students is a useful tool to counter those issues. Asking

students about their needs amplifies their voices and allows space for an education that is suited to their needs. Discussions surrounding race and cultural issues within schools provides space to set right the injustices that pervade the current systems.

Providing all students with an equitable and inclusive education attacks the inequalities within a system that has historically been beneficial for some. Equitable and inclusive education supports all levels of diversity, including "ancestry, culture, ethnicity . . . language . . . race, and religion" (George et al., 2020, p. 11). Considering the students in my classroom and using a pre-existing tool intended to motivate students to work on their annotation skills in English, I created a resource comprised of articles, poetry, and song lyrics that were either written by or centred around Black and Indigenous people. Students who identified as Indigenous excitedly thumbed through their booklets, instantly identifying with much of the content. Students who identified as non-Indigenous expressed keen interest in the content, commenting on its potential to initiate meaningful discussions. Students were able to make connections to themes and experiences that would otherwise be overlooked or dismissed.

As representatives of educational systems, teachers have the responsibility and power to use knowledge and experience as a tool to motivate their students in the direction of growth. Acknowledging that schools are important spaces to combat racism in addition to being spaces for democratic discourse allows teachers to facilitate discussions with students that would otherwise be difficult, challenging racism within educational systems (Arneback & Englund, 2020; Forrest et al., 2016). Many students desire to discuss issues surrounding race and culture and these conversations are subject to their teachers' willingness to address those issues.

Colourblindness

Anti-racist education can be very difficult to approach, and may be uncomfortable to address within the education system and the classroom when specifically dealing with issues surrounding race and ethnicity. When broached, a common default approach for teachers is colourblindness: choosing not to acknowledge the racial differences amongst their racialized students (Husband, 2016). Phrases such as "I don't see colour" create an environment of invisibility for folks who identify as Black, Indigenous, or as People of Colour, which is characterized by race or ethnicity. Being seen is crucial to being known, and the practice of colourblindness impedes that process. Teachers who minimize racialized students' identities by refusing to acknowledge their students' race and ethnicity may unwittingly employ colourblindness as a tool, perpetuating racial inequality (Burke, 2017). Appropriately addressing students' needs requires full acknowledgement of their uniqueness.

Addressing issues of race and ethnicity amongst teachers as it pertains to their classroom culture may also create further challenges when colourblindness is used as evidence of racial equality. Burke (2017) noted that a common system of belief carried by many is that colourblindness is a reputable trait, touted as tolerance among people who embrace diversity as an opportunity to enhance their own lives, but it fails to assist in breaking down structures that continue to marginalize racialized people. Creating spaces that encourage the idea that racial and cultural inequalities are minimal, or even non-existent, places teachers in difficult situations when the need to address those same issues arises. Husband (2016) asserted that the neutrality of colourblindness leads only to negative results for both educators and students, while Newton and Soltani (2017) explained that colourblindness erases the reality of privilege within the dominant culture, minimizing the lived experiences of racialized people. Teachers have a responsibility to reach students where they are and encourage them to grow as learners and individuals; however, if colourblind practices are utilized by teachers within school settings, all students cannot be reached and encouraged, thus hindering their growth.

Successful anti-racist education within school settings employs equitable practices, which acknowledge the reality of race and exposes the actuality of the lived experiences of all peoples: Black, Indigenous, People of Colour, and White, while teachers recognize that all people experience life differently and accept that "power and privilege" is afforded to those who are White, but that "pain

and suffering" is the burden of many Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (Newton & Soltani, 2017, p. 98). This acknowledgment opens the door to honest conversations, providing much needed perspective into how the world is experienced by others. When asked to share my perspective following a fatal incident involving race with other educators, one colleague who proudly professed racial colourblindness, admitted in shock the realization of the reality of my lived experience as a Black woman. The ensuing discussion created a space of awareness for the educators whose lived experiences did not mirror my own, providing an opportunity to appreciate the stories that students could potentially share in a similar space.

Implicit Bias

Teachers—as all people—have their own preference for, and ideas about, many things. These preferences and ideas include how their classroom should function and how the students within those classrooms should behave. Important to anti-racist education, but often overlooked, is the recognition that these expectations are often fueled by teachers' own implicit biases. Specifically addressing teachers' expectations of students, implicit bias is identified as subconscious associations connected to racialized people, which includes teachers' ideas of their students' potential, teachers' interpretation of students' value, and determining their students' integrity (Carter et al., 2017; Suttie, 2016). Discriminatory behaviour toward students is often fueled by implicit biases held by teachers, because the brain unconsciously carries "old biases and preferences" toward various racial and ethnic groups (Carter et al., p. 9). Teachers who refuse to address their own teaching practices while choosing to blame racialized students for their own lack of success are evidence of devaluing students (McKamey, 2020). Teachers with unchecked biases create a foundation for unfair judgement calls, often producing negative results for students.

I had a personal experience with a young racialized student I happened upon, collapsed in the middle of the school hallway in obvious pain, evidenced by the intensity of the wailing. I observed two teachers assigned to supervise the hallways at that time, peering around the wall watching this student in anguish, choosing not to offer aid. Additionally, after making myself available to this student, meeting her on the ground, her teacher came out of the classroom and instructed me to leave the student alone, citing reasons such as cell phone use in the classroom. In a very brief but highly charged exchange, I informed the teacher that a student in need deserves support and I proceeded to assist her as the teacher, uninterested, returned to the classroom. After a few moments on the ground, assuring the student that I truly cared for her safety, she divulged that a family member had contacted her while in class to inform her that a loved one had been found murdered. After enlisting the help of another staff member equipped to handle the next steps, I went back to the classroom teacher to follow up on the incident. After further conversation, the classroom teacher informed me that the student should not have been in the school in the first place because she was labelled as problematic and our school was not looking to house students of that nature. Teachers carry a great deal of power and authority in their classrooms, which when mishandled can cause a great deal of damage. Husband (2016) regarded teachers' low expectations of racialized students as a by-product of high levels of implicit bias; therefore, it is essential for teachers to regularly perform personal inventory of their beliefs.

During my undergrad as a music student, it was common practice for potential short-term employers to offer short-term paid singing jobs to vocal students; however, one instructor had the power to disseminate this information to singers of his choosing even though he knew and worked with only a small number of vocal students. In my final year, the instructor approached me for the very first time with an opportunity of which he did not have a high opinion, but articulated that he felt it was well suited for me even though he was unfamiliar with me. As a member of an incredibly small racialized population in the school at that time, it felt less like an opportunity and more like a low-class compromise. Posting every opportunity in a public space without prejudice would have provided all students an equal opportunity to choose their success, rather than their opportunities being chosen for them. Observing and facilitating an environment for change is often challenging,

especially when the change required is internal. Teachers who choose to confront and replace their initial biases and low expectations of students from racially diverse backgrounds ensure that those students have access to more equitable academic outcomes and opportunities (Husband, 2016). Students with more opportunities experience higher levels of success.

Conclusion

Anti-racist education as a tool for equitable education bridges the gap between those who have been historically oppressed or marginalized because of race, ethnicity, or culture. Challenging barriers such as systemic and structural racism, colourblindness, and implicit bias creates opportunities for success for all students regardless of their race, ethnicity, or culture.

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Distance Learning Support for Refugee Students

Agnieszka Desjardins

Abstract

The suspension of onsite classes from March to June 2020 as a result of COVID-19 posed many challenges for educators supporting LAL (Literacy, Academics and Language) refugee youth. This paper reflects on the practices of a collaborative EAL (English as an Additional Language) and LAL high school team. It also addresses the challenges of remote learning for LAL students including a lack of intensive programming and direct teacher instruction, limited technological skills, and communication barriers. In the end, the success of delivering the program in a COVID-19 environment was nested in the collaborative approach.

The COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on the educational system. While distance learning continues to be a struggle for many students, it has been especially challenging for newcomer refugee youth. On March 20, 2020, onsite classes in Manitoba were suspended to prevent the spread of the coronavirus, and learning began through distance learning platforms. This type of instruction has posed many challenges for refugee students in Brandon accessing Literacy, Academics and Language (LAL) programming. Without access to intensive programming with daily teacher supports, and given the limited technological skills and communication barriers, distance learning has not been an ideal learning environment for LAL learners. Despite the many challenges, my English as an Additional Language (EAL) colleagues and I collaboratively provided additional supports to make learning accessible for our students. Using the online platform TEAMS, we targeted instruction and interventions specific to our students' needs and language proficiencies. In addition, we utilized our extended community resources such as interpreters and SWIS (Settlement Workers in Schools) to address technological limitations and provide interpretation services. During this time of distress and uncertainty, relationship building (Carrington, 2019) was the key to our students' engagement during distance learning.

LAL Learners in Manitoba

In Manitoba, refugee students with severe gaps in education are known as LAL learners (Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2011). These students have had interrupted schooling or a complete lack of formal education due to war and other conflict in their home countries, or other stressors (Baecher et al., 2019). They require intensive programming in literacy and numeracy, in addition to developing their language proficiency and knowledge in mainstream content-area courses (Lee, 2016). Learning is a challenging process for LAL learners and their progress is significantly slower than Canadian-born speakers of English. Between 2016 and 2018, an average of 105 high school students in Manitoba had interrupted schooling and 33 had never attended school (Macintosh, 2020). The suspension of onsite classes due to COVID-19 concerned our school team. Without intensive teacher supports and daily interaction, teachers worried that the learning gap would be widened even further for LAL students.

