

WHO TAKES CARE OF THE LEADERS?

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CASS Spring Conference
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Provincial Quality Standard Alignment



Building
Effective
Relationships

SLQS 1

Modeling
Commitment
to Professional
Learning

SLQS 2

Visionary
Leadership

SLQS 3

Leading
Learning

SLQS 4

Fostering
Effective
Relationships

LQS 1

Modeling
Commitment
to Professional
Learning

LQS 2

Embodying
Visionary
Leadership

LQS 3

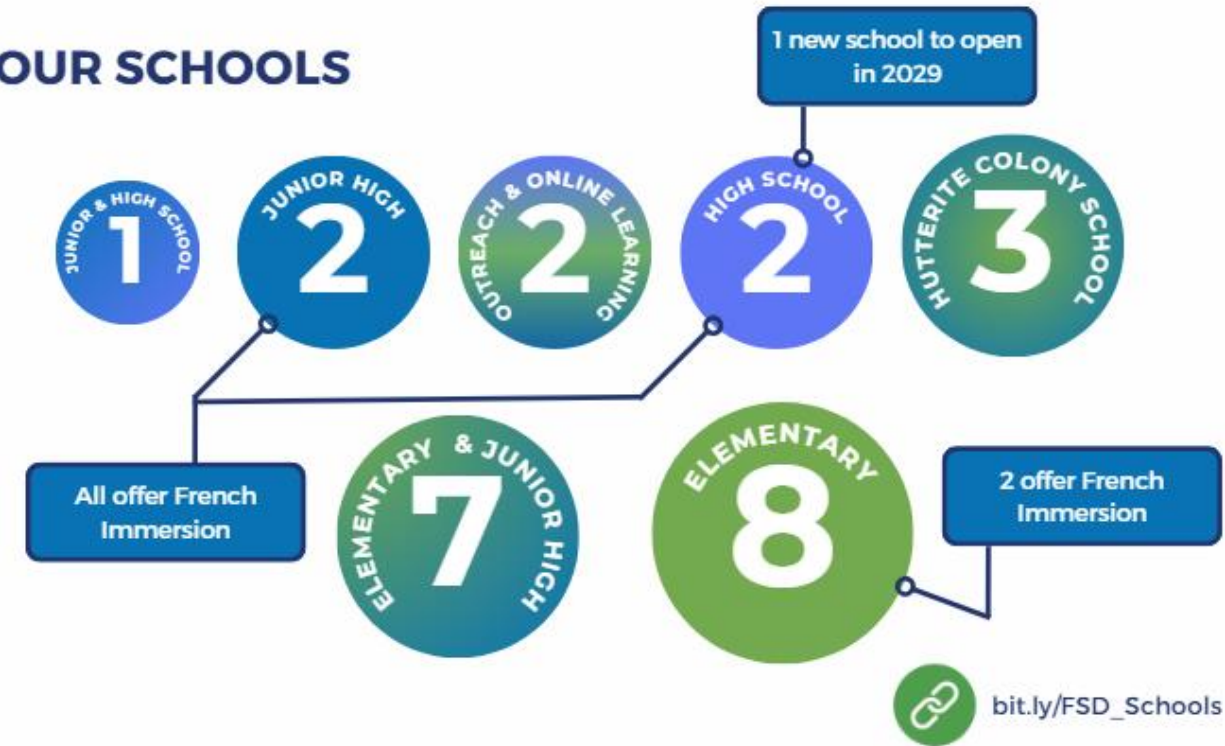
Leading a
Learning
Community

LQS 4

Who is FSD?



OUR SCHOOLS



7,900 students

OUR TEAM

Shown as Full Time Equivalents (FTE)

TEACHERS (400.35)				INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT (250.45)
TRANSPORTATION (23.20)	OPERATIONS & MAINTENANCE (9.00)	NON-SCHOOL BASED CERTIFICATED (9.00)	OTHER SYSTEM ADMINISTRATION (13.70)	
EXECUTIVE TEAM (4)				
GOVERNANCE (6)				



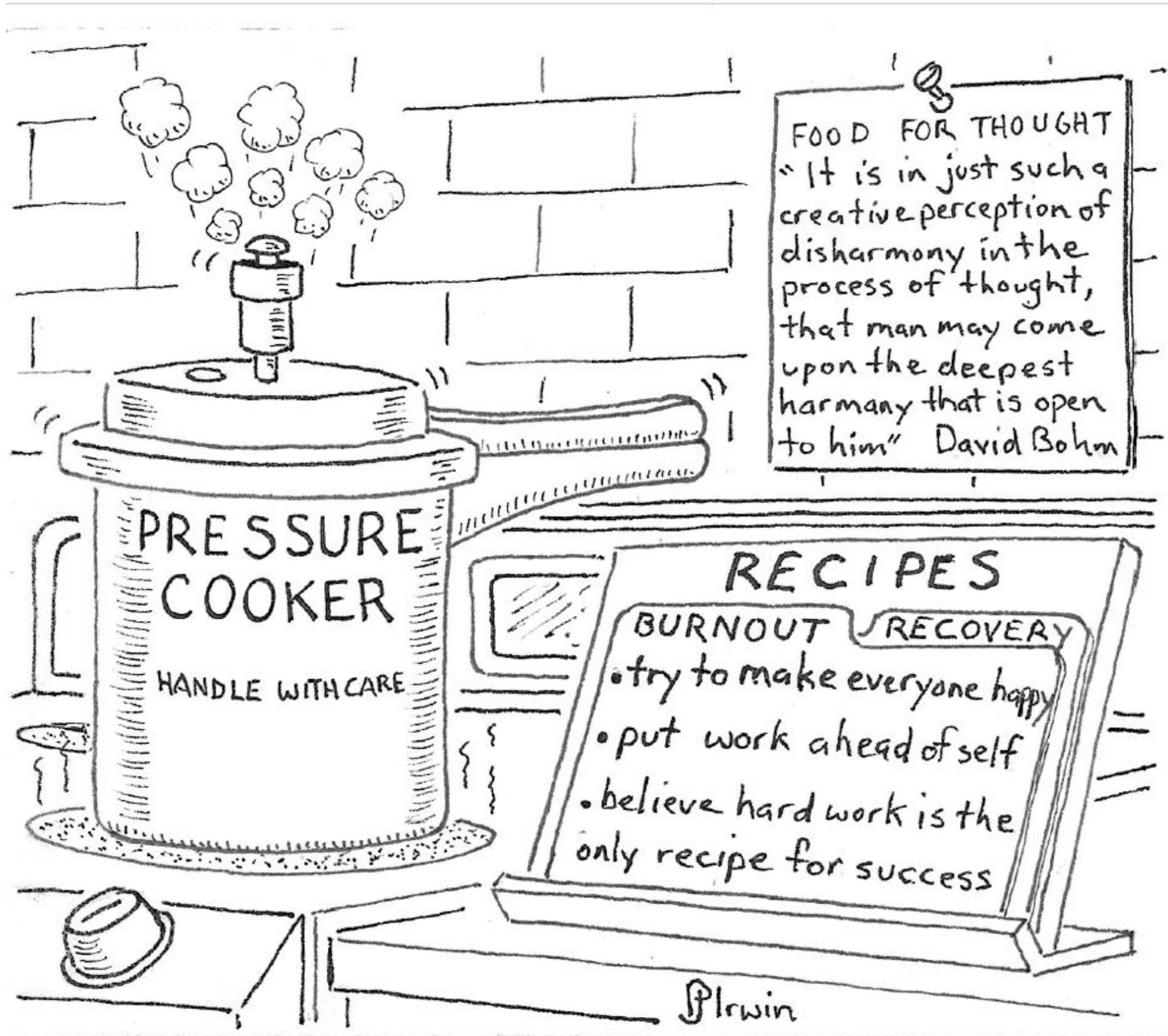
Who Takes Care of the Leaders?

