# Transcript

## Tracey Ezard on Ferocious Warmth Leadership

Duration: 1:30:54

TRACEY: Hello, everyone. So nice to see people's faces.

KENDRA: It's lovely. We have lots of people here.

TRACEY: A few familiar ones, yay.

KENDRA: All right. You can see up on the screen our etiquette for working together virtually. It's quite funny that we keep putting this up, but we all keep forgetting some of the basics. I've just been in a meeting earlier before I came in here with a group of principals and I think nearly everyone had to be told at least once "you're still on mute". So we think we'd know all these things by now, but it's nice to be reminded of them every now and then. So just have a quick look at those while we just give it maybe 30 more seconds for any extras I can see are still coming in to join us.

VIVIENNE: And yet, Kendra, the irony is that the second ‑ the middle tab on the screen currently says "Please keep your microphone on mute if you are not talking".

KENDRA: If you are not talking, that's right. It's when we talk that we've got to remember to take it off mute.

I'll start by introducing myself. So I can't see everyone on here, but I've no doubt there's some people on here that I know and I'm looking forward to seeing your names in the list. But welcome, everybody. My name is Kendra Parker. I'm currently a Principal in Residence at the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership and I'm also the Substantive Principal of Lysterfield Primary School, so I might know some people from there, and prior to that I was Principal at Mentone Park Primary School and did lots of my teaching in the South Eastern and the North Eastern regions of Victoria as well as a few places overseas and around and about in different areas.

So I'm really excited to be here tonight, but my role is really just to welcome you all and to do an introduction for our session. Our Thought Leadership Program has had some wonderful, wonderful speakers and I'm really excited to be introducing Tracey Ezard to you tonight. We were just having a conversation and Tracey is, what do we call ‑ I called you, I think, a local grown hero, so to speak, because we often ‑‑

TRACEY: I don't think you said "hero".

KENDRA: Oh, sorry.

TRACEY: I think it was just local ‑ home‑grown, just keep it to the home‑grown.

KENDRA: Home‑grown, I'll just keep that. But I'm just saying, you know, we often hear of wanting to hear from people like Michael Fullan, Lyn Sharratt, Maggie Farrar, Pasi Sahlberg, who I note that you've worked with, Tracey, but to have someone to come and address us tonight who's been a teacher in our system who knows what we do in schools, who's so well connected to schools, is so important for us, and Tracey is joining us tonight from a school over in Western Australia, so right in the heart of what's happening and understanding the context in which you're all joining us tonight. And we know that putting time into these sessions at the end of a day is a really great commitment from you to develop yourselves and be, you know, lifelong learners and model that for your students and your colleagues as well, so well done on doing that.

Tracey has authored several books, but most recently Ferocious Warmth, and I got a lot of warmth from this book when it was launched during the pandemic in the last few years. Tracey did some work with the North East Region and with networks and I got so much out of listening to that and being part of it. I have this book and The Buzz on my bookshelf currently and I've referred to them lots of times in my years as principal and in lots of different ways as well.

So I'm really excited to introduce Tracey tonight. I know it's going to be a fantastic session. We just worked out that we taught at schools just down the road from each other, oh, over 20 years ago now nearly ‑‑

TRACEY: A long time ago.

KENDRA: ‑‑ so let's not talk about that. We didn't know each other then, but we just found out we had that in common. So very excited to have Tracey with us tonight.

Before I do hand over ‑ oh, I was just going to do an Acknowledgment of Country. I'll just flow straight into this, actually, Tracey, seeing as it's popped up there now, that we acknowledge the Traditional Owners throughout Victoria and pay respect to the ongoing living cultures of First Peoples. We recognise their deep connections to the places where we do our work for continuous school improvement. We continue to learn from the vibrant and innovative knowledge systems of First Peoples and the depth of their teaching, learning and education practice. We observe their resilience through times of change and find ways to promote this through our work. We understand that each of us has a role in supporting each other to respectfully walk and work together.

And I'm coming to you from ‑ I'm up in the Dandenong Ranges, which is Wurundjeri land and people of the Kulin Nation. So we have a very strong connection to our Indigenous culture up here in the Dandenong Ranges, which I'm really proud to be a part of. So you might like to pop in the chat where you're visiting us from today and we can share and acknowledge all of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who might be amongst us or who we might come across in our work as well.

So have a lovely session. I'm going to hand over to you, Tracey, to take us through what I know is going to be a fabulous hour and a half of professional learning. If you have any chats through the session, any questions, you can pop them in the chat and we will be watching that and responding to them at the end of the session, so thank you.

TRACEY: Wonderful. Thanks, Kendra. Thanks so much for that warm welcome. It's just wonderful to be as part of this Thought Leader series blown away by the people that have already presented on it, people that I've looked up to, worked very strongly at looking at their work and learning from it over the years, so I'm really pleased that you've made the time this afternoon.

I'm hoping that it's really interactive and, you know, I'd love it if some people came off mute and asked a question, you know. That mute button is there, but if we were in a room, we'd be having a yack, so how can we make it so it's like that as much. So go there in the chat box. We will be using the Padlet as well.