Intensive Teacher Supports

When school closures occurred on March 20, 2020, educators were concerned about language and skill regression, and students falling behind, without the physical presence of their teachers (De La Rosa, 2020). They worried about their ability to provide the same instruction through a distance learning platform, since oral communication is developed through social interaction (Granados, 2020). LAL students benefit from intensive teacher supports, differentiated instruction, visual supports, hands-on and experiential learning, and opportunities to interact with peers. All of these

factors play a crucial role in bridging the gaps for LAL students. When schools changed to a distance learning platform, educators knew that they could not duplicate face-to-face interaction online (Granados, 2020). Refugee youth already struggle with understanding the educational system and the school culture (Li & Grineva, 2016), so carrying out instruction and outlining expectations are difficult to achieve without physical, in-school supports. Replicating this type of programming through a distance learning platform has been a challenging task for school teams.

To address these issues, my colleagues used TEAMS to communicate with students. First, they created a class page that contained daily messages, scaffolded lessons, and audio and visual supports in simplified language appropriate to their students' language levels. Second, they facilitated daily scheduled class time for students to interact with one another and to check in with the teacher. This provided students with step-by-step instructions and opportunities to discuss class assignments (Belsha, 2020) at a much slower pace. It also encouraged students to ask questions, complete class work together, and request support for other courses if needed. Most importantly, teachers were able to observe students' socio-emotional status and, if needed, refer them to additional supports, such as a social worker, or me, the EAL resource teacher/counsellor. Unfortunately, despite daily teacher access and a structured online learning environment, many students did not engage in distance learning. My colleagues were frustrated because students missed scheduled class time, requested support outside school hours, or did not engage altogether. Around the two-week period of distance learning, we accessed additional supports to address these issues. We reached out to our Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) team.

Settlement Workers in Schools

SWIS is a joint partnership between Westman Immigrant Services and Brandon School Division. Their job is similar to that of cultural brokers, whose role is to connect "different cultural groups to enhance practice and communication" (Brar-Josan et al., 2019, p. 512). In the Brandon School Division partnership, SWIS workers provide services to their clients and children, such as information and orientation on Canadian culture. They act as liaisons between their clients and schools to "facilitate culturally sensitive communication among school staff, students, and families to foster cultural understanding" (Westman Immigrant Services, personal communication, June 9, 2020). At our school, the SWIS workers are onsite on a weekly basis. Their main goal is to help students and families settle in Brandon and to make students feel comfortable at school. SWIS workers have a strong existing collaboration with our LAL and EAL team. Over the past two years, they have provided student supports in the form of workshops, presentations, activities, and individual student meetings. Prior to school suspension, most of our students and families were already connected to a SWIS worker. It was therefore a simple process for them to support us in communicating with families and gathering information about the lack of engagement in distance learning. One of the main reasons students were not engaging was limited technological skills.

Lack of Technological Skills

Technology plays an essential role in distance learning. In addition to gaps in literacy and numeracy, LAL students also possess a limited knowledge of computer literacy. For this reason, engaging with teachers online, accessing school work, and submitting assignments has been difficult. Students are not yet able to use and are not comfortable using online platforms on their own (Breiseth, 2020). Their parents and siblings face similar challenges with technology, so LAL learners have little to no support at home. Although our school provided students with laptops and start-up instructions for distance learning, students still struggled to keep up with assignment expectations without continued explicit instruction, especially in their non-LAL classes.

In order to support students and their families with technology, our team accessed the support of our SWIS workers. First, we created a spreadsheet at our departmental student intervention meeting. We organized the students into red, yellow, and green zones to identify which students

were and were not engaging in distance learning. We then added columns to indicate whether the students had access to technology (school provided or not) and internet access. Next, we created a triage process to focus on students who were not engaging altogether. Finally, we connected virtually with our quarto-lingual SWIS worker and began to contact families. Using the data gathered, we made an action plan to follow up with students. Our support included virtual online meetings with screen sharing and direct first language translation. This allowed the students to see the steps to access their class materials and resources. If slow internet connection was the issue, the SWIS worker provided additional supports to families, such as information for contacting internet providers. Coordination of these meetings was effective, but came with challenges.

Coordinating meetings with all parties involved was difficult. It required connecting with families ahead of time and guiding them with step-by-step instructions for logging on to the computer, turning on Wi-Fi, and navigating through TEAMS. SWIS workers also made reminder calls and reviewed instructions to log on the day of the meetings. The greatest challenges occurred if one person did not join the meeting. It meant setting an alternate date and coordinating another set of schedules. If this process did not work for specific students, individual teachers then provided print copies of books and school work. If transportation played a factor in the students' ability to pick up printed homework, teachers delivered work directly to their homes. Using a triage process, we were able to focus on students requiring the most intensive supports. Afterwards, we saw an increase of student engagement in distance learning and, most importantly, students and their families made stronger connections with the school team. The ability to communicate information to students and families in their first language was a critical factor in the success of these meetings. Language has been, and continues to be, a barrier between LAL students and schools.

Language and Communication Barriers

Communication is a pre-existing barrier between LAL students, families, and teachers. Newcomer LAL students possess limited English skills to participate in basic conversations. To bridge the language barriers, Brandon School Division has relied on in-person meetings with interpreters and SWIS workers share important information to newcomer families. Although the same supports are still being used during COVID-19, meeting in person is not possible. Arranging a phone meeting with all parties involved, or a meeting online, is a much more complex and frustrating process. During school suspension, the amount of information has been intense and overwhelming. It has also been primarily shared in English and has therefore been inaccessible for newcomer families with limited English skills. Refugee families already feel stressed by their lack of language proficiency and are intimidated by the Canadian school system (Koyama & Ghosh, 2018), so it is no surprise that many chose to opt-out of distance learning due to communication barriers.

Similar to technological support, we used our SWIS workers as interpreters to contact home in first language and share information on behalf of specific teachers and the school. We used this process extensively at the beginning, but discovered that many things were lost in translation and that follow up calls needed to occur. Within three weeks, we adapted our process to a call or video conference meeting on TEAMS and included everyone who was involved with that specific student. Our collaborative team included the classroom teacher, EAL resource/guidance teacher, SWIS worker, interpreter if needed, and the student and parent(s). Although difficult to arrange, the process was the most effective way to work through the challenges. We communicated information to families about school updates, picking up school belongings, accessing additional supports such as food banks, strategies for taking care of mental health, school expectations, and homework help. The meetings also provided the students and their families, the opportunity to ask specific questions in their first language, which they were most comfortable using.

In addition to using SWIS workers, the English as an Additional Language team created a TEAMS page for all English as an Additional Language students in our school. This was a platform to share important school information, motivational messages, and specific challenges (such as reading a book aloud or a cooking demonstration) that students could participate in to develop their

English skills. They also had the opportunity to win prizes. Our SWIS workers were included on the page and had the ability to post messages in students' first languages. Within the first two weeks, we saw an increase of student engagement on the group page. The higher proficiency English students uploaded exemplars and wrote supportive comments to one another. This provided the visual and auditory support for students with a lower level of English proficiency. For many LAL students, school is a priority and is considered "one of the best things about being in Canada" (Stewart, 2011, p. 68). The combination of using the Settlement Workers in Schools and working as an EAL collaborative team, helped us address many of the communication barriers for our students. Our primary goal was to keep them connected to their school community.

The Need for Collaboration and Connection

As educators, "it is easy to fall into isolation" (Carrington, 2019, xxii). The impact of COVID-19 forced us into isolation and made our jobs as educators even more complex. During school suspension, the English as an Additional Language team created a supportive and inclusive learning community to meet the specific needs of refugee students. As a result, the students benefitted because the focus was on their specific needs and support was available (Kirkpatrick et al., 2019) through a team of educators and community supports.

During COVID-19 school suspension, the EAL team used exhaustive resources in attempts to engage students in learning. Unfortunately for some students, learning was not possible because many had added stresses such as taking care of younger siblings (Macintosh, 2020), a home environment that made it impossible to learn, triggered trauma, lack of electronic devices for all family members, and parents who were unable to support due to their own limited language proficiency, literacy, and computer literacy. For these students, the most important consideration was their emotional well-being. To continue to keep the students connected, the EAL teachers phoned students and arranged social-distancing home visits. The visits included the entire EAL teacher team, arriving in separate vehicles to drop off school supplies, paper copies of homework, small motivational prizes, and larger participation prizes for those engaging in the challenges. A lack of support and encouragement from parents and teachers are some of the reasons that refugee students drop out of school (Yohani, 2010), and our team wanted to ensure that students were felt supported and connected during this uncertain time. In order to keep students connected, the EAL teachers used face-to-face conversations to unite with their students (Carrington, 2019). Making connections and building relationships was key during distance learning.