In your current role, what does it look like when you feel genuinely “well” as a leader at work —and how would others know it if you didn’t tell them?



Well at Work





FOOD FOR THOUGHT
"It is in just such a
creative perception of
disharmony in the
process of thought,
that man may come
upon the deepest
harmony that is open
to him" David Bohm

PRESSURE
COOKER

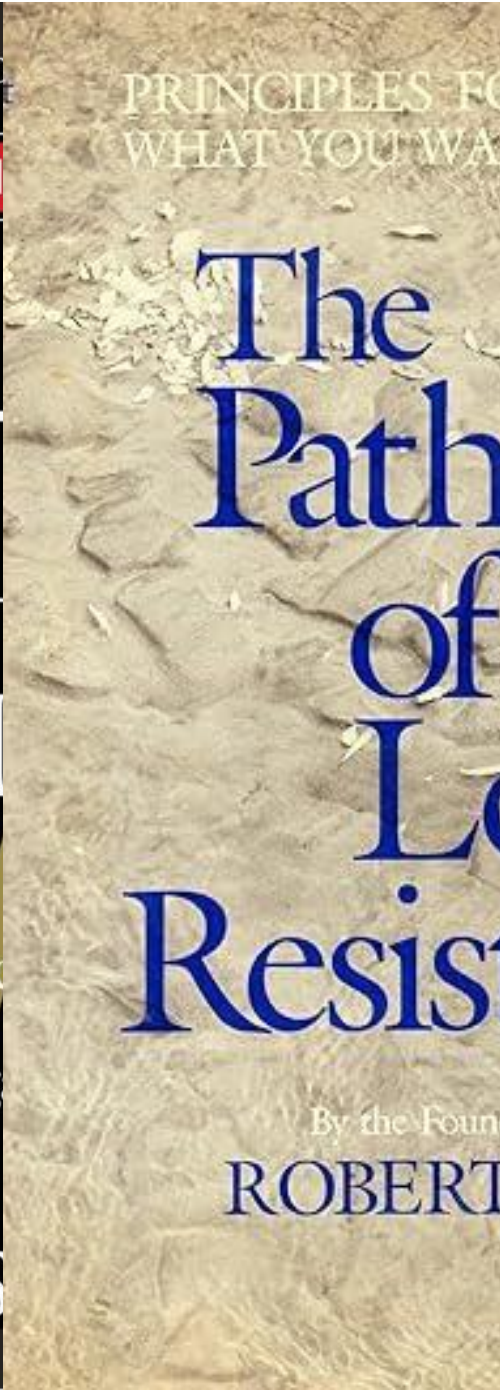
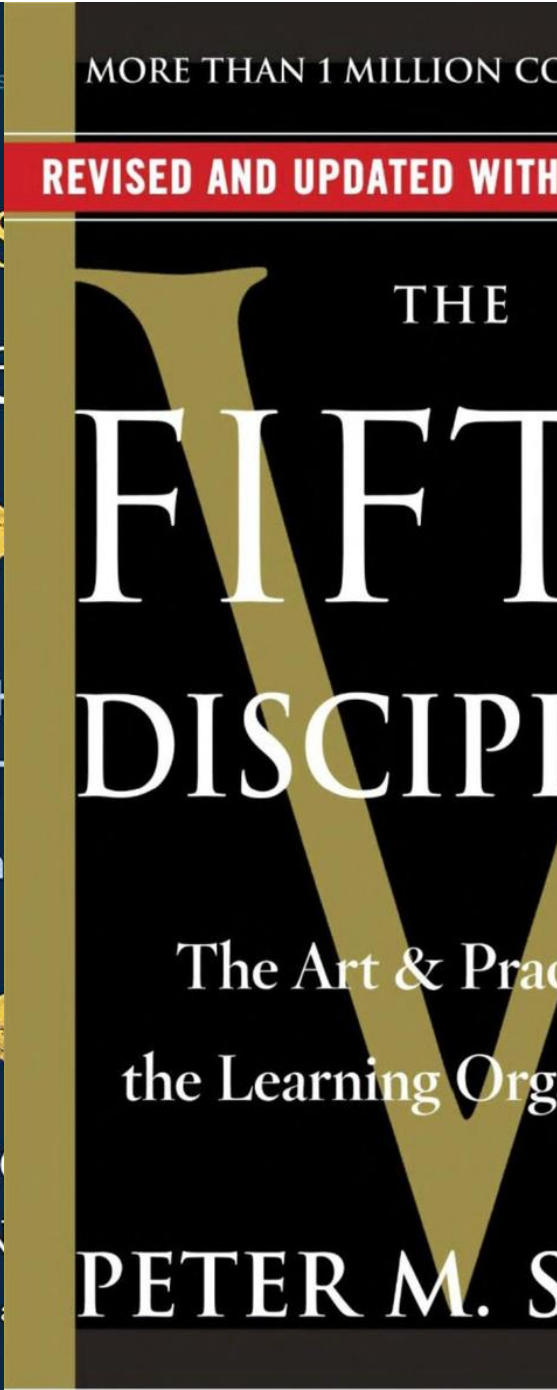
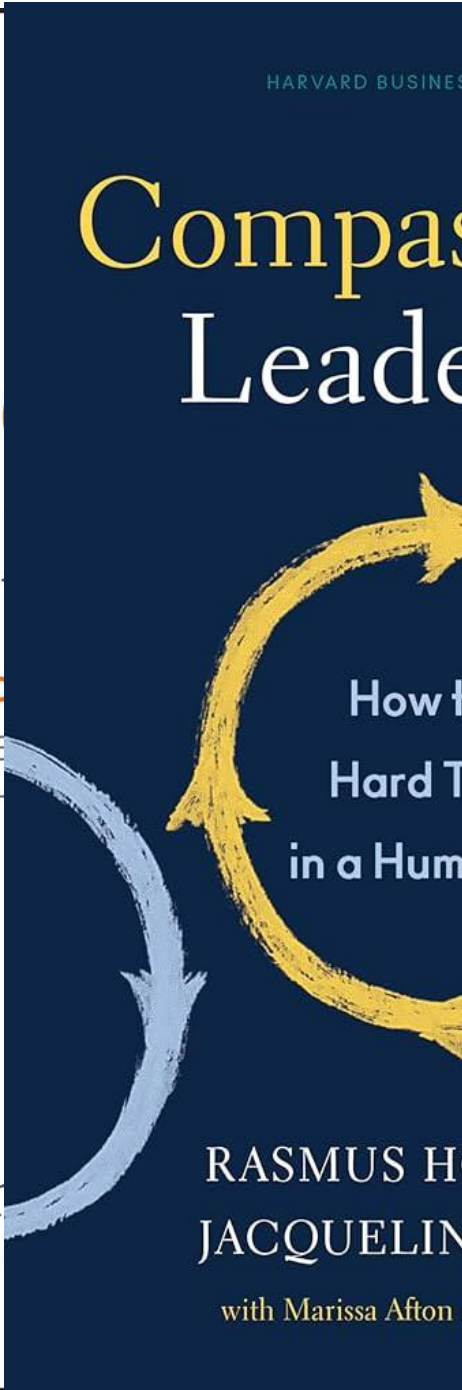
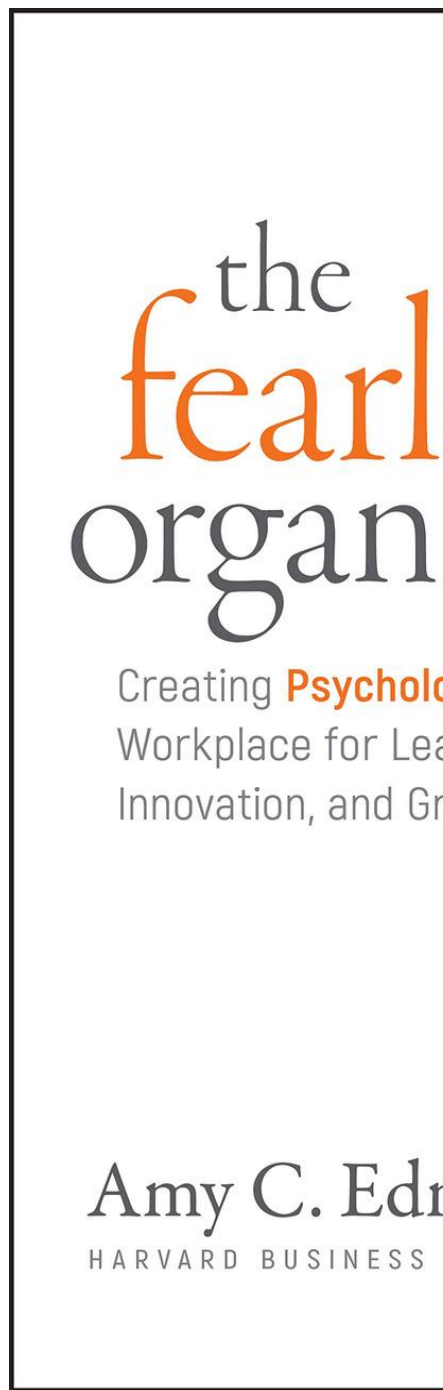
HANDLE WITH CARE

