

# Teacher Education for Mental Health

*The Banff International Conference on Behavioural Science*

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# Today's agenda

## Teaching, leading and working in challenging times

- The professional role
- Education and development needs for mental health :
  - Teachers
  - Teacher education students
- Working with our values
- Mental health literacy
- The wicked problem of wellness
  - Mental health, distress and illness
  - What it looks like at school and work
- Trauma and Violence Informed Care
- Strategies and resources

# What do you value?

Authenticity Achievement Adventure Authority Autonomy  
Balance Beauty Boldness Compassion Challenge Citizenship  
Community Competency Contribution Creativity Curiosity  
Determination Fairness Faith Fame Friendships Fun Growth  
Happiness Honesty Humor Influence Inner Harmony Justice  
Kindness Knowledge Leadership Learning Love Loyalty  
Meaningful Work Openness Optimism Peace Pleasure  
Poise Popularity Recognition Religion Reputation Respect  
Responsibility Safety Security Self-Respect Service  
Spirituality Stability Success Status Trustworthiness Wealth  
Wisdom...

# Take a few minutes...

- And jot down 1 to 3 key values that influence what you do every day
- Think about how your work, your workplace, and the systems within which you work (education, health, family, faith...) support (or do not support) you in working authentically
- Share one or two of them with your table group.

# The Wicked Problem of School Mental Health

- A problem that is difficult or impossible to solve because of incomplete, contradictory, or changing requirements that are difficult to recognize.
- “How can schools be an effective provider of mental health support to all students?”

# The Role of Teachers

1. Promote Mental Health at universal levels
2. Collaboratively identify MH supports and work together at school to implement targeted interventions
3. Participate in referrals and support intensive, strategic interventions for selected students
  - **Develop**: mental health literacy
  - **Build**: relationships
  - **Create**: mentally healthy spaces
  - **Notice**: the wellness of self and others
  - **Leverage**: their relationships to help others on the pathway to care

# The needs for education

## Teachers, Systems

### Boards:

- >80% indicated unmet student mental health (incl. substance use) needs in their board
- 85% indicated they were concerned or very concerned about student mental health and/or substance use

### Teachers:

- Overwhelmingly want to know more
- Feel ill-equipped to meet the mental health needs of their students

## Faculties of Education

- reviewed over 400 courses at 66 teacher ed programs
- identified 2 courses meeting 4 criteria
- Teacher educators and informants were clear about the need for support for teacher (and candidate) mental health support

### Policy:

- Accreditation and Standards

# Mental Health Literacy for Education

**Understand and notice** the wellbeing of people & our abilities to work, learn, play and be in relationships

**Develop and leverage** positive relationships in support of wellbeing

**Reduce** stigma

**Promote** positive mental health in the classroom

**Identify** risk factors & signs of change

**Help** students and colleagues along the pathway to care

**Advocate** for mentally healthy schools, staff and students

**Engage** in activism to support all of the above



# Bachelor of Education at Western

## The Basics

- 3 streams:
  - Primary-Junior
  - Junior Intermediate
  - Intermediate-Senior
- About 700 candidates across 2 year program
- Practica
  - 7 weeks Alternative Field Experience
  - 20 weeks in Classrooms

## The Course

- Mandatory
- Case studies
- 12 weeks, .25 credit
- Completely online
- Addresses healthy schools, teachers & students

And..