Conclusion

Newcomer refugee youth are at a great disadvantage during COVID-19 distance learning. Since school suspension, LAL learners have attempted to engage online despite previous disrupted schooling or lack of formal education, weak computer literacy skills, and limited access to technology. Without the appropriate context and support of interpreters, same-language peers, and community supports such as SWIS, problems in communication are more complex than ever. Despite these challenges, the EAL team at my school used a collaborative approach to support LAL refugee students. Using TEAMS, we adapted instruction to our students' needs and language learning proficiencies. With the support of the SWIS workers, we provided first language supports to aid with lack of technological skills and communication barriers. Through collaborative practices and building connections with each other and our students, we supported our LAL refugee students.

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Frazzled: Rediscovering Our Why

Patti Everett

Abstract

Teacher burnout is a growing concern. *Stressors of the teaching profession can become too much. Emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and personal and professional inefficiency are three main facets of burning out. By reconnecting to others and themselves, teachers can conquer burnout. Self-care, including getting enough rest, is also an important element to overcoming the stress of the job.*

Educators have forgotten the enthusiasm of acquiring their first teaching position and classroom. When the job becomes too much, the outcome is often burnout. Burnout is described as "a state of chronic stress that leads to physical and emotional exhaustion, cynicism, detachment, and feelings of ineffectiveness and lack of accomplishment" (Tapp, 2020, What Is Teacher Burnout? section, para. 2). The growing concern of teacher burnout can be concentrated into three main facets: “emotional exhaustion, a feeling of cynicism, and a sense of personal and professional inefficiency” (Capone & Petrillo, 2018, p. 1757). One suggestion is that teachers who are emotionally invested have a higher chance of burning out. Being “fired up” by the profession should not be considered a negative (Fernet et al., 2012, p. 270). One method to prevent burnout is to reconnect, not only to purpose, but also to self and to others. Connection will assist in bringing back the feeling of joy. Self-care and compassion, including getting enough rest, are also ways of preventing and conquering burnout. Additionally, educators can increase their efficacy, and triumph over burnout, by understanding how they cope with stressors and build resilience. Reminding teachers to look after their own well-being can change the narrative from a negative into a positive.

Causes of Teacher Burnout

Teaching has been described as one of the most stressful professions because it often leads to emotional exhaustion. Educators describe the situation of having to be “on” continuously as a cause for this weariness. “Being on” constantly can be described as showing emotions that one is not actually feeling or suppressing emotions that may not be considered appropriate (Larrivee, 2012, p. 38). Teachers often have confliction between the roles they play, because they are the providers of content and curriculum, but also play the part of counsellor, nurturer, and friend. The weight of role overload occurs when the emotional needs of students weigh more than the teacher has experience for. The emotions of teachers are shaped by experiences of influence and authority, causing an inability to let go of what is beyond their control (Larrivee, 2012). The emotional consequences can be overwhelming. Emotional fatigue, also known as compassion fatigue, can be triggered by an educator’s own trauma. These are the stories, which educators have yet to make sense of, causing them to put up a wall, or armor of protection (Larrivee, 2012). It is no secret that being a teacher requires a large heart but also a strong one. Compassion or emotional fatigue is often one of the main causes of stress within educators.

A feeling of cynicism can be caused by a lack of overall job satisfaction and a perceived lack of respect, creating unhappiness (Capone & Petrillo, 2018). The pessimism surrounding an educator in this state can be overbearing for others, especially if they are dealing with their own negative thoughts. These feelings of malice toward the job and all that goes with it can feel like losing a piece of who the educators believed they were. The feeling of disconnect or depersonalization can cause a perception of little support and even a fear of job security, causing mental health issues. Cynicism towards the profession is often the result when stress levels become unbearable. Teachers no longer can see their own growth and efficiency.

Personal and professional efficiency is required for educators to feel competent in their profession. The sensation of professional efficacy, in education, often relies on whether a teacher

observes that their students are achieving and doing well. Teachers' perceptions that students' failures are a direct result of their teaching abilities can cause their mental health to suffer as they begin to question their efficacy. They struggle to feel a sense of accomplishment and to maintain a personal and professional work life balance. Teachers struggle with the demands they place on themselves. They try to do it all and struggle with setting limits, leaving them feeling like nothing has been accomplished (Mielke, 2020). When this starts to happen, educators become unproductive and end up spinning their wheels, completing little. Rather than incorporating "self-protective strategies" such as stopping to take a breath, they ramp up their desire to be everything their own children need, as well as everything their students need, causing exhaustion and the feeling of being overwhelmed (Fernet et al., 2012, p. 284). The vast pressure that teachers put on themselves leads to an overall feeling of inefficacy.

Prevention and Elimination of Burnout

There are ways to prevent burnout or to help those who may already be feeling the effects of burnout within their profession. One strategy is to reconnect, not only to purpose, but also to self and others. Connection will assist in bringing back the feeling of joy within a profession. Understanding connection as energy alignment and knowing that we are all made up of energy confirms that when we share space, we are literally sharing energy (Nagoski & Nagoski, 2020). Educators need to recognize that the energy they extend affects the positive relations around them and those connections (Nagoski & Nagoski, 2020). For myself, acknowledging the power of the positive energy I extend assists in my ability to connect with, and advocate for, some of our most vulnerable youth. These connections and witnessing the success of students reminds me of my purpose and returns a sense of joy for my profession. One strategy I use to assist in increasing connection is through the practice of gratitude. By practising gratitude, we remember our social connections and are thankful for the personal relationships in our life (Larrivee, 2012). We all have the ability to alter the "trajectory" of our world by (re)connecting to those around us and being grateful for the ability to choose joy (Carrington, 2019, p. 175).

Self-care and compassion, including getting enough rest, are also ways to prevent and conquer burnout. 2020 has proven to be an exceptionally tough year, and the one reminder I share, in my role of supporting teachers, is that we grow stronger by being gentler to ourselves. Rest is the first step in repairing our bodies so that we can overcome the effects of burnout (Nagoski & Nagoski, 2020). We decrease the hormones that cause stress and improve our mood by practising self-compassion, therefore the energy we emit will be positive and inviting. Rest and self-compassion are connected. If we are un-rested we lack compassion and patience, yet when we reclaim rest we also reclaim power over the energy we emit and the overall compassion we feel toward ourselves and others (Nagoski & Nagoski, 2020). One method to ensure that negative emotions do not overcome the positive is through "expressive" writing. Writing is an effective strategy for ensuring that invasive thoughts do not take over. Writing these thoughts down permits us to make sense of, discover the meaning behind, and eliminate them all together (Larrivee, 2012). Rejuvenating compassion for ourselves creates an attitude of caring toward others that points us in the direction of supporting with empathy (Pogere et al., 2019). By increasing our self-care we can increase our resiliency, which increases our effectiveness on the job, reducing stress, and reducing the chances of burnout (Ungar, 2020).

Additionally, educators can increase their efficacy and triumph over burnout by building their resilience and understanding how they cope with stressors. Coping assists in adapting worrying feelings and modifying the setting associated with that concern. Educators who chose a "direct or direct action" coping approach are successful in decreasing teacher burnout (Pogere et al., 2019, p. 271). By recognizing the emotions of students, we build a stronger connection, which provides stronger coping strategies through relationships. Having an overall concern for students and using "problem-focused strategies" reduces compassion fatigue and increases resiliency (Pogere et al., 2019, p. 278). Resiliency increases when educators feel they are needed and are making a

contribution. Educators' stress levels decrease when they feel valued in their role both inside and outside the work environment (Ungar, 2020). Effective leadership is an important factor in building resiliency and adapting useful coping skills. For instance, leaders need to model the "life-work balance" and provide employees with a sense of responsibility and trust, by permitting them to own their classroom and to incorporate their teaching styles (Russell, 2020, p. 17). The increasing importance of these factors is relevant as we all navigate our way through a global pandemic. Facing adaptation of teaching styles and how we connect to our students and collegues must be handled through a supportive atmosphere (Kuchah, 2020). We have a responsibility to support each other in conveying a feeling of hopefulness as we work to build a large number of realistic teaching strategies while we shift how we teach and connect.

Conclusion

If educators feel an extended reaction to "chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors," they may be experiencing burnout (Maslach et al., 2001, p.397, as cited in Capone & Petrillo, 2018, p. 1758). The approach that educators use toward coping with the stressors in their professional and personal lives may directly affect how emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and a sense of personal and professional inefficiency will affect their overall mental health (García-Arroyo & Osca, 2017). Once educators are able to reconnect, not only to purpose but also to self and others, they will once again feel the joy within their profession. Reminding educators to practise self-care, get enough rest, and be compassionate with self are ways of preventing and conquering burnout. Additionally, educators can increase their efficacy and triumph over burnout by building resilience and understanding how they cope with stressors. Encouraging teachers to (re)connect with students and collegues, look after their own well-being, and understand their value can change the narrative of the demands of the job from negative to positive.

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Mathematics Education:
Problems and Solutions in Supporting a Complex System

Julie Seeley

Abstract

Students are guaranteed, by legislation, a math education that focuses on the process of mastery learning, and that incorporates an Indigenous worldview. The issue is that some teachers and principals are apprehensive or do not have the skill or knowledge to support mastery learning and Indigenous worldview in math. This article is not a reprimand, rather, it is an invitation for growth for all members of the complex system. My viable solutions to the issue of incorporating mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview are about relying on legislation, and continuous support through creating responsive professional development plans.