RECIPES

BURNOUT RECOVERY

- try to make everyone happy
- put work ahead of self
- believe hard work is the only recipe for success

Plwin



Guide to Success for a Flourishing FAA Leadership Community

Principles

What principles must we attend to in achieving our

Indicators of Success

Practices

How we set things up to allow the principles to happen.
Strategies and tactics.

Healthy Relationships

Effective Collaboration

**Effective
Communication**

Authentic Curiosity

Systemness

IMPROVE

TRAINING

FAST

SKILLS

DEVELOP

CHANGING

TEAMWORK

GOALS

COACHING



LEADERSHIP

CAREER

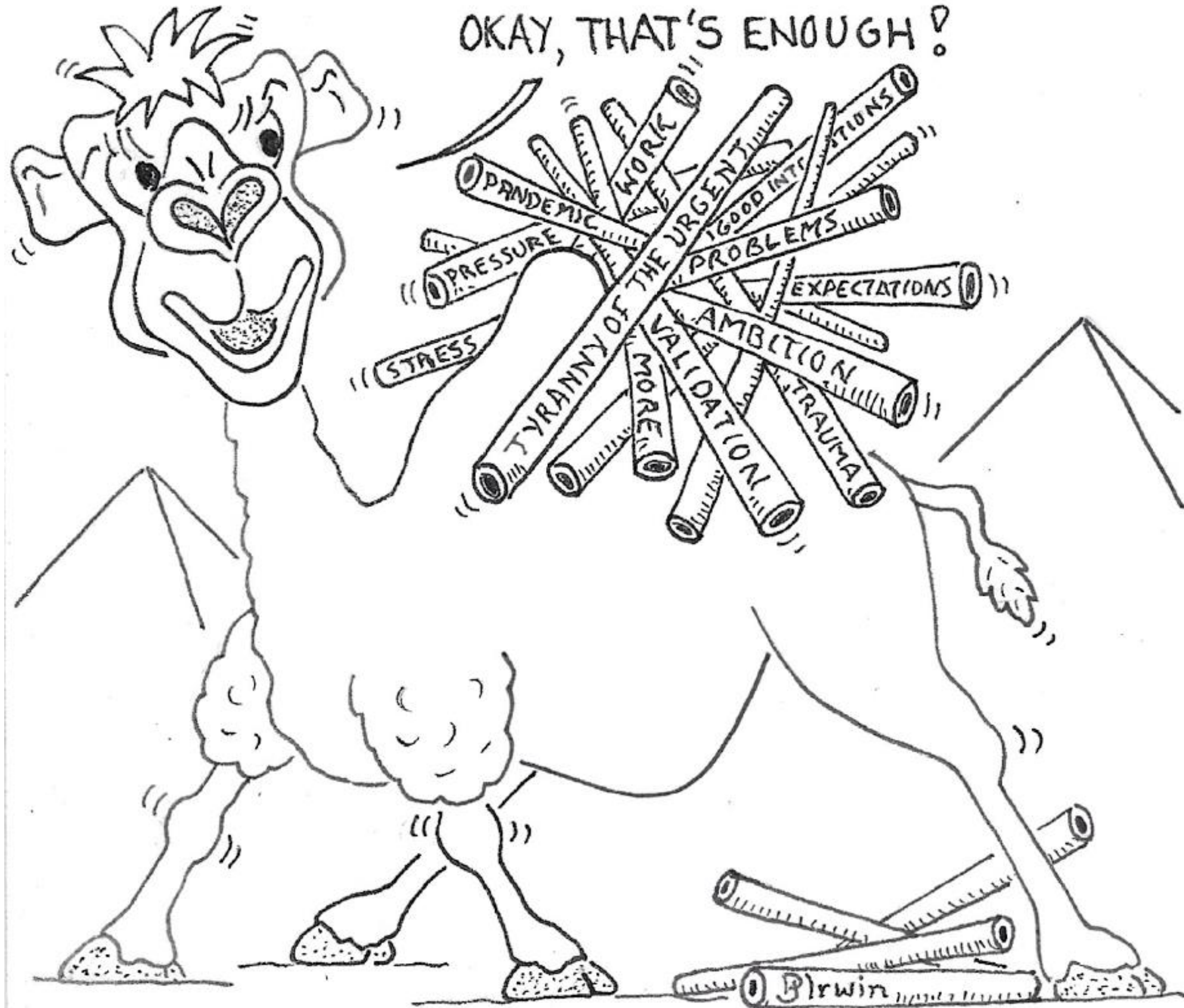
WEBINAR

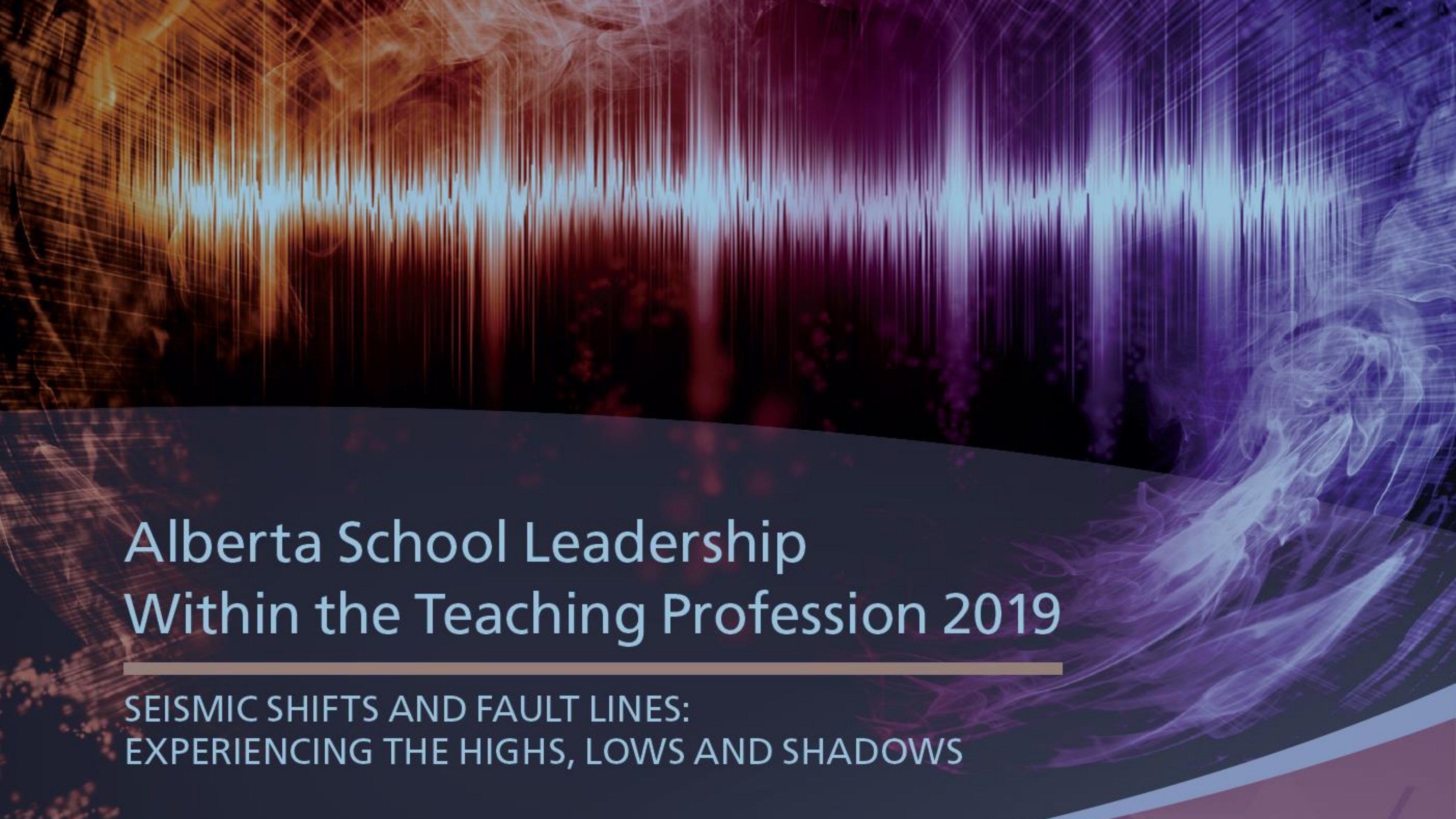
PASSION

Who Takes Care of the Leaders?

In your local context, what are one or two small shifts that could meaningfully change how leaders are cared for, without requiring new funding or policy?







Alberta School Leadership Within the Teaching Profession 2019

SEISMIC SHIFTS AND FAULT LINES:
EXPERIENCING THE HIGHS, LOWS AND SHADOWS

Highlights

- **Instructional leadership**
- **Champions of inclusion**
- **Supports to Indigenous education**
- **Prepared to meet LQS**
- **Professional learning**

Lowlights

- **Youth mental health challenges**
- **Complexity**
- **Exhaustion and overworked and overwhelmed**
- **Impact of technological changes**
- **'Ideal worker' normalized**
- **Challenging parents**
- **Underliving professional lives**
- **Rural specific challenges (and urban?)**
- **Moral distress**

Shadows

- **Technology is a burden, and systems understand**
- **Trusted by districts, and autonomy in question**
- **Outside constraints multiple, right thing to do still possible**
- **Barriers are more for women in leadership, job not seen as more
challenging**

Top Trends and Issues Impacting School Leaders

Survey respondents were asked, What constraints do you experience as a school leader, if any, that make you unable to take appropriate action or do what you know to be right?