As Kendra mentioned, I'm actually coming to you from Perth, from Boorloo, and this is a beautiful picture of the traditional lands of the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation and I pay my respects to their Elders past, present, future and emerging.

I am at Hammond Park Secondary College, a brand spanking new college over here. I've been working with the Western Australian Primary Principals' Association conference this morning and working with some secondary principals this afternoon, so it's really great that we've got this technology.

But I saw in the chat box we've got people from all over the place coming in today, which is fantastic, and thanks for acknowledging the country that you are standing on. I also come from the country of the Wurundjeri people, so the Woi Wurrung. This is a beautiful photo I took at midnight on Birrarung on Yarra River and that's where I come from in Richmond, Tigerland country, but let's not mention anything about ‑ anything remotely concerned with anything footballish. You certainly can't do that in West Coast Eagles land that's for sure.

So I'm really interested in what you are up to, what are the things that are bringing you this amazing joy that we have in our work even when the work is hard and that's the reality. This afternoon and tonight we're going to be talking about ferocious warmth leadership and it is around how do we stay balanced and centred to do the incredibly complex work that you do every day.

I've had the privilege of working really closely especially with Victorian system over the last two and a half years and up in New South Wales, Northern Territory and the things that you've had to deal with, we've talked about so many times how incredible that shift has been and how bloody hard term 1 and term 2 this year has been and we can't shy away from the difficulty that I know that you face every day and yet we also know that there is a lot of joy in our work.

And so I'm wondering if you could get your fingers typing and in the chat box could you share with the people that are on this call with you some of your joy, and I think there's a Slido that's come up. What has been what I call a joy bubble for you recently? What is something that has given you joy this week, last week, some time where you have gone, "That's why I do my job"? So I'm going to give you a moment to think about that because you may have to be thinking about it hard, or it might come really easily.

And we're seeing who's going to come first. I'm hoping you're finding joy. Was it a small thing with a student, was it something with a colleague, was it something with a parent? What is it that brought you joy? And I'm not getting anything coming up, so I'm hoping that people are ‑ is there something coming up, Kendra? Can you see stuff coming up, any joy?

KENDRA: It looks like people are putting it into the chat itself rather than Slido.

TRACEY: Oh.

MICHELLE: Yeah, it's just a bit hard in the bubble because you can only put one or two words.

TRACEY: Oh, yeah. Who just came off mute and said that? Thank you so much.

MICHELLE: Yeah.

KERRY: It is coming up in Slido. We can see everybody's responses, but they're not coming up anywhere else.

TRACEY: Okay, cool. See, this is me ‑ sorry, I've got to straight up tell you that I am a Webex novice, I am a Zoom person, and so I am, you know, the ‑ people have been amazing to go let's just have some tests around it, but chat box for me is just really nice and easy to be able to ‑ for me to see.

KENDRA: Can you see the chat, Tracey?

TRACEY: I can see the chat, which I'm loving. "Children's honesty" ‑ Alexandra, I love that. Children's honesty gives you joy, doesn't it, and often gives you a real giggle. So so many things ‑ "Pleasing data I have to shift in practice" ‑ Merryn, love you to come off mute and share with us a little bit about that if you're happy to. Can't see you, Merryn, but I'd love it if you wanted to.

MERRYN: Are you able to hear me?

TRACEY: Yes, I can hear you, Merryn.

MERRYN: We've just shifted from a balanced literacy approach for more structured literacy, explicit instruction, and we've just seen some really great data in our tracking over this term across practices which is really pleasing for the school.

TRACEY: So nice. So important, isn't it, that we do that cycle of that deep work and then we see the shifts. How nice to be able to celebrate that as well, fantastic. And I'm wondering if I can pull in just something from Craig, "listening to old 90s tunes", because it is really relevant to what we talk about later, whether it's 90s or 2000s. Tell us about that, Craig. Are you okay to come off mute?

CRAIG: Yeah, thanks for that. Just going back through Spotify and listening to some songs from the 90s and, yep, just putting a smile on your face when you reminisce about good times.

TRACEY: Yes, beautiful. So incredibly important. And this is a really important point for being a balanced and centred leader is what is it that you do that brings you joy and when we do step into that joy and we share it with the people that we work with, we shift the chemistry in our brain and so the time to take to do that work takes nothing at all and yet what it helps us to do is collectively attach back to our purpose.

So when you run your meetings, when you see each other in the hallways, do you focus on the stuff that's not working or do you focus on the stuff that does work? Are you focusing on the stuff that brings joy to the work that you do or are you focusing on the things that need to be fixed because both of them are really important. And so that space of being able to do I just had a joy bubble just then and to share that was incredibly empowering.

I had a principal today who showed me a video of two of their students who are brothers who both have autism and they have never run in a school carnival race and they ran in one with the teacher and their ES supporting them, their support person supporting them, and they all ran all four of them and they had never run in a race and the whole school was around cheering them on and what a community joy bubble that is. How do we create these spaces again, especially after we've had this disconnection, to be able to come together to deeply celebrate the things that we do and how do you do it, you know?