As a math instructional coach, providing professional development and support to students, teachers, and principals in mathematics is my job. Having educators incorporate mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview into mathematics in order to support student success is currently the most pressing issue I face. Research into this issue has helped me to understand better why incorporating mastery learning and Indigenous worldview in math is important, and is an issue to students, teachers, and principals. The research also leads me to several solutions to support students, teachers, and principals to foster changes needed. Mandating and legislating change, providing tailored professional development plans and continuous support, orchestrating opportunities to develop pedagogical leadership, and changing my thinking and approach as the coach are viable solutions. Being a math instructional coach in the kindergarten to grade 12 system requires my application of support and professional development plans across the complex system, in order to vary and be responsive to the issues and people in that system. Incorporating mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview into mathematics is the issue my current system faces, and tailoring my coaching to support each member of the system is the solution.

Supporting Students

Teaching for mastery learning and incorporating an Indigenous worldview in math education are important practices because students are entitled to a math education that helps them to understand the world around them. In Manitoba, understanding the world and land around us means incorporating and honouring an Indigenous worldview and mastery learning (Appropriate Educational Programming Regulations, 2005; Frontier School Division, n.d.; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). When students work toward mastery learning, and when they have an education that reflects an Indigenous worldview, they are better able to move through the kindergarten to grade 12 math education system (Manitoba Education, 2014). Students also more likely to graduate, seek higher education, and have a better quality of life (Hattie et al., 2017). For students, the solution to the issue of not being taught the mastery learning process and Indigenous worldview in mathematics is twofold. One solution relates to educators knowing how to support students in a way that orchestrates mastery learning, and honors and incorporates an Indigenous worldview in mathematics. The second solution is in relying on legislation and professional obligations to ensure that change is mandated.

Incorporating an Indigenous worldview and mastery learning is especially important in mathematics in Frontier School Division. It is important because it is unlikely that mastery learning will develop without incorporating an Indigenous worldview. I reached out to multiple sources to determine the student population in Frontier School Division that self-declares as Indigenous. The generalized answer I kept hearing was that between 80% and 85% of students in Frontier School Division self-identified as Indigenous (J. McCracken, Student Data Manager Administrative

Assistant, personal communication, November 15, 2020). The only hard evidence found came from Provincial budget reports. According to the Manitoba Education Schools' Finance Branch (2020), Frontier School Division reported that they expected 59.6% of their operating fund revenue for the 2019-2020 school year to come from First Nations (p. 53). This revenue is based on the enrollment of students who report treaty status and does not include non-treaty, Metis, Inuit, and students who self-declare as Indigenous. A significant proportion of Frontier School Division's student population identifies as Indigenous, so ensuring that mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview are incorporated into math education is a significant issue.

The problem of guaranteeing students' rights to an appropriate education is really an educator issue. Students are guaranteed a math education that is appropriate to them, and that orchestrates opportunities for mastery learning and incorporates an Indigenous worldview (Appropriate Educational Programming Regulations, 2005; Frontier School Division, n.d.; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). Planning for student success in these areas requires the skill and knowledge to put these teachings into practice. Feeling uncomfortable, or lacking the skill to deliver the curriculum, is not an excuse for teachers and principals to ignore it, and legislation can be leaned on to mandate change (Manitoba Teachers' Society, 2014). To have real change take hold, though, educators need to be supported and taught the skills and knowledge required, and then receive continuous feedback and support in order to see those changes through longterm (Vennebo & Aas, 2020). Mandating and legislating change is a reactive solution, while working with teachers and principals and supporting change are proactive solutions to the issue of not having mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview taught in math classrooms to students.

Supporting Teachers and Principals as Educators

Incorporating mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview into mathematics is an issue for teachers and principals, so the solutions must include changes in them. The problem is that educators feel they do not know how to incorporate Indigenous worldview and mastery learning into math education. They worry about carrying out the learning in an inauthentic way, or worry that they do not have the right or skill to teach for mastery and Indigenous worldview (Meyer & Aikenhead, 2021). This apprehension is normal, but it is not a valid excuse to exclude mastery learning and Indigenous worldview from math education. It is an invalid excuse because mastery learning and incorporating Indigenous perspectives in curriculum are mandated. The same twofold solution offered in the student section also applies here. Educators can be mandated to incorporate mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview into math education, or they can be supported and provided the learning to make these changes, and then given opportunity to practice and receive feedback.

Legislating and mandating change is less effective than supportive coaching. Holding an educator professionally accountable through progressive discipline often sours the coaching relationship and trust for a time (Brown, 2018). Sometimes, teachers and principals come around once they realize that incorporating mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview in math education benefits student growth. In some cases, though, the coaching relationship never repairs and that connection is closed off. Relying on legislation to force teacher and principal change, and mandating the use of mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview, is one solution to ensure that students receive an appropriate math education.

The solution that I am more interested in pursuing is to support students in mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview in math through working with teachers and principals. Instead of mandating or shaming educators to change, I would rather create a professional development plan that is responsive and provides continuous coaching support (Brown, 2018). The first step in creating the professional development plan requires the coach to acknowledge that change is slow and difficult (Guskey, 2002). It is important to preface this because it is easy to become defeated when a treatment is applied to the system and the effect is not immediately apparent. The next step is to provide a coaching session or a professional development opportunity, then follow the session up repeatedly with those educators so that they can be guided to reflect on and receive feedback on

the learning and growth of their students, and themselves (Desimone, 2009). Educator change takes place when student growth is apparent and there is opportunity for feedback (Keiler et al., 2020). The last piece of the process is to provide consistent coach follow up, support, and pressure to grow (Sowell, 2017). This professional development and coaching plan creates the opportunity for educator change to take root, and is a viable solution so that mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview in math education becomes incorporated into schools and classrooms.

To apply this solution to my own practice, I have organized grade-group sessions wherein I meet with all teachers of the same grade for half a day, four times a year. At these sessions, tailored professional development on skills and knowledge that are seen as needing support are provided. Following the professional development session, scheduled classroom visits with the individual educators occur multiple times when new skills are put into practice. In an upcoming grade-group session, I am working with the Indigenous Way of Life instructional coaches to present to teachers on what mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview look like in math education.

When educators feel supported and safe to share their struggles and vulnerabilities, educator change and student growth can flourish (Pearce, 2019). This may seem idealistic, but it can happen with a well-developed coaching and professional development plan. The solutions to the issue of having educators not teaching for mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview in mathematics can include discipline and legislation, or it can include space and support to grow and learn.

Supporting Principals as Pedagogical Leaders

As well as learning skills and knowledge about mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview in mathematics, principals specifically also need opportunity for professional development related to their role as the pedagogical math leaders of their schools. When principals are supported and given opportunity to practice being pedagogical math leaders a complex system change is more likely to occur (Radinger, 2014). The structure of how to apply support, feedback, and professional development for teacher change can also be applied to principal change (Desimone, 2019). Supportive coaching and a professional development plan for principals is a solution to the issue of not having mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview taught in math classrooms.

Pedagogical leadership skills are not always tacit to principals. When learning to lead, there is not one prescribed manual to follow, nor are principals given a list of questions that help drill deeper into math pedagogy (Davis & Renert, 2012). Some principals, in fact, try to delegate to coaches the responsibility of being the pedagogical leader. This delegation, or avoidance, is an attempt to circumvent tough conversations and mentorship in pedagogy and practice. Again like teachers, principals do not feel like they know how to, or have the skills to, lead those tough conversations (Radinger, 2014). They do not know how to facilitate those conversations and move thinking from surface learning to deep or transfer learning (Hattie et al., 2017). Learning to be the pedagogical leaders of their schools is where principals are looking for support, and giving them exactly that is the solution to ensure that they have the skills to incorporate mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview into math education across their schools.

Principals need the opportunity to receive professional development on being pedagogical leaders, and then receive the same follow up support and pressure that teachers experience (Radinger, 2014). They also need time with other principals, so that they can practice some of these skills and situations with others in the same role, and practice having tough pedagogical conversations (Vennebo & Aas, 2020). In Frontier School Division, principals are required to attend professional development sessions with their teachers. Principals are also required to attend their own meetings wherein instructional coaches, principals, and superintendents work alongside them to build skills in pedagogical leadership. Focus will be applied in the upcoming meetings to include opportunity for scenario or real problem solving regarding the incorporation of mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview in math. When principals become the pedagogical leaders of their schools, teacher change, student growth, and change in the complex system happens much more effectively (Pearce, 2019). When given professional development and support, principals can pedagogically

lead and cause change in the issue of the lack of incorporation of mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview in mathematics.