CATEGORY	NUMBER OF COMMENTS (N=353)*
District expectations (eg, policy requirements, funding and resources, priorities, professional autonomy)	70
Funding (eg, infrastructure, intersectoral coordination)	54
Complex classrooms (eg, mental health, aggression/violence, inclusion)	47
Parents (eg, parenting skills, abuse, disrespect, personal agendas)	43
Other <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nonflourishing teachers (eg, absenteeism, loss of passion, mental health, hyperfocused on procedural fairness) • Workload (eg, administrative creep, complex classrooms, technology and social media, meetings, district priorities) • Conflict resolution skills • Nonurban, nontraditional school needs are overshadowed • Teacher shortage in specialty areas 	

19%

15%

13%

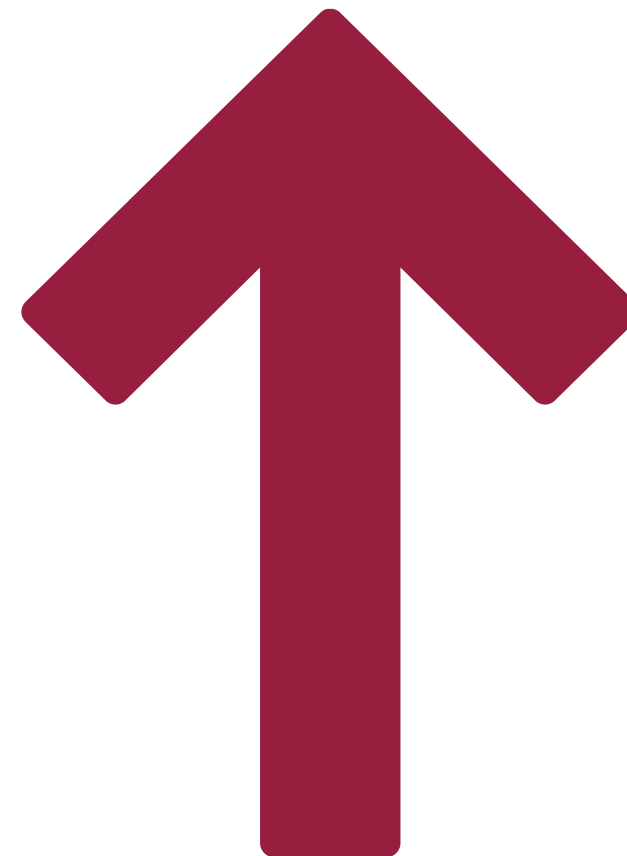
12%

Opportunities?

Highlights

Lowlights

Shadows



Who Takes Care of the Leaders?

If your jurisdiction decided that protecting leader well-being was a strategic priority, what is one practice you would stop doing, one you would start, and one you would amplify?



Upstream





WERKLUND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Research Partnership: Through an Appreciative Inquiry Lens

Goal was to use an interactive research approach that included in person engagement using an appreciative inquiry lens:

- Growth focused
- Positive mindset
- Abundance approach

In parallel to the qualitative study, a fulsome environmental scan to examine policies, legislation, and practice documentation on how leader wellness, psychological safety, and leadership development are situated from a landscape view across Canada.

Appreciative Inquiry in Action

Dr. Nadia Delanoy and Dr. Stephen MacGregor worked with the FAA to help refocus and help move into a research orientation

- Meeting #1- Appreciative Inquiry Activity (Grounding)
 - Purpose of leadership
 - Researchers (also practitioners shared K-12 background)
 - Your 'Why's' (leaders)
 - Sharing and acknowledging the road traveled and the path forward
- Meeting #2- Path Forward (Time Machine)
 - Introduced the research
 - Time machine activity- If you could travel back in time, what advice would you give a budding vice principal?
 - Cue card/post card activity

Initial Engagement with Appreciative Inquiry Framing

- FAA school and district leaders as well as on the operational and business side received this engagement positively.
- Conversations were happening immediately and an excitement to work with Nadia and Stephen could be felt.
- Leaders shared they want to be a part of the change and keep building Foothills School District with an eye on leadership well-being, psychological safety, and leadership development.