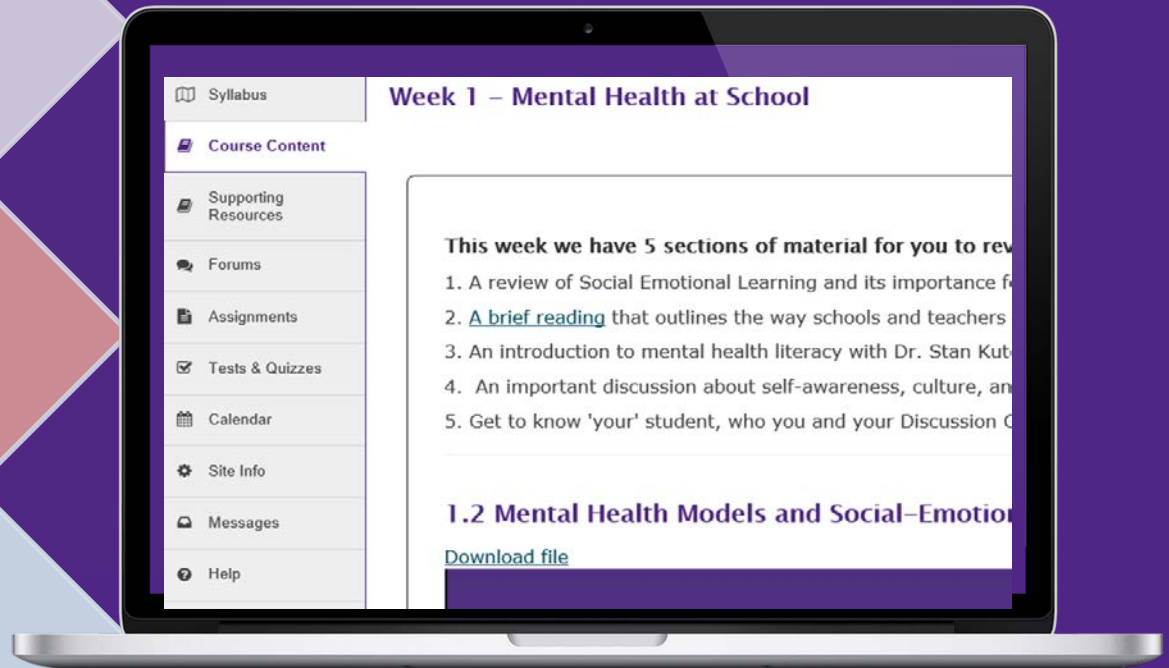
- Teacher WB Committee
- Conferences

# WHAT WE DID: CURRICULUM

Comprehensive  
Curriculum  
Framework  
(Weston et al., 2008)

Aligned and  
Integrated Model  
(AIM; SMHO)

Teach Mental Health  
National Curriculum  
Project  
(Kutcher et al., 2015)



# The Preservice Course

## A: Learning

1. Mental Health at School:
2. The Context of the Lives of Children, Youth and Teachers
3. Mental Health in the Classroom
4. Trauma and Violence Informed Teaching I
5. Trauma and Violence Informed Teaching II
6. Stress (Students and Teachers)

## B: Applying

7. Learning, Teaching and Working
8. Building Relationships (Caring for students: Building Resilience and Support
9. Caring for ourselves: Building Resilience and Support
10. Creating and Leading the Mentally Health Classroom
11. Creating and Leading a Mentally Healthy Classroom (

# Mental Health Literacy Questionnaire for Education (MHLQ-E)

- 4 factors, 45 items:
  - Teaching and Learning in a Mentally Healthy Classroom
  - Expectancies
  - Professional Relational Skills
  - Role Clarity

# Results

## Mental Health Literacy (MHLQ; 4 factors)

- ❑ Teaching & Leading  $F(1, 257) = 121.6, p < .001$
- ❑ Expectancies  $F(1, 257) = 2.18, p > .05$
- ❑ Professional Relational Skills  $F(1, 257) = 34.7, p < .001$
- ❑ Role Clarity  $F(1, 257) = 3.78, p = .053$

**Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practice**  $F(1, 230) = 2553.3, p < .001$

**Opening Minds Stigma Scale**  $F(1, 230) = 8.35, p < .05$

**Knowledge**  $F(1, 230) = 1.8, p > .05$

-quartile split, looking at those who scored less than 85% on the pre-test  $t(107) = 4.1, p < .001$

## Ways of Coping

- ❑ Self Control  $t(252) = 2.174, p < .05$
- ❑ Seeking Social Support  $t(244) = 1.77, p > .05$