Math Coach Development

My last issue and solution to incorporating an Indigenous worldview and mastery learning in math education is potentially my most important or most damaging tool: myself. As the coach, I have to support teachers, principals, and students in the kindergarten to grade 12 math system. I am the decisive element in how this is going to be carried out and whether what I say humanizes or dehumanizes the people I work with (Ginott, 1972). How I create space for others to learn, and how I choose to lead, are all factors that I control (Brown, 2018). The issue presented throughout this work is my issue, and comes from the environment that I am in. Therefore, the solutions also have to include change in me (Davis & Simmt, 2006). In complexity science, all members of the system have a role to play and have power to effect change (Davis & Renert). My skills have to vary, and I have to be responsive to the learners I have in front of me. I also need to have courage and knowledge to have hard conversations, as well as the math knowledge for teaching (Vennebo & Aas, 2020). As a coach, I meet with the other divisional and provincial numeracy leads, take coursework in this area, read professionally, live as a learner, and work with my own mentors to build my skills so that I work more effectively with others. When effecting change, a person's most powerful tool is oneself, and engaging in reflection is part of the solution to my issue.

Conclusion

It is easy to point fingers, be angry, and say that not providing an opportunity for mastery learning and an incorporating and Indigenous worldview in mathematics is the problem, and that teachers and principals should take responsibility and change. It is much harder owning that the only thing that one can truly control is oneself (Brown, 2018). I am the coach, and if I want things to change I have an obligation to help change them. My solutions to this issue come from a variety of stances, one being a hard-nosed one where I could solely rely on legislations and professional obligations to mandate teacher and principal change. The other stance is to support by creating professional development plans for teachers, principals, and students that are responsive their specific needs. Having educators incorporate mastery learning and an Indigenous worldview into mathematics to ensure that students receive appropriate math education is my issue, and providing continuous support and responsive professional development is my solution. Although legislating seems quick and rewarding, it rarely causes actual change because, even if mandated, teachers and principals still do not have the skills or tools to cause change, and their fears of doing harm or not having the authority or skills still remain (Meyer & Aikenhead, 2021). Honouring the mastery learning process and incorporating Indigenous worldview into mathematics requires all members of the complex system to commit to working and learning together for change, not mandating it.

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Overcoming Learning Barriers of Hutterian Students

Tara Knoll

Abstract

English Language Learners, such as my Hutterian students, struggle to overcome a variety of learning barriers. I examined a variety of instructional methods to determine what would help them. The first aspect I explored was how English Language Learners acquire literacy skills. I also investigated how to expand my students' background knowledge. Furthermore, I studied how to minimize the consequences of teaching kindergarten to grade 4 in a multigrade classroom. The final learning barrier was how to obtain beneficial instructional methods on my school's inadequate budget. I am developing my understanding of the best teaching practices to help Hutterian students.

My Hutterian students work hard to overcome the learning barriers they encounter as English Language Learners. Explicit instruction helps them to overcome misconceptions as they learn to read in English. Building their background knowledge increases their reading comprehension. I transformed my teaching practices to overcome the learning barriers in a multigrade classroom setting on a colony. Accessing quality instructional methods to support Hutterian students is essential. I have experimented with solutions to overcome my students' learning barriers.

Common Misconceptions About Reading

My students demonstrate a pattern of common misconceptions as they learn to read in English. I boost their confidence that is damaged from the daily misconceptions they encounter (Gove & Wetterberg, 2011). My students require explicit instruction on letter knowledge to overcome letter misconceptions (Kaye & Lose, 2018). Lack of exposure to English words reduces their ability to identify words automatically (Crosson et al., 2019). I teach my students lessons to increase their word knowledge to identify words automatically. I simplify the overwhelming number of decoding strategies my students are using to read simple books. I test a variety of solutions to help my students overcome the misconceptions they experience as they learn to read in English.

The literacy misconceptions my students encounter daily damages their confidence. I see embarrassment and hopelessness in my grade 4 students' eyes because they are unable to read. I build my students' confidence when I explain that English takes longer to learn than other languages (Gove & Wetterberg, 2011). We talk about how we need to be easier on ourselves because of the challenges we encounter. My students' confidence improves as they read enjoyable books, which are outside of their assigned reading level (Routman, 2003). My students are excited to show me how they can read their books easily. The books are below their grade level; however, I notice an increase in their confidence because they feel like real readers.

I recreated my lessons to provide explicit instructions on the common misconceptions that my students encounter as they learn English letters. I complete frequent letter name and sound identification assessments to see what letters my students need to focus on (Gove & Wetterberg, 2011). The students also perform an action for each letter to increase their memory on letter sounds (Vacca & Vacca, 2015). I teach an explicit lesson on the differences between similar letters, such as *b*, *d*, and *p*. In one lesson, I show my students' the *b* and *d* on our classroom alphabet. My grade 1 students now look at the alphabet before writing *b* or *d*, to make sure they write the correct letter. Directing my instruction to consider common misconceptions increases their letter knowledge.

My students struggle to identify words automatically because they have less exposure to English words. I experimented with strategies to overcome the limits to automatically identify words (Crosson et al., 2019). One solution to help my students is to label everything in my classroom with the English and German word (Vacca & Vacca, 2015). These labels develop my students' word knowledge because of the increase in frequency they see the word attached to the object. The

labels also display English spelling patterns for my students to learn. The rich classroom print supports my students when they spell during independent writing time. My students' increase their English word knowledge to improve their ability to identify words automatically.

I minimize word decoding misconceptions by reducing the numerous decoding strategies that my students use. The Sound-Spelling-Meaning model provides a simple structure for my students to follow (Davis et al., 2020). The first step teaches students to look at sound and spelling patterns to solve an unknown word. The Sound-Spelling-Meaning model suggests three strategies as compared to the large number of strategies that I taught my students. The second step of this model teaches students to check the word in the sentence to determine whether it makes sense. This strategy benefits my students who over rely on thinking about if what they read sounds correct, therefore, mixing up similar-looking sight words. The Sound-Spelling-Meaning model simplifies the numerous decoding strategies that my overwhelmed students need to use. I support my students to overcome the common misconceptions they encounter when learning to read.

Background Knowledge for Reading Comprehension

Students require background knowledge to comprehend the books they read. Students build this knowledge through their daily experiences (Dempsey, 2020). My students' limited exposure to life outside of the colony influences their background knowledge. As a result, my students do not have the life experiences necessary to create a deep understanding of the books they read (Goodwin & Perkins, 2015). I provide opportunities for my students to build their background knowledge by creating real-life experiences in the classroom (Vacca & Vacca, 2015). Also, students who create stories in their mind naturally comprehend books. Internal stories free up students' attention to focus on other literacy skills. Background knowledge facilitates reading comprehension.

I create opportunities for my students to build their background knowledge through designing real-life experiences in the classroom. Thematic teaching is a strategy to enhance students' background knowledge by creating opportunities for students to experience the curriculum in a memorable way (Vacca & Vacca, 2015). Thematic units benefit English Language Learners because it provides them with exposure to vocabulary in various contexts. These repeated exposures deepen their understanding by connecting their past knowledge with new information. Students use props, relating to the content, to enhance learning experiences (Dempsey, 2020). Interacting with these objects mimic real-life scenarios. My students' reading comprehension increases as they participate in experiences to build their background knowledge.

I teach strategies to build my students' internal stories to help improve their reading comprehension. Internal stories free up students' attention to focus on other literacy skills (Goodwin & Perkins, 2015). My students practice creating an internal story by making a movie in their head as they read a book (Serravallo, 2015). We discuss the movies that play in our minds as we read our books. My students learn to recognize that they need to reread if they are unable to see a movie in their mind. I can see my students' reading comprehension level according to the details they explain in their internal story. I encourage students who are struggling to stop frequently to check whether they are creating an internal story. My students' reading comprehension improves as they focus on their internal stories. Background knowledge is essential for reading comprehension.

Learning Barriers in a Multigrade Classroom

My students overcome learning barriers due to the dynamics of being in a multigrade classroom on a colony. Multigrade classroom teachers struggle to balance numerous grade levels for all curriculum areas (Taole, 2020). My kindergarten to grade 4 classroom has a huge learning gap between my youngest and oldest students. The students sometimes work alone when there is only one student working on a grade level outcome. The older students cannot work independently at grade level tasks because of their limited reading comprehension (Quail & Smyth, 2014). To overcome these barriers, I combine common kindergarten to grade 4 curriculum outcomes to

support students in the whole-group setting of my multigrade classroom.

I spent a significant quantity of time becoming familiar with the content that I teach my students, in order to balance all of the curriculums. I combine common themes that I notice among the grades. I started with creating 20 units out of the kindergarten to grade 4 social studies curriculums (Manitoba Education and Youth, 2003). I also combined the kindergarten to grade 4 math curriculums (Manitoba Education, 2013). My students can now play math games together, working with grade-appropriate skills, while I direct learning opportunities for everyone. My students no longer struggle to work alone. I am now exploring how to teach literacy as a whole group in order to ensure that my students are reaching their highest potential (Quail & Smyth, 2014). I expand my curriculum knowledge to overcome the barriers of being in a multigrade classroom.

Instructional Methods

Accessing quality instructional methods to support Hutterian students as English Language Learners is essential for their success. My students require a different instructional style than English speaking students. I provide my students with scaffolding supports as we work together during interactive reading and writing time (Vacca & Vacca, 2015). The instructional methods that my school division recommends are not as beneficial as first thought, such as Reading Recovery and the three-cueing systems (Chapman & Tunmer, 2016). The Sound-Spelling-Meaning model supports readers by simplifying the process to decode an unknown word. I adapt my instructional methods to make sure that I support my students to reach their highest potential.