International Journal of Leadership in Education Theory and Practice

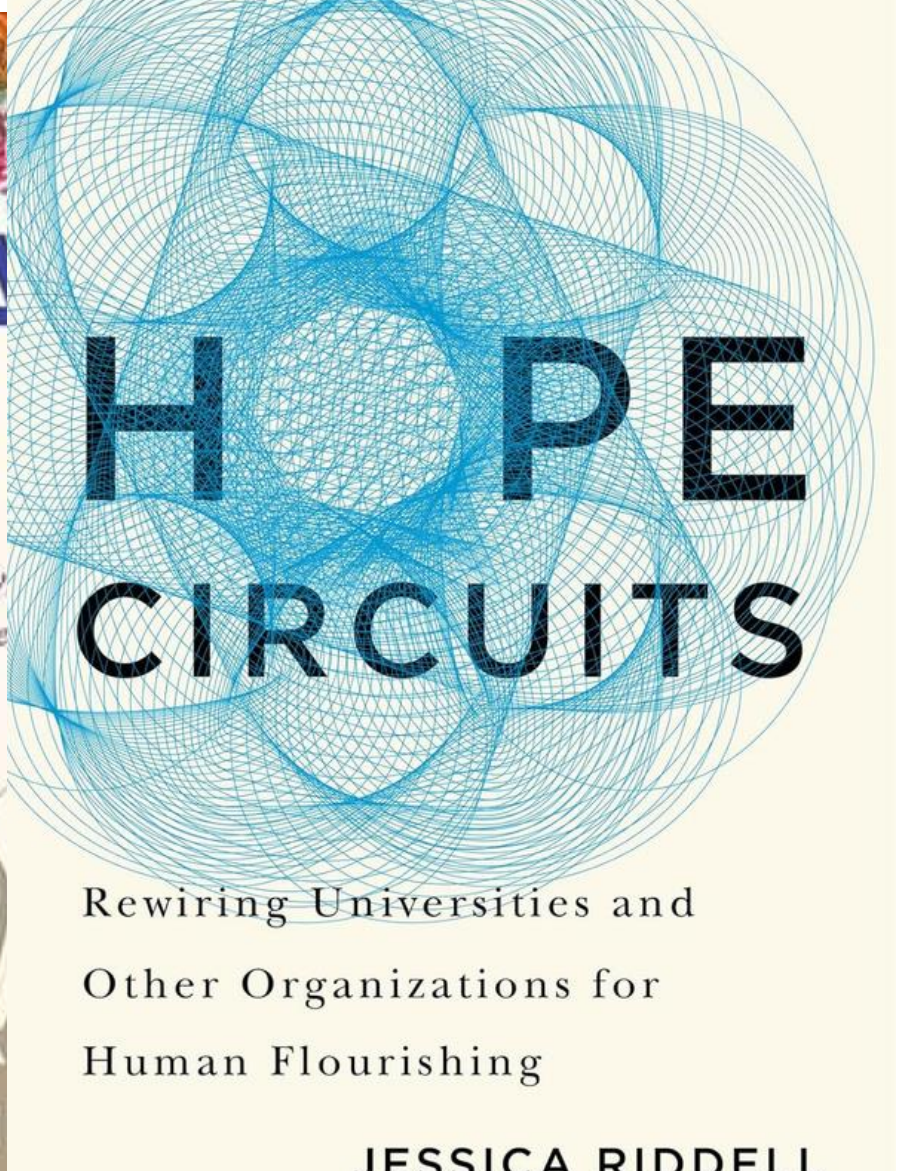
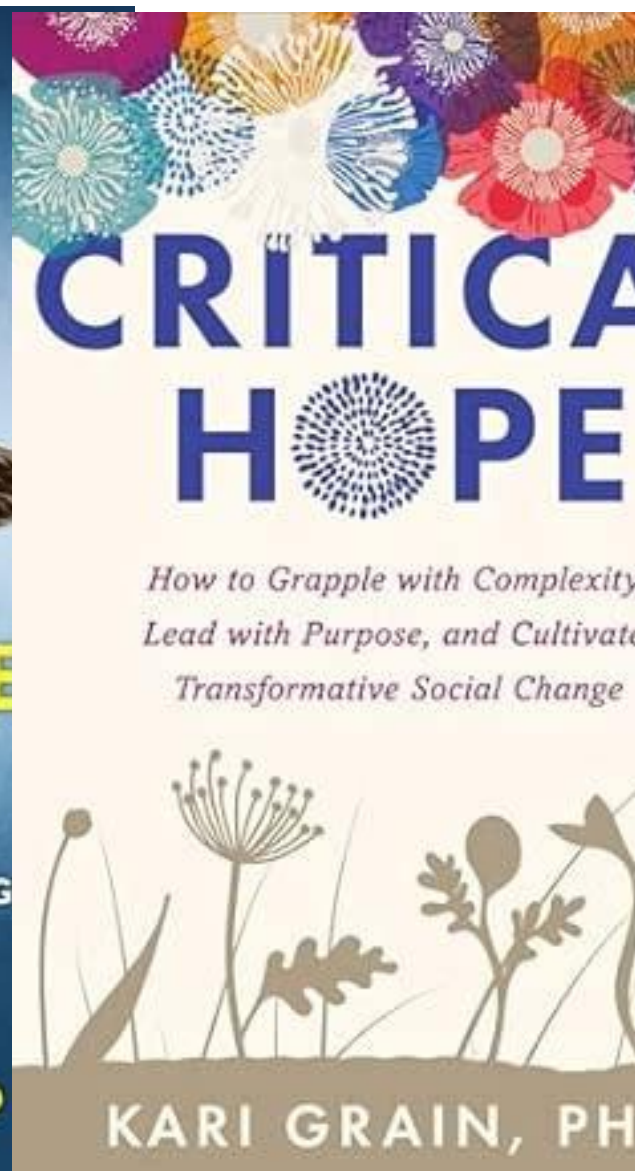
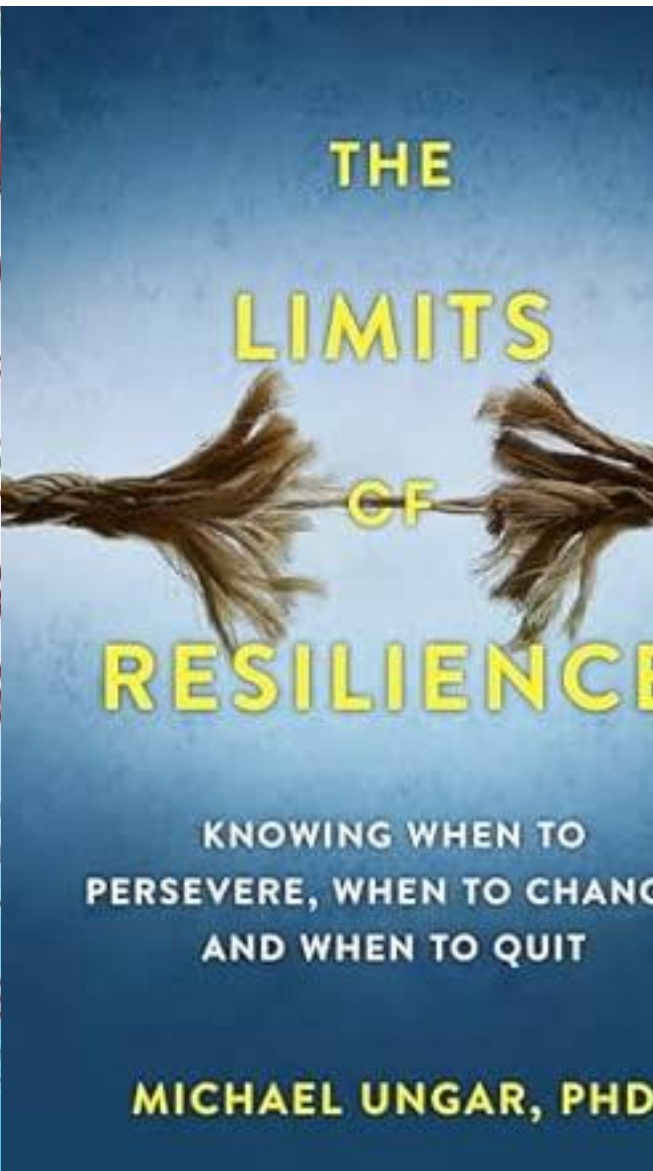