There are some beautiful ones in the chat box that I'm hoping that you're reading and that perhaps you might want to go back and have a bit of a think with your teams around let's just collect the joy that we've had this term so far and just spend some time actually doing that connection piece.

For those of you who know my work, most of my work has been around creating really strong collective learning and collaborative learning cultures. My first book was called The Buzz and there is a buzz in the school, isn't there, when people are really committed to learning together and it comes and sits in the suite underneath ferocious warmth leadership and it's about creating an environment where what we understand is that what we bring to the table helps to create the culture that we're after.

So one thing that we know really strongly I think is that emotions are contagious and I can remember being at Oakleigh Primary School actually and I came into the staff room and I was pouring myself a cup of tea and I gave this big sigh at the end of the day and I said, "Oh, my kids were right off today" and the very wise Lizzie Pringle stood next to me and looked at me and said, "Trace, were you right off today?" And she was so right, I had been off all day and the kids just reacted to that.

When it comes to leadership, it's the same. The emotions we give off help people feel safe around us, they help people to feel that we have got the strategy and the nous to be able to move forward, but that we can hold the space and this is the elements that I'd really love to explore with you today around ferocious warmth.

So a curious question I have for you and what I'd love you to be doing if you're taking any notes is that you've got a special spot on your note taking pad that is about curious questions, what am I curious about, because I don't think we have enough curiosity about ourselves. And so to walk away from today with a few curious questions to ponder either by yourself or with your leadership team can be really super powerful as a way of getting out of professional learning ‑ instead of just taking a whole lot of notes, actually what are some really key provocative questions for me, and this provocative question is probably a little bit challenging in a pandemic to ask this, but what infection are you spreading?

We hope it's not the green lurgy, the spicy cough, but what infection do you spread as a leader? People are around you. Are you creating in the environment the contagion that you would want and what would that look like? Is it about possibility, optimism? Is it about being able to say yes, we can do this? Is it about being able to hold boundaries, what isn't on and what is on and have the courage.

Thanks, Anne, for adding that, great, passion for learning, enthusiasm for learning ‑ love it, how great is that, because what that does, it's contagious, isn't it, because if we have a passion for learning, we are open to influence, we are open to listening to people's perspective, we are open to saying "maybe I haven't got it right". And I don't know about you, but when I'm around leaders that believe they are always right, it tends to make other people feel that they're very wrong. So how do we step into that space of going this is complex, we can't know it all, what is it that we are trying to do together, and I don't have all the answers.

So let's pause on that and let's do a deep dive and let's see if we can find the best answer. So I love it and Danielle, how beautiful is that, lightheartedness because gee we're serious, aren't we? Sometimes we're really, really serious and I know life gets pretty tough ‑ I've just spilt tea everywhere, sorry ‑ but we can be too serious.

I got these principals and school leaders this morning to dance and we had a good dance to some great music and that's why I focused on Craig's perspective on how do we listen to stuff that makes us feel lighter, how do we listen to great music that helps to shift our state so that we can do the really complex work because you do complex work every day. No matter what your role is in a school, there is huge complexity that goes along with it.

So that curious question is useful because I think what it gets us thinking about is if I'm spreading an infection and an emotional contagion that's not useful, what do I need to do to shift myself, what do I need to do to get into a better space where I can be what I call a balanced leader? And it's these little tiny things that I think make the difference in leadership. We can have all the theories in the world, but it's our humanness that brings that to the fore.

There are so many beautiful reflections in the chat box around all of this. "A sense of trust in capability" ‑ how much does that get paid back to us, Rebecca, when we give that out, rather than micro managing, rather than looking over people's shoulders and not giving them the trust that they deserve as professionals? You know, I think sometimes if we listen to the way that we as school leaders can sometimes speak to the adults, it sounds like we're talking to a class of kids. It can be really interesting when we can get into that parent‑child with people that we work with. How do we keep it as an adult‑to‑adult space?

This is what, you know ‑ Michael Fullan, I love his book. So Professor Fullan's book on nuance is just a brilliant dive into what are the little moments that make a difference between what he calls surface leaders and deep leaders and I really love his insights into this, that it is actually the key principles upon which nuanced leaders stand that allow them to make and adapt themselves and for me this was really ‑ he wrote this and brought this out at the time I was writing Ferocious Warmth and I read it and I said yep, this is absolutely the patterns that I see in great leadership is it is about the small nuances, it's about being able to tap into people's joy, it's about being able to bring a sense of wonder and curiosity, it's about having an authenticity to you that people feel that they can connect to you and feel that they can be stretched by you, but at the same time be held.

And his main key picture ‑ you know, his main key principles that he focuses on ‑ is that ability to create joint determination, show that adaptability to be able to move depending on the outcomes, move depending on whether we're getting where we need to go, and to have a culture that is about accountability.

And so ferocious warmth for me is the concept that came about probably about three years ago. I've always been lucky to be exposed to brilliant leaders as well as leaders that are not so great, They're a work in progress. And I started to unpack with the leaders that I saw just were able to create an environment of high challenge, high support and say what is that about, what are the patterns?