English Language Learners require a different instructional style than English speaking students. I provide my students with extra supports through scaffolding. My students require additional repetitions of explicit instructions on a skill before they can work independently. My schedule now focuses on interactive reading and writing (Pinnell & Fountas, 2011). We read a grade-appropriate book during interactive reading. We use the book as a model to create our own story during interactive writing (Vacca & Vacca, 2015, p. 64). We build sentences together while we practice spelling and other literacy skills (Routman, 2003). All students practice the skills that we learn as they contribute to creating a classroom book. My students require different instructional styles, such as providing extra supports through scaffolding.

My school division recommends teaching methods that are not as beneficial as first thought. My division has been recommending the three-cueing systems. I restructured my knowledge on literacy instruction to overcome the damage caused by using the three-cueing systems (Davis et al., 2020). These systems do not create the habits of skilled readers. The three-cueing system states that students can make mistakes if it does not change the meaning of the story. As a result, my students do not pay attention to the visual cues in words if what they read makes sense. The methods that my school division recommends decrease my students' word identification accuracy.

I updated my literacy instruction to a method that supports students in their reading development. The Sound-Spelling-Meaning model simplifies the decoding process (Davis et al., 2020). Skilled readers look at spelling patterns and letter-sound relationships. The Sound-Spelling-Meaning model teaches students first to decode a word by looking at its spelling and sounds. The students check whether the word makes sense in the sentence, in order to ensure that they have decoded the word properly. Repeated experiences in decoding letter patterns teaches students to identify words automatically (Davis et al., 2020). I hope that the Sound-Spelling-Meaning model provides my students with the quality instructional methods to help them achieve success. This model is one of the instructional methods that I have found effective for Hutterian students.

Conclusion

I switched my instructional methods to help my Hutterian students overcome the numerous barriers as they learn to read in English. I provide my students with explicit instruction on the common literacy misconceptions that they encounter as English Language Learners. I provide my

students with opportunities to increase their background knowledge in order to improve their reading comprehension. My instructional practices now overcome the disadvantages of being in a multigrade classroom. I increased my knowledge on instructional methods that benefit my Hutterian students as English Language Learners. I love expanding my knowledge on how to help my Hutterian students to overcome the various barriers as English Language Learners.

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Teacher Burnout: A Failure in Leadership

Kristen Phillips

Abstract

The rate of teacher burnout is increasing because school leaders are failing to modify their expectations of teachers. Teachers are adapting to meet COVID-19 protocols, but are paying the price of drained resiliency reserves due to a decrease in self-efficacy and the quality of professional relationships, and an increase in the pace of technological integration. School leaders can improve teacher resiliency by offering supports such as ongoing professional development, regular consultations, increasing time resources, and employing information technology professionals.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to light the failure of school leaders to adapt their expectations of teachers. An already alarming rate of teacher burnout is being worsened by the change in standard operating procedures to meet pandemic protocols. To counteract this trend, teachers need to deepen their resiliency reserves. For this to occur, a change is needed to the supports that teachers can access.

The Problem: Asking Too Much

Teacher burnout causes many good teachers to leave the classroom for the wrong reasons. I have experienced the beginning stages of burnout several times in my career, not because I am lacking, but because of the expectations placed on me by the school, school community and other levels of management. Burnout, characterized by teachers interacting less with students and being less interested and invested in their lives, "exhaustion, hopelessness, and loss of efficacy" (Schussler, 2020, p. 646), leads to lower levels of student achievement and higher levels of student misbehavior (Jensen & Solheim, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic is rapidly intensifying certain causal elements of teacher burnout, including a decrease in teachers' sense of self-efficacy, a decrease in the quality of teacher-to-teacher relationships, and an increase in the pace that teachers are expected to integrate technology into their classrooms Sokol et al., 2020). School leaders, at all levels, need to acknowledge that their expectations of teachers can exceed what teachers are capable of and to change the supports that are offered to teachers.

COVID-19 makes teachers question their self-efficacy to meet all curricular outcomes (Capone & Petrillo, 2018). This increase in self-doubt happens because following the pandemic protocols uses up time that would otherwise be spent teaching curricular lessons. As well, over the past few decades, single-family homes have grown, parents have become more stressed, and screens have become babysitters – all of which lead children to spend less time learning by being in community (Brendtro et al., 2002). To fill this learning deficit, teachers devote lessons to teaching emotional self-regulation. Students can be taught strategies to self-regulate when they are calm, but can only truly learn to use them when they are dysregulated (Carrington, 2019). Emotionally co-regulating with students is exhausting. One year, I taught a student who had daily meltdowns and with whom I was continually co-regulating. I was exhausted every day. Teachers' sense of self-efficacy has been diminished by the time COVID-19 protocols and emotional self-regulation lessons take from their short instructional time. School leaders need to recognize the time constraints placed on teachers and to prioritize outcomes to combat the loss of self-efficacy in teachers.

The creation of cohorts to meet COVID-19 protocols has decreased the quality of teacher-to-teacher relationships. It is through building relationships with other teachers that a teacher builds a circle of support, and through a circle of support that a teacher finds a greater ability to cope (Sokol et al., 2020). One year, my teaching assignment changed a day and a half before the start of the school year. I changed buildings and proceeded to struggle the entire year because I was not given the opportunity to create a support network within my new school community. Social distancing

requirements have also diminished the time teachers have to bond with each other. Cohorts have led to the establishment of extra recess periods at my school to accommodate social distancing in the school yard. This means that grade K-2 teachers see grades 3-5 teachers only before and after school. In my division, the ban on singing, means that choir classes have been put on hold (River East Transcona School Division, 2020). This eliminated the only time in the school day cycle set aside for grade level teacher team meetings. School leaders needs to find a way to allocate time for teacher-to-teacher bonds to be built and tended to within the school day despite COVID-19 restrictions.

Worldwide, teachers have been given the daunting task of incorporating technology into curricula from kindergarten to grade 12 (Califf & Brooks, 2020). While many positive outcomes are associated with this trend, the current pace of technological roll-out is causing technostress in teachers and is leading to teacher burnout. Techno-insecurity is felt when individuals fear losing their job to someone else with a greater understanding of technology (Califf & Brooks, 2020). The sudden and complete shift to online learning, in March of 2020, has led to an increase in teacher techno-insecurity. Teachers were inundated with online resources to help them teach remotely, but were provided with little to no time to learn and integrate the new programs into their teaching while continuing to lead their classes (Sokol et al., 2020). I was overwhelmed in March 2020 and learned to use Microsoft Teams by trial and error as I was teaching students. I used activities that my students knew, and could complete independently, while I adapted my in-person lessons. School leaders need to give teachers time to incorporate technology into their pedagogy in a way that makes sense to them individually.

Teacher burnout leads half of teachers to leave their current teaching assignment, or the career, entirely within their first five years of teaching (Schussler, 2020). The range of negative emotions a teacher experiences during burnout negatively affect the classroom community (Jensen & Solheim, 2019). COVID-19 restrictions that began in March of 2020 amplified some sources of teacher burnout. Teacher efficacy, teacher-to-teacher relationships, and technological integration into pedagogy will improve once all school leaders recognize when their expectations of teachers exceed what the teachers are capable of and improved supports are provided for teachers.

The Solution: A Change in Supports

A decline in self-efficacy, faltering professional relationships and an increase in techno-insecurity are three contributing factors to teacher burnout. The ever-changing COVID-19 restrictions that have been in place since March 2020 have high-lighted that many supports currently offered to teachers are reactive solutions that do not eliminate the source of stress or help teachers build resiliency. School leaders need to offer proactive supports and resources for teachers to expand their resiliency reserves (Damico, 2020). These proactive measures could include ongoing professional development, regular consultations of front-line educators, an increase in time resources and employing information technology (IT) professionals.

For teachers to become more resilient, school leaders need to change the professional development (PD) opportunities that are offered. Rather than leading PD sessions that are one-off or behavior management based, teachers require ongoing PD that is relationship centered. This kind of PD will increase teacher confidence to co-regulate with students and will increase their ability to cope through consistent reminders of why they are using a particular pedagogy. Dr. Jody Carrington (2019) presented the idea of the “light up” in her book *Kids These Days* (p. 30). To help teachers remain passionate about the students who are the most difficult, she offers a “Stay Lit” conference every January and a “Relit” conference every November (Carrington, 2020). I read Dr. Carrington’s book in February 2020 and it forever changed my personal pedagogy. By October 2020, I was struggling to continue with my change in pedagogy alone. On the Manitoba Teachers’ Society PD day 2020, I heard Dr. Carrington speak, and was able to recommit myself to her pedagogy. School leaders need to change the PD they are offering to ongoing, relationship-based PD that will lead teachers to deepen their resiliency.

To raise teacher bounce back, school leaders need to consult regularly with front line educators. A support that helps one teacher manage her stress and build a greater ability to cope may not help another (Rajendran et al., 2020). A remote learning teacher hub (Manitoba Government, 2020) will be the support that some teachers need, but not others. This hub is to employ many teachers when there is already a shortage of substitute teachers in many divisions (Bedford, 2020). Unfilled substitute teacher requests are often covered by resource teachers and educational assistants; however, in my building, there is no one who can be reassigned. The support I would place the most value in right now is IT support for the classroom space that does not have a projector, but this support would not be valuable to all teachers. Teacher resiliency will rise when school leaders consult with them and act upon the information that is shared.