# Outcomes

New

1. Teaching for Trauma: ARTIC (Attitudes Related to Trauma Informed Care)
2. Teacher Well-Being

# Student reflections

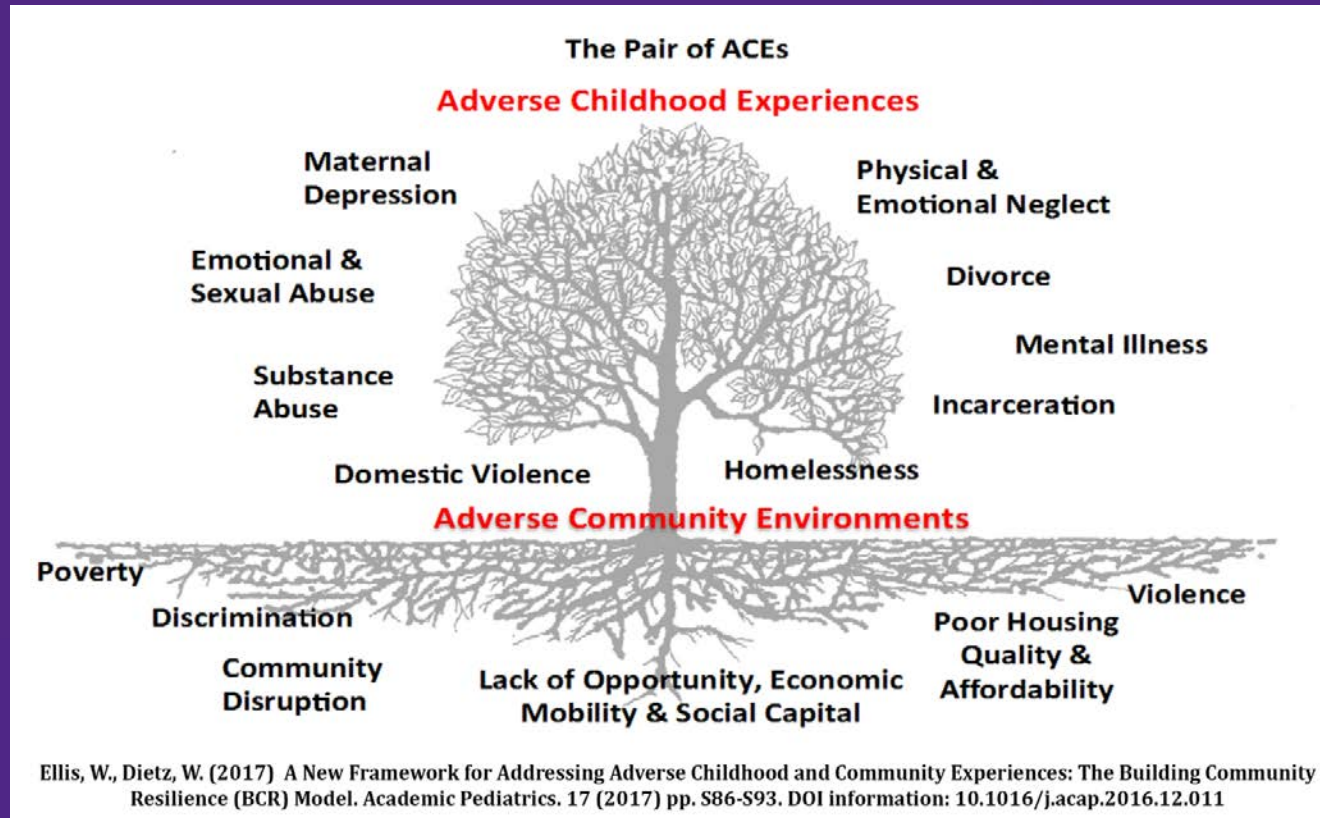
- *“... I have learned the many different ways in which you are able to help your students who may be suffering from a mental illness/stressor. As an educator, if you are able to notice this signs and help your students, you are enabling them to become more successful in and out of the classroom. This course has taught me how to look for specific signs and symptoms, and how to successfully help your students when they are in need” (Course participant).*
- Students reported that they found the student profiles to be helpful in applying the course content to a case study reflecting the realities of teaching:
- *“I really liked the idea of having one student to focus on and having more of his story revealed throughout the 10 weeks. It made the readings more interesting when we had a situation to relate them to” (Course participant).*