So just like Professor Fullan with his research and the work that he's done with leadership, I've always been fascinated with what is the thing that's like the tumbler in the safe that actually makes leadership where people thrive, people feel like they can grow and people feel that there is a sense of the collective together, there's a really strong sense of purpose and there's a really strong focus on the students.

And so this concept came to me when I was in ‑ I was working with a principal up outside Townsville Claudine Rasmussen ‑ Claudine Moncur‑White at Rasmussen primary school and it was ‑ it's a school that had nine principals in about seven years and they have a very high percentage of First Nations children, attendance is a challenge, their results were a challenge, keeping teachers was a challenge, kept on turning over, and I came and worked and observed her and got to hang out with her when she'd been there probably for about three and a half years and talk about a turnaround. Their attendance was right up.

In fact, last time I spoke to Claudine ‑ unfortunately, she passed away of cancer a year or so ago, but she was so proud of the fact that graduates usually leave schools in droves after the first year, but she was having them stay to the percentage of about 95% were staying. And the data was up.

But I stood with her at the school gate and I watched her interact with every child that walked through that gate and every family and make connections and see each child and value each child and she would just make a note of whether that child maybe needed to go to the uniform shop and just get a new pair of shoes, or whether they looked like they had had an upsetting morning, or whether they were raring to go. She was their cheerleader.

She was also her teachers' and support staff's cheerleaders. I never heard her say a bad word about anyone. What I heard her say is talk about the challenges that she might have had about working with and creating an environment with a certain person, but she would never ever say anything that was less than in terms of treating another human being with respect and professionalism. And I think sometimes we can get into holes where we don't do that and we actually speak not as well as we could around our students, around the people that we work with.

So ferocious warmth, one of the things that we see is a really strong love of people and I use that word really strongly. There is a love for the work and I've asked ferocious warmth leaders time and time again do you believe that love is an important element of the work and all of them have said absolutely. It's an agape love, it's a filial love, it's a I love you for your humanness ‑ even when you drive me up the wall, I still love you, I have a love for you.

And I was talking to a principal just today and she said we have started a new school and that's absolutely what we are recruiting for is people that show a deep love for this work and a deep love for humans and if you have the book Ferocious Warmth, I talk about an amazing principal over in America Lindsa McIntyre, who created ‑ turned a turnaround school that was really suffering, the school had never come out of turnaround into higher levels of achievement and they managed to turn it around and she says ‑ I've heard her speak and spoken to her and she talks about coming from a soapbox of love.

And so I want to put that out there that I think it's really useful for people to see that we care, that people see that there's a connection, but that people see that you care that there's also high expectations and we're always lifting the bar around what we're trying to do and how we're trying to do it. So the ferocious warmth approach is pulling from both the head and the heart and it's bringing it together in the centre, pulling from the cognitive, the logical, the rational, the tasks, the stuff to do, and bringing it together with the empathy, the connection, the ability to connect to people and with people and to bring those together depending on what is needed at the time.

And around the outside are four key principles that just keep on coming up time and time again when I talk to ferocious warmth leaders and that is expansive, being able to be the lead learner and lead a learning culture, expanding your model of the world, being connected, courageous and authentic and we'll talk about those before we finish today.

One thing I really would like you to think about, and I know there are many leaders on here that are really experienced leaders and some that have led in a number of schools and this is one of my favourite Christmas light pictures is that sometimes we can go I'll just have what they're having and we try to replicate exactly what we might have done elsewhere or seen elsewhere and it doesn't always work because context matters so much when it comes to leadership. And for those of you who've been working with Vic Zabbar and I'm sure you have been talking about context, I'm sure you have been talking about how do we take this evidence‑based work that we're looking at and contextualise it for our needs.

Now, I think that context matters on a 10‑minute, 5‑minute, 30‑minute basis. The context and our ability to pull from the head and the heart, depending on the need and the context, is our ability to be the adaptable leader, to also be able to see when things are working and when they're not.

There is also ‑ this daily dance requires us to be able to do the paradox of yet. The paradox of yet is this ability to be able to see and do things through two different lenses. So, for example, sometimes we absolutely need to be director ‑ we're directing the traffic, we're making the decisions, we're moving things along ‑ but at the same time, we need to be able to have the skills to be a cocreator. We have to be able to step in and cocreate with our people and listen to their voice, listen to their input. It's cocreate with our students, increase their student agency by actually stepping in and not just telling them what they need to be doing, but actually cocreating, new constructs.

The paradox of yet is also about being courageous yet vulnerable, being challenging yet compassionate, and so ferocious warmth is about not seeing these as a dichotomy, but in actual fact being able to bring them together. I challenge high support, warm demanding, firm but fair, to not sit one or the other but to come into the centre.

Steve Munby, the author and, you know, great leader from the UK, talks in his book Imperfect Leadership about the challenge of power and love. Power and love together is for me ferocious warmth. It's being able to use our power for influence and to use our power with people, not to use our power over people. It's about being able to create connections with people that are not about letting them get away with everything, having soft boundaries. It's about having good boundaries and being open to having conversations. So the paradox of yet I think is the daily dance and the daily struggle that we can find ourselves in.