Teacher resiliency will improve when school leaders increase the time given to teachers for collaboration and maintaining professional relationships (Capone & Petrillo, 2018). By restructuring teachers' timetables, school leaders can increase the amount of teacher collaboration (Rosenberg, 2020). Teacher collaboration is important not only to student success but also as protection from burnout. When teachers plan and teach lessons with other teachers, they develop improved teaching tools with a sharper focus on students, leading to higher student achievement. Successful collaboration between teachers can happen only when sufficient time is allotted to building connections and trust with colleagues (Muckenthaler et al., 2020). When my school went to code orange on the Manitoba Pandemic Response System, I went from teaching one class of 19 students to teaching 41 students split among three classrooms. This pushed me into a more intimate form of collaboration with my co-teacher. I went from exchanging ideas and materials with Cathy (a pseudonym) to a co-constructive model of collaboration (Muckenthaler et al, 2020). When given adequate time resources, teachers' resiliency will improve as they collaborate and build relationships with other educators.

School leaders can amplify teacher resiliency by employing IT professionals. Having a dedicated IT professional in a school would strengthen teachers' ability to cope because of the knowledge that they always have access to a person to help with technology problems. My school has 80 laptops and 30 iPads. Currently, the library technician is looking after them, but because the library is being used as a classroom, it is always not possible to access support when it is most needed. When we had a designated IT teacher, she was not given release time for IT-related tasks. For this reason, she gave up personal time and lunch breaks to accomplish this work (C. Paul, personal communication, September, 2019). An increase in teacher resiliency could be achieved by having dedicated IT professionals in school buildings.

The proactive steps of ongoing professional development, regular consultations of front-line educators, an increase in teacher time resources, and employing IT professionals have the potential to increase teacher bounce back. Offering these supports will permit teachers to cope with the ever-changing demands of the school environment (Capone & Petrillo, 2018). Raising teacher resiliency will keep teachers in classrooms in a time when many are thinking of leaving (Bedford & Fullan Kolton). School leaders can strengthen teacher resiliency by changing the way they offer support to educators.

Conclusion

Teachers will be more resilient when they are provided the opportunity to access the supports that they truly need. The deeper a teacher's resiliency reserves, the greater protection that professional has from the symptoms of burnout. School leaders must adjust their expectations of teachers considering COVID-19 protocols.

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Workplace Bullying: Teacher-on-Teacher

Candice Taylor

Abstract

Workplace bullying is a known issue in society, and is most prevalent in education. Nevertheless, teacher-on-teacher bullying is a taboo topic of discussion. Bullying is repeated acts or verbal comments made to the victim as a way of controlling and demonstrating power over the individual. These acts could cause a multitude of psychological or physical effects on the victim. Taking care of oneself mentally and physically is imperative. Exploring a holistic approach to healing helps the victim to heal emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

Teacher-on-teacher bullying is a very personal subject for me. I am a victim of workplace bullying at my school. I always thought a person had to be weak to be bullied, and I am not a weak person. Speaking up early on provides the best opportunity to stop the bullying behaviour before it becomes a long-term occurrence (Ziv, 2020). The bullying I experienced happened so smoothly and slyly that I did not realize it was happening until it was too late and other parents and community members got involved. The whole experience made me evaluate myself as a teacher, friend, parent, and member of society.

Workplace Bullying Among Colleagues in Schools

Workplace bullying has been recognized as a serious problem. Compared to any other profession, bullying is most prevalent in education (Orange, 2018). Teacher-on-teacher bullying happens far too often (Mulvahill, 2020). Understanding teacher-on-teacher bullying relies on knowing the definition of workplace bullying, why someone feels the need to bully another person, the effects it has on the victim, how leadership plays a role, and the effects that bullying has on others.

Teacher-on-teacher workplace bullying is different than student bullying. It is more than the occasional meanness or common conflict issues (Mulvahill, 2020). Bullying occurs over a period of time with frequent direct or indirect acts towards an individual. It is not always easily identifiable (Merilainen et al., 2019). Acts of bullying may include rude and abusive language, spreading rumors, public embarrassment, and isolation in a repetitive, negative manner. Workplace bullying is the overall mistreatment of a person (Orange, 2018). Having experienced workplace bullying myself, it has been one of the most difficult and stressful situations I had to deal with in my life. I was never popular as a child because I was always opinionated and stood up for what I believed was right. Dealing with bullying both as a child and now as an adult, I can attest that workplace bullying is extremely different and considerably tougher to manage.

Bullying is all about the power imbalance between the bully and the victim. The reason a person bullies another individual is to be superior to the other person, wanting to make the victim feel inferior and alone (Mulvahill, 2020). The victims feel unable to defend themselves in a situation (Merilainen et al., 2019). The bully wears down the victim (Maruro, 2015) and manipulates school culture by ostracizing, snubbing, and excluding the victim. The bully has the victims believing that they are inadequate, ineffective, and deserving of the negative behaviours. Often, the bullies think that they are just doing their jobs and fail to identify their actions as bullying (Merilainen et al., 2016). Once the victim sees this narrative, the bully's action appears logical and the power cycle is complete.

Bullying plays a toll on a person in multiple ways. Victims suffer traumatic effects from bullying mentally, physically, socially, and emotionally (Fachie & Devine, 2014). Bullying is a trauma to the victim, which generates severe emotional reactions such as anxiety, shock, fear, helplessness, and negative self-worth (Maiuro, 2015). I have personally experienced many of these emotions. Many

victims of bullying suffer from severe health problems, including depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress symptoms (Maiuro, 2015). The consequences of such exposure to bullying may be both psychologically and physically debilitating for the victim.

The most common physical effect of workplace bullying is sleeplessness or disturbed sleep, including horrible dreams. The bullying experiences invade their subconscious and trigger violent dreams. Other physical effects include headaches, stomach pains, skin irritation, weight gain or loss, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. Psychological effects influence individuals in different ways. Everyone can experience a wide range of effects, from no psychological effects to suicidal thoughts. Victims will often experience a loss of sense of self and where they are positioned in the world (Fachie & Devine, 2014). Victims of bullying take a hit to their confidence and morale. The entire experience is extremely stressful and can be painful (Mulvahill, 2020). Victims of workplace bullying suffer from insecurities, anxiety, vengefulness, poor social skills to protect their own self-esteem, personality conflicts, and gender issues (Orange, 2018). Victims use several negative coping strategies to deal with bullying, such as seeking revenge, substance abuse, suppressing emotional responses, and alcohol consumption (Fachie & Devine, 2014). These actions compound the physical and psychological effects that the victim already suffers.

The victims continue to suffer in their workplace while trying to teach, and from the financial effect of missed days of work due to the bullying. Workplace bullying negatively affects teaching and learning in schools. The victims are less tolerant, humorous, and patient. They suffer from difficulty concentrating and using their prep time effectively (Orange, 2018). It is difficult to say whether the victims have low self-esteem or anxiety, which makes them more likely to be bullied and could be a result of the long-term workplace bullying (Merilainen et al., 2016). Teachers who suffer from workplace bullying take increased sick days. Bullying-based teachers' sick leave costs the Finnish Trade Union of Education nearly 15 million dollars a year. The costs do not stop there. The organizations have additional costs associated to workplace bullying, such as legal costs, loss of productivity, reputation, and the overall organizational culture. Society also experiences hardship through growing medical costs and premature retirement.

Bullying in schools is a systemic problem that can be related to leadership practices. Bullies often seek allies with leaders and get into leadership positions because of it. It is difficult to make bullies accountable or even acknowledge that the problem exists if the organization is allied with them (Merilaine et al., 2016). Bullying is commonly fostered by poor ineffective leadership that contributes to the destructive and unhealthy behaviour in the workplace. Ineffective leaders avoid confronting the problem and are indifferent to the bullying situation (Fachie, 2014). When upper management does not address the bullying behaviour, it makes the problem worse (Orange, 2016). Leaders can enable or even include bullying behaviours. Leadership practices and social relationships contribute to the issue (Merilainen et al., 2019). Some school administrators engage in bullying of their teachers by using threatening behaviour, disrespecting teachers, verbally abusing, socially isolating, showing favoritism, and nepotism (Orange, 2018). As demands and unclear work expectations increase related to "tasks, obligations, privileges, and priorities," there is the potential of increased bullying behaviour towards others (Maiuro, 2015, p. 139). Change needs to happen at the organizational level, which is more effective than with just an individual. When workplace bullying is condoned by leaders in the organization, the bullying will only continue. Administrators will skillfully create teaching assignments with the purpose of isolating the victim in order to avoid having to deal with conflict. This tactic only makes the situation worse on the victim and can quickly lead the victim to depression and wanting to quit teaching.