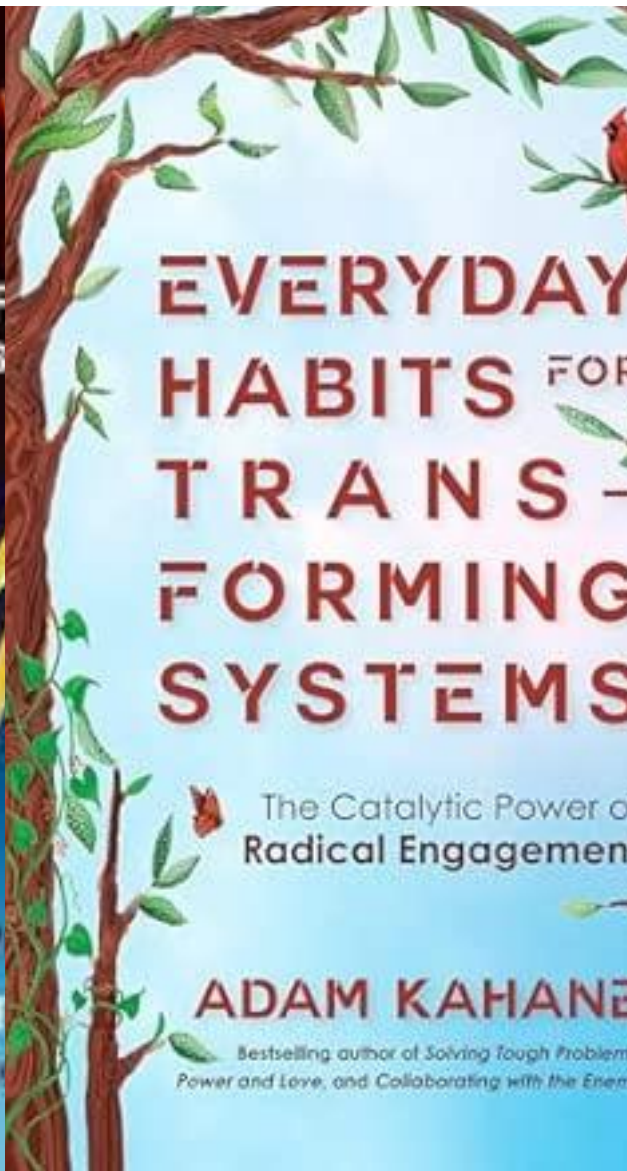
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Moral distress among school leaders: an Alberta, Canada study with global implications