So here are a few examples of some of the things that can come up when we are looking at how do we do this dance of yet in the middle and the bottom one is something that I think we could do more of, is how do we become a leader who is able to be realistic yet optimistic, and we need to be able to look after ourselves to be able to do that because the tough times that we've been moving through can make us feel sometimes very less than optimistic. So how do we move into a space of being able to say, "This is what we've got to do, let's work together to do it and I'm absolutely optimistic about what's possible." That creates a space where people feel like they can get their heads up.

I'd really love you to think about and go to the meta position, go up to the balcony above yourself and have a listen to the quality of your language at the moment when you go back in to school. Are you able to straddle that realism but also the optimism, and it sounds like "can", "let's give it a go", "possible", "okay, what does it look like, let's talk about this", whereas realism and pessimism looks like, "This is what we've got to do", "Oh, this is hard work", "We're never going to get there" and there's this glass half full approach that the optimism has that means that the realism allows us to start taking the steps towards the vision of the optimist.

So that really is a very strong feedback that I get from people that we want leaders who can help us shape a plan of where we need to get to, but there's also light at the end of the tunnel or there's light every day. There's a bit of fun, there's a bit of joy, there's that connection that helps us feel like it's worthwhile getting out of bed and walking in to work.

And I heard, you know, a leader in a Victorian school the other day say, "At the moment I find it hard to get out of bed and come to school because of the way we're all operating together" and what I thought was beautiful about that is that that person said that to the entirety of the school staff. So that was incredibly brave and vulnerable and it allowed us to have some really good conversations around where things were at.

Now, have a think about where your yet is. Where is it that you have got really strong ability to be able to move through both of those? So one of them is more head driven, one of them is more heart driven.

In the centre of the infinity ‑ and it's an infinity because it's an energy that shifts all the time ‑ is where ferocious warmth sits. It's our ability to see where is it that we need to make some really strong, decisive movements, where do we need to be strategic and where do we need to have empathy, build culture and be connected?

And one of the biggest things that we can do I think is have an idea of where our default might lie when we're not thinking about things. So when we are not having to think very hard about stuff, we tend to go into habits of leadership. And so some of you might identify that you know you go more to the head. You've got a thousand things on and you go a little bit more head driven. So you start thinking more about what have I got to do, what's the plan, what are the 100 things I've got to do before morning recess, and we get our heads down and we do the work. And we think of outcomes, we think of compliance, we think of measurement, we think of OH&S. It's the hard edge stuff that we go to first. And for some of us we know that's where we go.

For others, we might go more to the relationship driven side and that is more heart, more to the relationships, more to the side that actually is about people rather than task and rather than the work to do. It's about the relationships that we have.

And so knowing which one you go to first is really useful. Do you think you're more relationship or do you think you're more results? And if you say to me, "Tracey, it depends on context", excellent, ferocious warmth, beautiful, boom, and knowing what our preference is is a really good start to be able to say yep, okay, I know at school I tend to go more results driven when the pressure is on, okay?

With both ‑ and Kerry, that is absolutely the whole point of ferocious warmth is to have both. We have to be drawing from the head and the heart to be able to be in the middle and yet time and time again we don't necessarily. We start to move and default, what I call the default, more to one side than the other. This is the bell going in this school, if you can hear that lovely sound, so sorry about that.

So what I'd like you to do is can I get you, please, to just think about whether you think you go more to the head or more to the heart more as a default, like the first place you go to, or if you're really tired, you tend to sit there a little bit more. You'll either focus more on the relationships or you'll focus more on the results. Just have a think about that and what I'd like you to think about and put into ‑ I'm hoping a Slido comes up, but if the Slido isn't working for you, pop it into the chat box ‑ the question is if we sit as a prolonged default as a results‑driven leader in our school, what do you reckon some of the impacts are?

Yeah, that's really interesting, yes, thanks, Kerry, "relationship with students, results with teachers", yes. It's interesting to unpack what that's about too, isn't it? So what would the shift be? If we are prolonged in results driven, so we're very focused, it's all about measurements, all about the AIP, it's all about the strategic plan, it's about the outcomes that we're after, what is it that comes up?

BEC: Yeah, so I think you can have a shift in culture that it can become quite negative because you don't have that compassionate side at all and it's all about that, so it can become quite stressful and under pressure.

TRACEY: Absolutely. And there's this space, isn't there, that says I no longer feel seen. So people don't feel seen by us because it's all about the work rather than the person actually in the work.

Now, research that ISV did, Independent Schools Victoria did, with Monash shows that during the pandemic 84% of school leaders actually said they swung far more to the relationship‑driven side of, you know, stepping into making sure everyone was all right. That was in 2020 and so it's interesting to think of, you know, this ongoing pandemic, how have we been able to balance so that we're really focused on both results and relationships. But the points that have been put in the chat box are really important and I'm wondering if people can add a few more. Sorry, there's some on the Slido, but I'm not able to see it without totally being distracted.