# Trauma- and **violence**-informed care in schools

Goes beyond individual pathology, risk factors or exceptionalities

Takes ONGOING (and historical) violence into account

Takes structural violence (e.g. systemic racism, poverty, stigma, discrimination) into account



**Not “what is wrong with you” but “what has happened (and may still be) to you?”**



# Many Examples of Traumatic Events

## Interpersonal Trauma

- Child abuse and neglect
- Abandonment
- Sexual assault
- Intimate partner violence
- Sudden Death of a loved one
- Torture or confinement
- Elder abuse

- War
- Being a victim of crime
- Unexpected job loss
- Being a refugee
- Extreme poverty
- Homelessness
- Natural disasters
- Accidents

## Structural/Situational Trauma

Historical trauma (e.g. colonialism, residential schools)

# Principles of TVIC (EQUIP)



1. Be trauma and violence aware (prevalence and effects)
2. Create safe environments
3. Foster student choice, collaboration, connection
4. Adopt strengths-based and capacity-oriented approaches (for students and staff)



[Equiphealthcare.ca](http://Equiphealthcare.ca)

# What can we do?

- examine not only the effects of ongoing violence, but also social structures and practices that can be harmful, and look for ways to improve practices, and consider social conditions, to provide a better, safer educational environment.
- examine our own experiences, power & assumptions, and adjust these to provide the safest and most appropriate learning environment.

# But bottom line...

Teacher education and professional development needs to be:

- a curriculum, not courses;
- Evergreen and lifelong;
- Part of professional identity;
- Inclusive (people, context, critical issues);
- Relevant to education and educators, and;
- Supported.

# Design time

## 1. Design Part 1:

1. Who is your target audience for some PD about mental health in schools?
2. What are the *needs*?
3. What are the *wants*?
4. What do you need to account for in terms of access, recruitment and participation?
5. What resources do you have?

# Let's Talk

- What are the priorities you've identified?
- Who is going to participate?
  - Why this group?
  - Why this?
- How will you bring their voices forward in your work?

# Learning Objectives

- What will you provide?
  - E.g. presentation, materials, peer learning.....
- What will you target?
  - E.g. knowledge? Skills? Attitudes? Values?....
- What level of learning do you expect?
  - E.g. knowledge, application, critical understanding
- How will you know if they have achieved it?
  - Test results, motivation, planned behaviour....

# Learning Objective

*Given* a brief presentation and discussion time

*The learner will* understand how mental health influences effective learning for students

*To the extent that* they can name 2 key learning outcomes when mental health is poor, and 2 other learning outcomes when mental health is good

*As evaluated by* their peers



# Design Time 2

- In your groups develop:
  - A topic for your PD session or series
  - A title that will inform and draw people in
  - 1 or 2 learning objectives
- Don't forget to focus on:
  - the connection between your priorities and your plan
  - The change you want to see, and how you will know if you are seeing it