Bonnie Stelmach, Lee Smith & Barbara O'Connor

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To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603124.2021.1926545>



School and System Leader Support Structure Framework

The School and System Leader Support Structure Framework is designed to provide comprehensive, multi-faceted support to school administrators, acknowledging their critical role as change agents within schools.

This framework addresses the intensifying demands placed on principals, including workload intensification, longer work hours, staffing shortages, and safety concerns, which have been further catalyzed by cultural shifts and the COVID-19 pandemic.

Coaching

Mentoring

O and M Learning

Acute Crisis Support

Reflective Practices

Adaptive Structures for Improvement

Professional Learning



WERKLUND SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Leader well-being in Education Systems

- **School leadership is widely recognized as a key driver of:**
 - school improvement
 - teacher retention
 - student success
- **Yet research increasingly shows that school and system leaders face:**
 - rising complexity and workload
 - increasing mental health demands in schools
 - growing risk of stress, burnout, and turnover

Environmental Scan: Understanding the National Landscape

- To situate our collaborative work, we conducted an environmental scan of education policy and leadership frameworks across Canada.
- **The scan examined how provinces and organizations address:** leader well-being, psychological safety, leadership development and professional learning
- **Sources included:**
 - provincial and territorial leadership standards
 - ministry policies and guidance documents
 - leadership association frameworks
 - division-level initiatives
- **Aim:** Understand how Canadian education systems conceptualize and support leader well-being.

What We Saw Across Policy and Frameworks

- **Across many jurisdictions, policy emphasizes:**
 - leadership competencies and professional standards
 - instructional leadership and system improvement
 - professional learning and leadership development
- **well-being appears in policy language through concepts such as:**
 - wellness
 - resilience
 - work-life balance
 - supportive leadership culture
- **However, how these ideas are operationalized vary widely across jurisdictions.**