Yeah, so Antoinette, you've got what we are after there when we've got both. We have disconnection. People feel undervalued. That is such an important piece. Do you know that one of the biggest survey results Gallop that does a survey, workplace survey, global workplace survey, which they've found that about 60% of people are disengaged around the world.

Now, I don't think that really fits exactly for education. I've never found an overall 60% have disengagement. But one of the biggest things that people say that makes them want to leave is a sense of feeling valued and I know we have huge big issues around feeling valued as a system, as people that work in a system of education, but some people say, "I don't feel valued in my own school".

So we've got some great words in there. We've got neglected, underused ‑ yes, nice. You don't care anymore, yep. Damages, butting ideas. That's where it so links to our culture of change, doesn't it, is if people don't feel seen, valued and connected to at a human level, then we're going to have all this burnout and things that come out.

Yep, and absolutely, Adam, we're only going to cooperate together because we're not going to get into that deep collaborative, cocreative space that we want. Great, and Danielle has shared those Slido results, which is fantastic, which I can probably go into and have a look also at.

Okay. So let me just keep moving on here because what I'd like you to also think about, though, is what happens if we have prolonged default relationship‑driven leadership because that's really important that we also understand the other side. So it's like it's not that ‑ it's like relationships are all. Having a nice harmonious culture is all. But there's not a focus on what we're trying to achieve as a school, what we're trying to achieve in our levels, as a system if we're in the state system.

What is it that happens when we let go of that and we just focus solely on making sure relationships are okay in our environment, and I'm wondering whether people are ‑ yes, they are, great. "Lack of accountability and lack of pushing each other to be better". "Inequity" ‑ Vivian, are you able to come off mute and talk to us about what you mean by inequity?

VIVIAN: So can you hear me?

TRACEY: Yeah, I can, thanks, Vivian.

VIVIAN: So when I think of inequity, I just think sometimes we might feel compassion or empathy towards one particular staff member and then someone else who may not speak up and need that support, they might not be receiving it as well.

TRACEY: Yes, absolutely. You've just really hit the nail on the head, Vivian, around some things that people feel this relationship driven, what it can lead to is I'm in or I'm out and there can be a feeling of exclusion because there might be some people that get that really good support and others that don't necessarily get it as well. It's really interesting when that happens I think and it's a dynamic that's almost a rescuing dynamic. So really ‑ I love that, Sandi, "a country club". Can you tell us more about the country club?

SANDI: I just remember years ago wanting to apply for a school and I asked what's going on at that school and the SEALs would describe them as a country club and I would imagine ‑‑

TRACEY: Right.

SANDI: ‑‑ there wasn't a level of accountability, there wasn't push. It was just everyone was feeling good about what they were doing and going with the flow, but not necessarily taking those next steps.

TRACEY: Yeah. It's what I call the ‑ on my culture letter, if you're familiar with my buzz culture level, you know, the bottom one is corrosion. The next one up is complacency. It's, "Ah", you know, "what we do here is pretty okay and, look, we love each other, we love each other."

Now, do not get me wrong, loving each other, critical, I've already mentioned how strong that is in terms of the work that I do, but if that gives us a level of comfort that means we don't push ourselves out of our comfort zone and really stretch, then we get into that really dodgy area ‑ yep, and absolutely, Adam, I'm with you, it's that culture of nice that says it's such a nice place to be and our students are there going "push me, stretch me, excite me, push me into entrepreneurial thinking, get me thinking" and, you know, it's that whole thing.

You know, I think Professor Hattie really redefined this conversation a few years ago and he did it at an ACL monograph at a conference where he really made it clear let's stop putting on pedestals schools that have high achievement, but low growth, you know? Let's actually put on pedestals schools that have low achievement but high growth.

You know, schools in Northern Territory in 2019 were the biggest growing schools in terms of their data because they all came together as a system to go, "We've got to shift what we're doing" and they worked as a collective. So, you know, it's a really interesting space to go we have to have this blend of both, but having one much more than the other creates an environment where there is unevenness and outcomes that we don't want.

Yes, I like that Jade, yeah, if we have challenge and expectations I'm being mean, I am being mean, rather than actually it's a culture of learning and it's a culture of growth. Blurred lines is also a great one, Tania, and I'm sorry I'm using the ‑ I know I'm using the chat rather than the Slido, but I'm sure you can put things on ‑ see things on the Slido as well that say that let's not make it that it's all about ‑ let's lessen the results driven and get more into relationships. It's that the balance is critical for our students in our schools. I do believe ‑ yes.

KENDRA: It's Kendra. I was just going to share for you a few things that are on the Slido, if you'd like me to.

TRACEY: Great. Yes, that's great.

KENDRA: But also I think your camera might have gone off.

TRACEY: Oh, there we go. Thank you. Oh, there we go. I've been waving my hands around for nothing. Thanks, Kendra.

KENDRA: So yeah, in the Slido, very similar things but there's a few comments around lack of accountability, lack of focus and drive to grow.