# Critical Issues

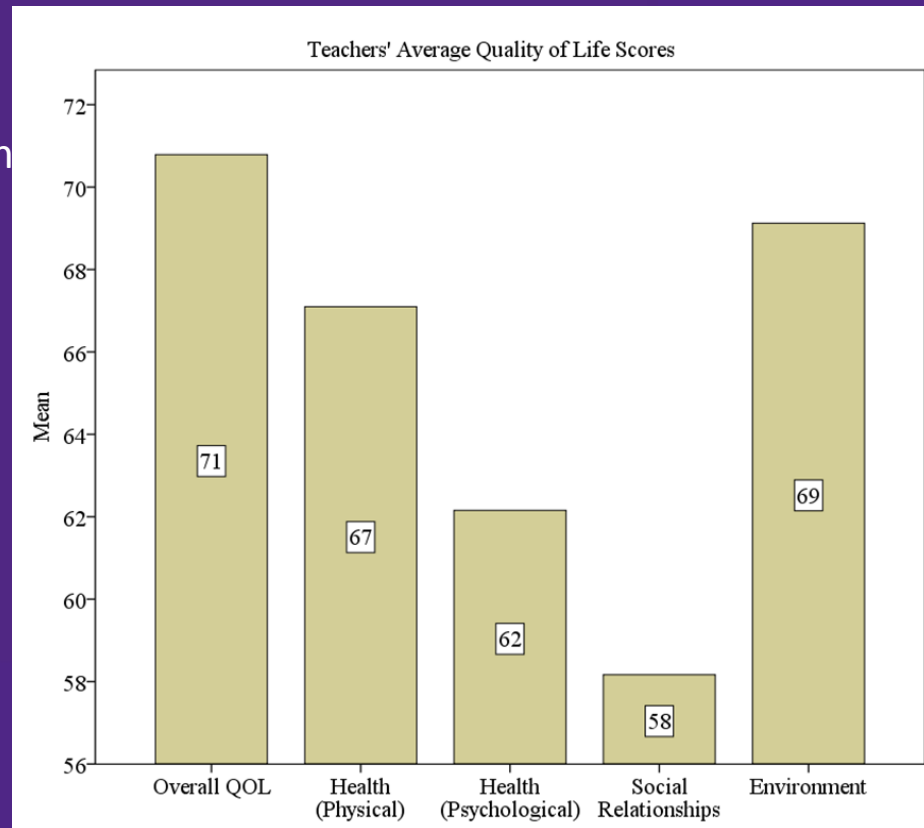
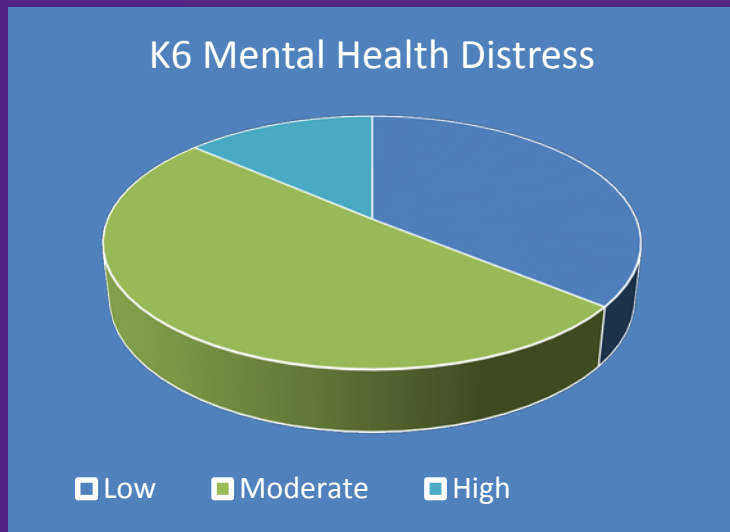
- Wellness and capacity for this work
  - Educators, leaders
- Access to resources and support
  - Within and outside education