Bullying affects everyone: the victim, the victim's family, and the bystanders. This creates an undesirable workplace (Merilainen et al., 2016). Negative school climate festers over years, and uses human dignity and worth as currency for abuse and manipulation (Fachie, 2014). A bullying situation takes its toll on relationships and family life, and is costly for the company due to turnover, absenteeism, and reduced productivity (Maiuro, 2015). The victims often withdrawal from family and friends.

The bystander usually takes one of three positions: people who intervene, people who do not dare intervene, and people who blame the victim. Those who choose to blame the victim often participate in the bullying acts (Merilainen et al., 2016). A private Facebook group called We Are Teachers HELPLINE has over 44 000 members (WeAreTeacher HELPLINE, n.d., Home [Facebook page]). With so many Facebook members, it is clear that bullying affects everyone the individual is associated with, the victim, the victim's family, and the bystanders. With so many Facebook members, it is obvious that this is a pressing issue affecting many educators.

Many teachers walk away from the profession because of bullying. Given the definition of workplace bullying, the characteristics of a bully, the effects it has on the victim, the leadership role, and the effects on others, it is evident why one out of four victims of workplace bullying leave their jobs (Maiuro, 2015). The teaching profession has higher rates of workplace bullying than any other profession (Fachie, 2014). The result of bullying affects teacher retention due to the continued stress on the teacher.

Becoming a Better You After the Trauma of Being Bullied

There are many ways to solve a problem, and bullying is no different. From personal experience, I believe the holistic view is the most prevalent approach to self-preservation when dealing with the trauma of being bullied. Holistic healing is looking at the whole person in all aspects of life, including the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual disposition of a person. Therefore, the holistic approach is the most effective for lasting and long-term change in a person (*What Is Holistic Healing?* n.d.). Bullying takes a major toll both at work and outside of work. The bullied need to try to find a healthy balance between the negative and the positive influences in their lives (Ziv, 2020). Understanding the holistic approach to healing involves exploring the emotional, physical, and spiritual aspects of oneself.

Bullying can be incredibly traumatic and affects the victim emotionally. In the first phase of bullying trauma, people who are bullied may struggle with regulating or soothing their emotions in everyday life (*Phases*, n.d.). In your everyday interactions, ensure that you are modelling and supporting ethical behaviour. You want to treat others the way you want to be treated (Solon, 2014). Having a support system is an invaluable resource every person needs to remain healthy. A support system includes mentors, people who can guide you, teach and challenge you in a respectful way, and compassionate individuals. This could include other teachers, spiritual leaders or spiritual advisors, elders, physicians, mental health workers, psychiatrists, psychologists, Employee Assistance Program (EAP) counsellors, and many others (Phases, n.d.). You should also seek support from your teachers' union (Ziv, 2020). They are available to support you as a member. If you decide to make a complaint, make sure you do your research. Check to see whether your division has a policy about bullying, mistreatment, verbal abuse, and so on. Most school divisions have policies to protect their employees (Ziv, 2020). Teachers in Manitoba pay union dues with the expectations that the union will provide support with any problems you may encounter.

As human beings, we can be very critical of our thoughts and judge our weakness and struggles in a way we would never view or express to a friend. Treating ourselves kindly is a foreign concept to many people. We must remember to give ourselves a break and cut ourselves some slack (*Phases*, n.d.). When talking to a bully, you could call attention to their values, stating you know they have good intentions and really care about how everyone needs to feel valued. Then suggest for them to try in the future to avoid having their intentions misunderstood. Repeating the bully's name often when speaking to the bully helps make the conversation more human and personal (Ziv, 2020). Many victims shrug off the initial bullying incidents and do not speak up for months. By this time, the power imbalance has been cemented into place. If you speak up after months of abuse, the bullying actions will likely not stop but take a turn for the worse and intensify (Ziv, 2020). It may be difficult to approach the bully, and the victim often ends up leaving their job to find new employment somewhere else to solve the problem.

Through my experience with being a victim of workplace bullying, it was a rollercoaster of emotions, questioning my choice of careers, and questioning who I am as a person and how I interact with society. The next phase of healing involves the important task of mourning the losses involved with the trauma of bullying, and the space required to grieve and express one's emotions (*Phases*, n.d.). After the initial shock and slight realization of what was happening to me, I took steps toward healing. Taking care of myself in a holistic manner grounded me and offered me the ability to work through the traumatic effects of being bullied. Keeping a journal or diary is a prodigious way to see your thoughts from a different perspective (The Worsley Centre, n.d.). You could also try getting involved with activities outside work. You would benefit from joining a team or club. You could also participate in yoga or meditation. Do something that makes you happy and brings you joy (Ziv, 2020). Through the assistance of a counsellor or therapist, the victim processes the trauma by putting it into words and emotions to make meaning of it (*Phases*, n.d.). I found counselling to be very therapeutic and comforting.

It can be very difficult to talk to family or friends about your problems. You do not want to monopolize the conversations with your problems. Talking to a trained professional can be more comforting to some people (The Worsley Centre, n.d.). Mindfulness practices include mindful eating, consciousness of breathing, gentle yoga, mindful walking, and open awareness meditation (*Phases*, n.d.). There is no need to feel ashamed or embarrassed to talk about any topic with your counsellor because they are used to talking about taboo topics. There is no judgement from a professional, and it is a safe place to express yourself (The Worsley Centre, n.d.). It is important to seek professional help from a counsellor or therapist who understands trauma (Ziv, 2020). Counselling is a cathartic experience (The Worsley Centre, n.d.). Bottling up things inside is not healthy. Having a place to purge your pent-up emotions releases a weight off your mind and give you an opportunity to start to heal and move forward.

One of my favourite physical aspects to holistic healing is massage therapy. Massage therapy releases tension in your muscles and provides you an opportunity to release emotional baggage. A massage gives a clearer path forward wholeness and health (Osborn, 2011). The music a massage therapist chooses reinforces the intent of lulling the mind: no melody, no loud passages, always changing, no repetition, and interesting but ultimately boring. The stillness of movement gives your mind a quiet state to zone out and relax during a massage. This quiet state is where your mind enters moments before you fall asleep (Osborn, 2011). Massage therapy improves sleep patterns, reduces insomnia related to stress, improves mood, and improves self-esteem (Brothers, 2018). Massage therapy is also 80% covered by most Canadian teachers' benefits plans, and you should take advantage of your paid benefits.

The final phase of healing is creating a new sense of self and a new future, which may involve the spiritual aspect of healing. Trauma does not have to be your life story; it could be a small piece of the puzzle of how you changed and became a stronger person afterwards (*Phases*, n.d.). Exploring our own cultural heritage and practices can make an important contribution to recovery and well-being. They also have healing qualities in that they help us to make connections within ourselves, to feel a sense of belonging, and to strengthen a sense of identity and purpose. You can borrow from other traditions if you find comfort and meaning in them. Being curious and exploring yourself are important component of being healthy and living well. Some examples of cultural healing practices are sharing circles, smudging ceremonies, yoga classes, and praying (*Phases*, n.d.). In the third stage of recovery from trauma, the victim recognizes the impact of the trauma but is ready to take steps towards empowerment and self-determined living (*Phases*, n.d.). Trying something new and different is a learning process and, as teachers, we understand that we are lifelong learners.

Spiritually taking care of my mind has been the most difficult for me to accomplish. After experiencing the trauma of being bullied, there is a sense of helplessness, isolation, and the loss of power and control. Trauma recovery focuses on the restoration of safety and empowerment. Being recovered does not necessarily mean freedom from post-traumatic affects, but in general the ability to live in the present without having overwhelming feelings or thoughts from the past (*Phases*, n.d.).

The smallest triggers can bring you right back to a bullying incident and set you back months of the work you put into healing through therapy. You need to face those feelings, be aware of the triggers, and be prepared to manage your emotions when they occur. Our ability to be compassionate to others depends on our ability to be compassionate to ourselves (*Phases*, n.d.). Self-compassion is being warm and understanding to ourselves when we feel inadequate, fail, or suffer instead of ignoring our pain and being self-critical. Being spiritually connected can help you become more compassionate to yourself and others.

In Buddhist tradition, the chatter that often goes on in a person's internal dialogue while we undertake our everyday lives is considered "monkey mind." It is described like a monkey jumping from limb to limb, similarly how to our brains jump from thought to thought without a singular focus. Calming the monkey mind has a profound effect on our mental well-being (Osborn, 2011). Personally, I experience "monkey mind" often. I realize that I must find time to quiet my mind to regain focus and feel better overall.

Although there are many ways to solve the problem of bullying, taking a holistic approach to healing entrusts the victim to heal as a person. Teaching is a demanding profession, and many teachers fail to find the balance between work and home, and between the positive and negative influences we face daily. When you take care of yourself physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually, you can move forward and start to grow as an individual and as a professional.

Conclusion

There are a variety of ways to heal from the trauma of being a victim of bullying. I prefer the holistic approach. I feel empowered to have control over how I take care of myself emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Despite being a victim of teacher-on-teacher bullying, I will not allow it to define who I am. I may have changed because of the trauma I sustained; I feel the change will make me a stronger person in the future. As teachers, we must be role models and demonstrate to our children how to take care of ourselves so we can take care of others. Through the exploration of self and workplace bullying, I continue to learn as an educator, mother, and friend, and overall I am becoming a stronger human being.

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