TRACEY: Yep.

KENDRA: Losing perspective when bias gets in the way of improvement.

TRACEY: Yes, yep. .

KENDRA: Yeah, quite a bit around lack of accountability, no accountability, slow progress, yes.

TRACEY: Yeah, beautiful, great. So this is a really interesting list of things to look at, these two lists that we just looked at, because it makes us really go what's the outcome of my leadership? And I just want to go to the extreme. So the next two slides are about the extremes of leadership.

When we are results‑driven leaders as a default and we don't hang on to that and we don't grab it and even ourselves up with the other side, we become fearsome leaders and I have worked with a fearsome leader and a fearsome leader creates absolute fiefdoms, kingdoms, where people just do what we're told and we have no say in it and we actually have got fear. There's no conversation, there's no interaction, there's no dialogue, there's nothing that we can say ‑ in fact, we've stopped saying it.

You know, there's just that great insight if we don't really listen to what people say to us that we don't agree with, people will stop speaking to us. They just won't bother. They'll just tell us what we need to hear or what we want to hear.

And a fearsome leader unfortunately is dangerous because a fearsome leader actually inflicts trauma. It's extreme and I've worked in organisations where they're picking up the pieces after having a fearsome leader absolutely impact on them for years and create a culture of fear. No psychological safety. The psychological safety is that I can speak up without fear of belittlement, embarrassment, shame and I have a voice. So I think we need to beware when we start going out of balance to fearsome leadership.

Let's go over the other side. A lot of heart, where relationship ‑ we err more to the relationship. We can become enmeshed leaders and enmeshed leaders find it very hard to get their heads out of just really mucky unhealthy relationships with the people that we lead.

I think this is really important that we help our younger teachers, our early leaders, to be able to have good, frank, vulnerable conversations with their teams when they start moving into leadership around how do we navigate this fact that I'm ‑ you know, I'm part of the team, but actually I have got accountabilities that are different and how do we have that? And I've had leaders say to me, "I did that at the very start when I started moving into a different space" and the angst that it saved me because we didn't have to get into this mucky avoidance not saying the things that we really needed to say.

I used to work with an enmeshed leader and what you have to do is wait to see how they walk down the corridor as to how you could approach them during the day because everything was so up and down. (Inaudible). And the thing that was most leaky was that enmeshed leader would go and try to fix things in relationships by telling people things about other people that was not their right to tell and what that does, what's the impact of that, you know, what is the impact of that.

Yep, great ‑ some great examples. "Difficult as they favour teachers" ‑ yes, this is where that bias that we talked about with the relationship part comes in to the fore when we're not keeping a hold on that.

Now, if you go into a school which has got challenges with culture, you'll find some of this going on. You'll find ‑ and some leaders will say to me, "I've been so stressed lately, Tracey, that what I've been doing is just ping‑ponging from one side to the other and becoming enmeshed." I had a principal say to me, "I read your book over the holidays and I realised that what I was doing was I was being a bit fearsome and then I would go home and wake up at 2am in the morning, worry about it, be concerned about it, and then I'd come back to school and I'd very unhealthily, in an enmeshed way, try to fix it" and she said, "I could tell that I was just flitting from one to the other because I was feeling so stressed about where I was at."

So can you just add what's your experience, what is your experience of working with either a fearsome or an enmeshed leader? And here you'll see ‑ and this is in your downloads that you can get ‑ this is a really useful just reminder of the impacts that these five different areas can have. Ferocious warmth, we bring together the head and the heart, we work lifting the bar, but we also work holding the space. We work from an empathy and compassionate space, but we deeply see that our role is to do the very best for our students and make the courageous decisions.

But when we start moving out, you'll see the results, the outcomes can be people feel distanced from us trust wise. The conversations tend to be a task and people start to do stuff because they have to ‑ compliance, rather than being brought in. But those edges are what I worry about, especially when we are stressed, you know. So this is where I really am really focused on helping leaders to go, "What is it that I need to do to bring myself back from too out of balance back into the centre and what do I need to bring from the other side?"

So can you pop in the chat box maybe some things that you might have experienced and we've got some. Yeah, Jodie Matthews, three‑way conversations. Now, I don't know whether you've seen ‑ many principals and assistant principals have seen Rachael Robertson speak at conferences, you know, and she headed up the Antarctic expedition and she just got sick of having to deal with kids, even though she had like 16 adults that were living with each other 24/7 for nine months. She got them all together and she basically metaphorically, you know, tonged their heads together and said, "We are all professionals, no triangles" ‑ classic way to go okay, if you've got a problem, actually talk to the person. Culture is built on the quality of the conversations.

When we are in enmeshment, we tend to use manipulation to get what we want. When we are heading over to the fearsome, we tend to just look for compliance and blind yes, I'll do whatever you say.

Let me just have a bit of a squiz what we've got. Yeah, nice. It's so important, Michelle, because what's ‑ I don't know whether you've seen what Michelle said, "Couldn't trust one of my leaders, never tell me what I needed to improve with, always nice, I felt I couldn't grow and was unseen".