# What is it about *teaching*?

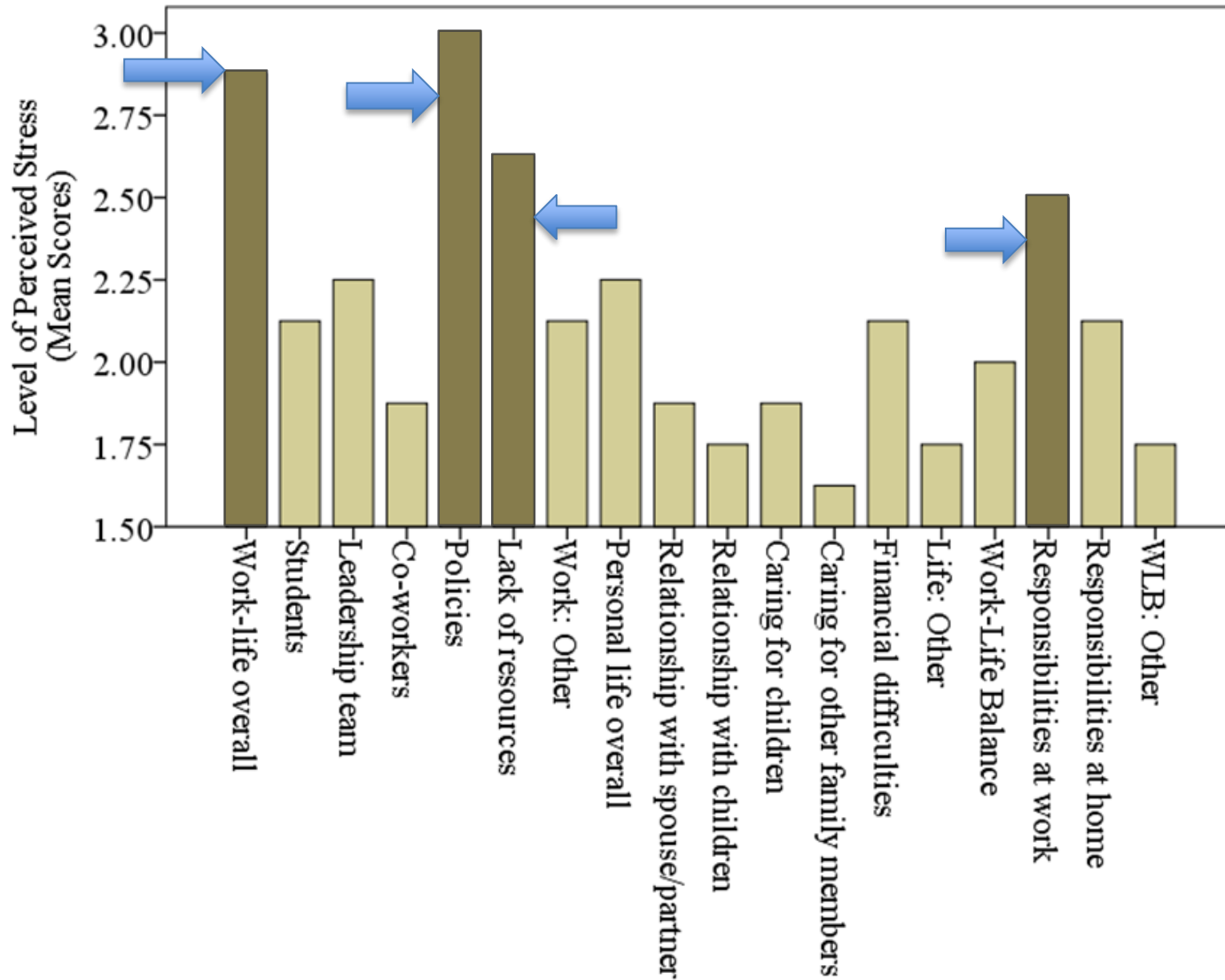
- Being the expert. All the time. From the start.
- Work intensification.
- Being in the classroom/office. All day. Isolation.
- The relationships with students & families, over time.
- Balancing all components: the workplace, the school community, pedagogy and policy
- High levels of stress
- Gaps in initial teacher education and professional development opportunities
- Job market
- The public perceptions: “getting summers off” and other popular myths

# Teacher Wellness

- n = 467
- Average 43 years old, 68% female
- Caregiving: 70% child, 21% adult, 13% both
- Average # years teaching = 15.5
- 48% taught in two levels in past year
- 58% taught in at least 3 schools
- Volunteering: 81% at school, 46% outside



Teachers' Sources of Stress (Self-Report)



Where does the stress originate?  
(scale 0→3)

## Emotional Labour

- The systems we work in don't always support the kinds of work we want to do
- The ways we are expected to work may not align with the values that brought us into the work
- The daily effort to reconcile these mismatches adds to the "emotional labour" already required in the caring professions



*Emotional labour... involv[[es] the regulation and management of emotion ... [it] is about action and reaction, doing and being, and can be demanding and skilled work. The labourer is expected to respond to another person in a way which is personal to both of them but like other aspects of care it develops from the social relations of carer and cared-for and is shaped by the labour process.*

James, N. (1992). *Sociology of Health & Illness* 14(4). 488-509.