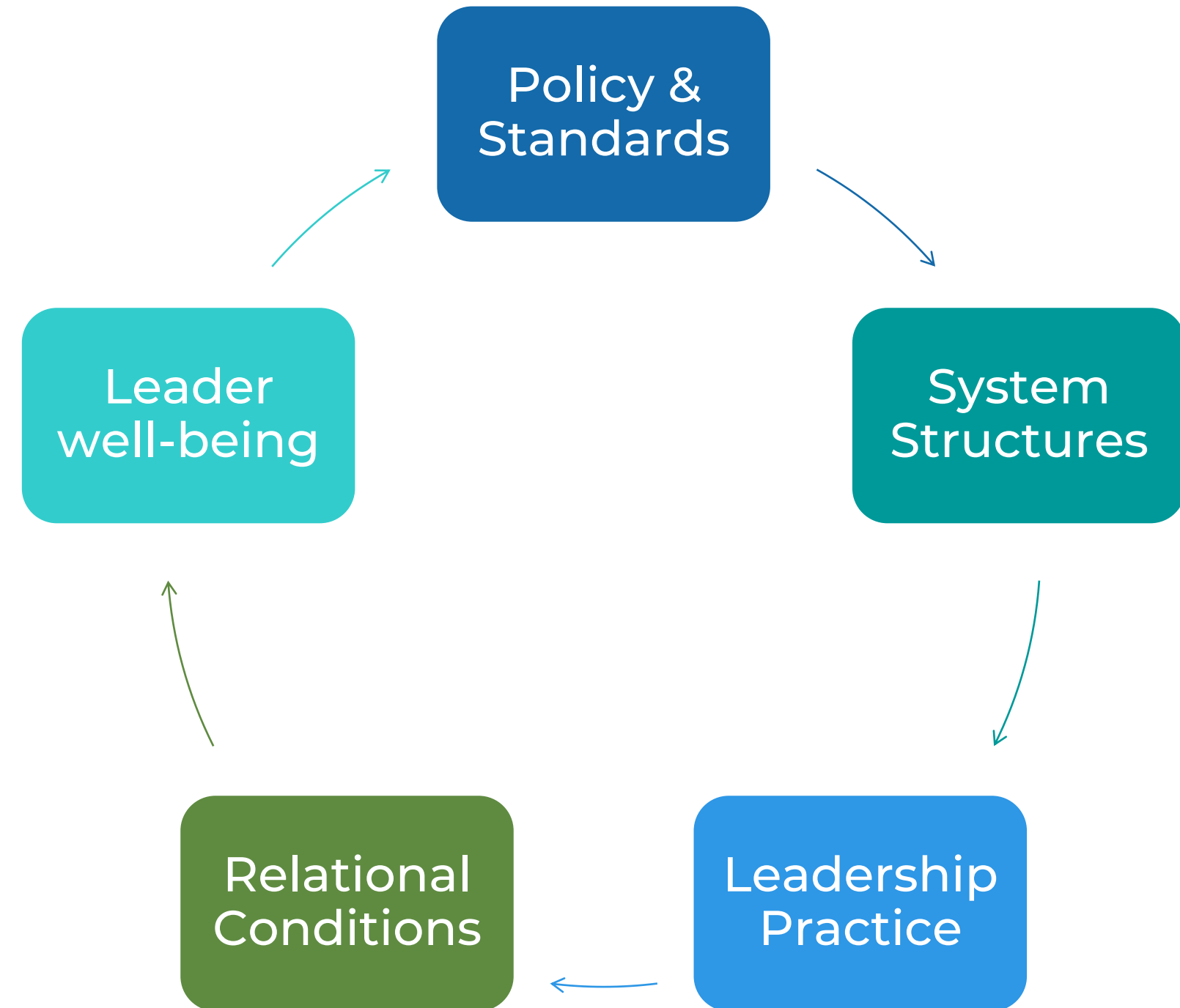
A Key Insight from the Scan

How leader well-being is framed in policy	How leader well-being is experienced in practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leadership standards • governance frameworks • strategic plans • individual practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • trust among colleagues • peer support networks • mentoring relationships • psychological safety in leadership teams

Leader well-being does not flow automatically from structures. It emerges through the relational conditions' leaders experience every day.

How Leader Well-being Actually Emerges

Leader well-being is increasingly recognized as a system-level leadership issue.



Fast Forward Flourishing CommUNITY

A large, stylized blue wave graphic that starts under the word "CommUNITY" and extends across the page, ending with a small blue circle and a smaller wave.

ABOUT FSD

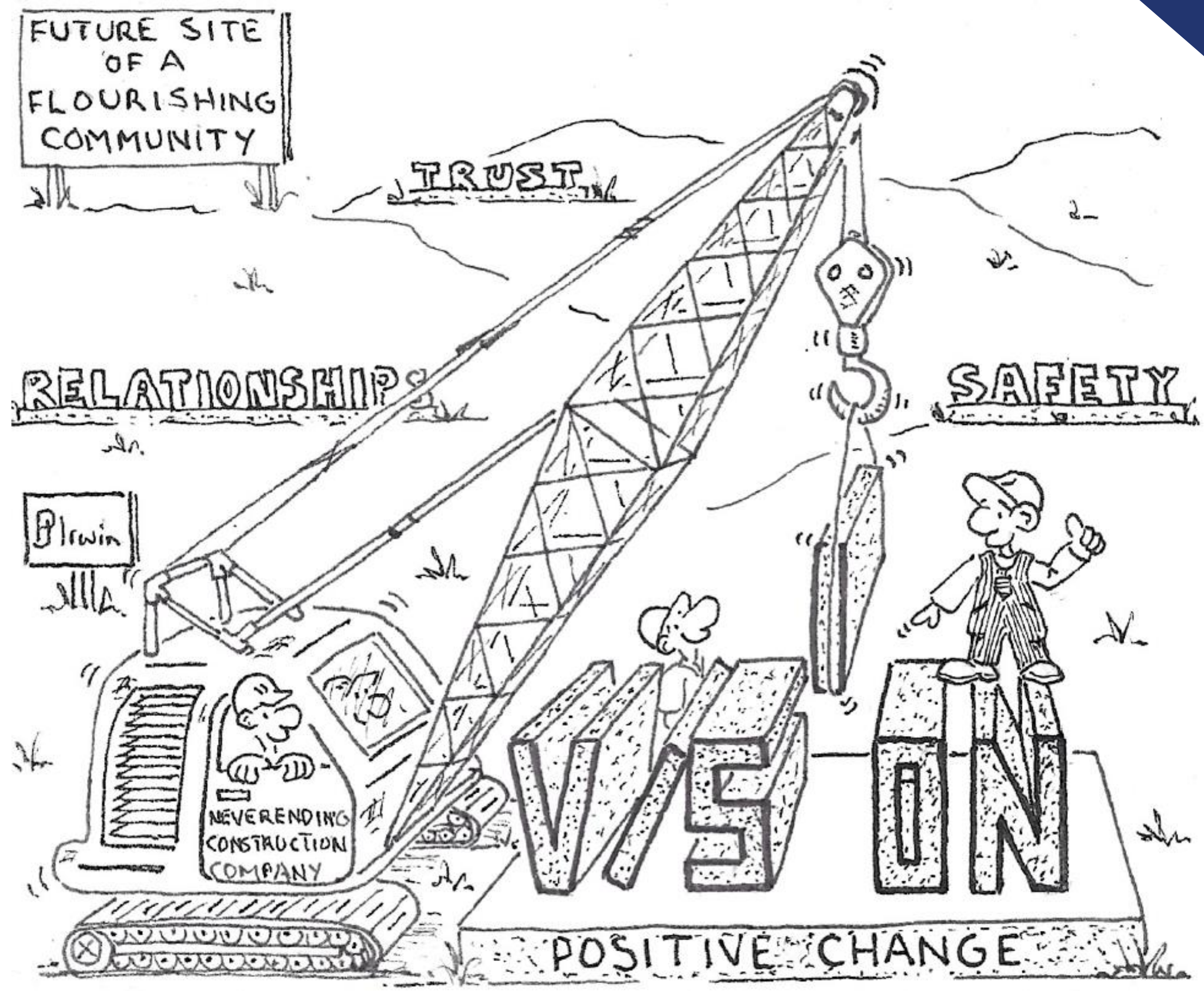
Foothills School Division serves a wide region south of Calgary that impacts the communities of Foothills County, DeWinton, Millarville, Diamond Valley, Longview, Okotoks, High River, Blackie, and Cayley.

SAFEGUARDING RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

Suffice to say that we live in turbulent times.

Our societal context is global, ongoing, increasingly unpredictable, and indicative of our present and a foreseeable future. It is important to acknowledge this reality as our schools and systems...are not only expected to exist, but thrive in this construct.

Rural schools and communities across Alberta face unique and rapidly evolving challenges driven by economic shifts, population changes, and increasing complexity in social and environmental contexts.



Who Takes Care of the Leaders?

Given you agree with the 'upstream' premise of this work; as you look ahead, how can you create environments where well-being and growth are central, not peripheral, to leadership and organizational effectiveness?

Q & A

STAY CONNECTED



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