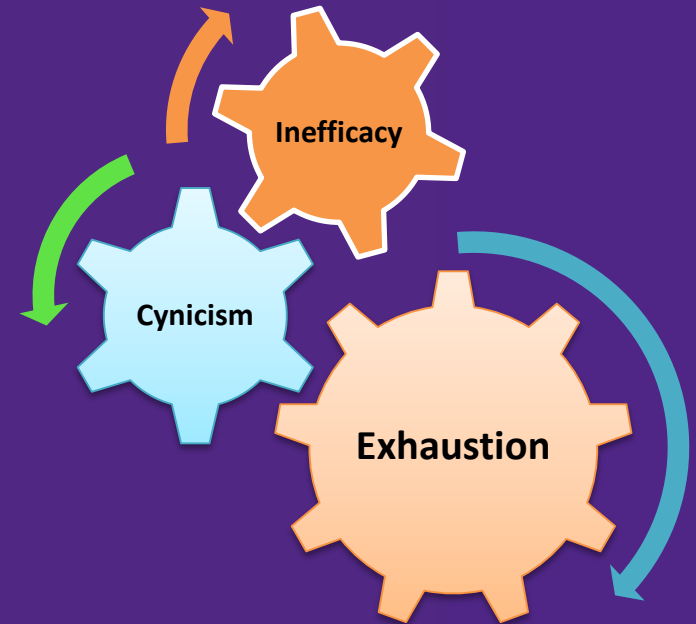
# Emotional labour

- Surface acting:
  - When we **pretend** to feel a certain way during a work interaction
- Deep acting:
  - When we **adjust** the way we feel in response to a situation at work
- The impact of emotional labour:
  - Exhaustion, distancing, dread, self-doubt  
(Kerr & Levine Brown, 2016)

# WHAT IS BURNOUT?

“A prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job. . . defined by the three dimensions of **exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy.**” *Maslach and colleagues (2001)*

- Experienced among those in helping professions: teachers, first responders, nurses





# Burnout

Leads us to focus on what's wrong

Contributes to negative thinking and stress

# Burnin

Leads us to focus on what's right

Contributes to positive thinking and *resilience*

# FLIP IT: BURNING IN

- Another way to think about preventing burnout is to instead go after **burnin**.
- Feeling burned-in means that:
  - **You are engaged in your work as a teacher— that you feel positive about your students and teaching, that you are fulfilled, dedicated to, and absorbed by the work.**

# BURNING IN OR BURNING OUT

The people most prone to burnout are not those who are the least committed. **You can't burn out if you've never been alight. The ones who burn out are often those who care the greatest, give the most.** When you've too many people to see, you can go home feeling you've never seen enough of them. When you're deluged by paper, it's hard to be devoted to all your people.

*~Hargreaves (From Burned in: Fueling the fire to teacher. Audrey A. Friedman & Luke Reynolds, eds, 2011. Teachers College Press: Columbia University, New York, NY, p. 19)*

# Outcomes Measurement

- How do you know you are getting where you want to go?
  - Ideas & experience with outcome measurement?

# Design Time 3

- Design a workshop!
  - Timetable
  - Activities
  - Measurement
- Each group will get a few minutes to share what you've done!

# teachresiliency

[www.teachresiliency.ca](http://www.teachresiliency.ca)



# Can you find it?

- Go to [teachresiliency.ca](http://teachresiliency.ca) and find:
  1. The Blog entitled “The Change We Need”
  2. The Resource “Mental Health Literacy”
  3. Knollwood Public School’s winning submission in the Share2Care competition
  4. The podcast “**The good teacher and the bad teacher: Myths and legends**”
  5. The “Anxieties Strategies Chart” (SMH-Assist)

# Resources

## Teach Mental Health: Mental Health Literacy for the Classroom

<http://pdce.educ.ubc.ca/teach-mental-health/>

Online, self-paced resource: Pre-service and current teachers can take this 7-module course in its entirety or simply the modules they are most interested in.

Module 1: Introduction & Background

Module 2: Stigma & Mental Health

Module 3: Human Brain Development

Module 4: Understanding Mental Health, Mental Illness & Related Issues in  
Young People

Module 5: What is Treatment?

Module 6: Seeking Help & Providing Support

Module 7: Caring for Students & Ourselves

**Participation in this  
online course is FREE.**



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# Are we ready to tackle this wicked problem?

- An Innovative approach
- Knowledge & Competencies
- Agency
- Values
- Relationships
- Partnerships
- Resources

# Resources

- [Wellahead.ca](http://Wellahead.ca)
  - Focused on integrating social and emotional wellbeing into K-12 education



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