I can't ‑ you know, we are really bad at stretching people with feedback. It's like the irony of our expertise. There's a couple of things we're not great at, actually, in education. One is admitting and learning from our mistakes. The thing we say to kids all the time ‑ actually, if you've got a culture of learning, you are willing to share your mistakes and learn from them. High‑performing teams, that is an indicator of high performance is what we do with mistakes. But the other thing is that we are not all that great at having the more courageous conversation and yet we talk all the time.

"Blame and shame" ‑ I love that, Katie. Katie said, "Asking for advice instead of feedback has been more successful for me". Yes. I really do believe we need to ditch the word "feedback". Sorry if anyone is offended by that, if I've got anyone offended by that. But I think if we can talk about having growth conversations, that's a different kettle of fish. We've got so much baggage around the word feedback that it's turned into something that it's not or that it shouldn't be. So how do we create this environment where it's about growth, it's where are my errors of development? Advice is such a great word that you've popped in there, Katie, thank you.

So the centre is where we're heading for. The centre is where we really want to head towards and move towards. So momentum happens when we are in the centre of that.

I can see there's a question in there. I'm just going to go back up. "Can a leader be an amalgamation of the fearsome and enmeshed?" Yes, I absolutely believe they can be, Natalie, because I think that what happens for people that are on the edges is that there's a fragility there, we're fragile, and so sometimes we can be hit in a way that's really heart hit and we can have a reaction. So I've had people that say to me, "I go more to the relationships, but I absolutely know that if someone triggers my values around people and around connection, I'll go fierce, I'll go over to that fearsome side and I will react in a really blow my stack type of way."

So I do believe that we can teeter between the two and what it always says to me is we have to give ourselves a lot of compassion if that's happening because we're not being the people that we want to be. And so this is where rather than seeing wellbeing sitting in another bucket, wellbeing should be every part of our day and, you know, again, let's make sure that wellbeing doesn't get this thing that is what we get everyone else to do, but that every day we build in something that is absolutely to fill our well ‑ listening to 90s music, having a dance while you're making dinner, having fun with the students that you teach. It makes a huge difference.

Janet, are you happy to just share anything more about your last statement, which is the difference you've obviously seen? You've been able to experience both a fearsome principal and a ferocious warmth principal.

JANET: Yeah, the fearsome principal, I think our turnover of staff ranged over a three‑year period from about 75% to 83% over three consecutive years, so mass turnover of really good teachers. I'm a business manager, so I'm not a teacher.

TRACEY: Yep.

JANET: And my last principal actually rebuilt confidence to actually draw the best out of everyone at the school, not just myself, but empowered people to do their job.

TRACEY: Yeah, that's fantastic.

JANET: Two different complete cultures of a school.

TRACEY: Can I ask a question, Janet? That ferocious warmth leader that came in, did it take them long?

JANET: No, not to get confidence ‑‑

TRACEY: It's amazing, isn't it?

JANET: Yeah. I started, they were already here and no, confidence was ‑ it was from the get‑go.

TRACEY: Yep, great. Because I think sometimes we can go ‑‑

JANET: Sorry.

KENDRA: I feel a bit embarrassed sitting here, Tracy, because that's my business manager.

TRACEY: That's very nice. How nice is that?

KENDRA: Thanks, Janet.

TRACEY: What nice feedback. That's really lovely.

JANET: I wasn't saying it because Kendra is on there either. It's true, yeah.

TRACEY: And look, it's really interesting, isn't it, because I don't ‑ like we often say, "Oh, it takes forever to change culture." I don't think it does. I really don't think it does. I've seen culture go from towards the top of the culture ladder, and some of you may have done The Buzz Diagnostic. I have a diagnostic that you can get access to by doing this webinar around collaborative learning cultures.

A tad over 11,000 educators go through it now and, you know, I've worked with some schools that they've had a change in leadership and it's rocked the culture and then I've seen the absolute opposite when in very small amounts of time, with a leader that believes in people, with a leader that listens to people and lets people do their job and actually trusts them but is willing to have the hard conversations if needed, then the shift in the culture is enormous.

The diagnostic is called The Buzz Diagnostic, Craig, and it gives you insight. So if you've ever seen my book The Buzz, so The Buzz is there for you to download on the resources, it's about the collective growth mindset in our school, which is different to a growth mindset. We talk about growth mindset a lot, but the collective growth mindset is really the hard work of coming together to be leaders together, the compelling environment we create and do we have authentic dialogue, so it gives you ‑ and it gives you a benchmark of where you might sit against other schools as well. So, yes, huge what it can do to feel empowered.

So I'd really love you to think about the people that you lead, and I know perhaps some of you may not be leaders, you might be thinking about leadership. Do you see and value every person (inaudible) the most discomfort maybe talking to, you haven't got that really strong rapport, but can you still feel them and really feel very balanced ‑ the word is not balanced, feel that you can see their positive intent? Do you understand what motivates them? Have you had that and made those connections to you, because if you haven't, it's really good work to do. Excuse my coughing.

So we talked about fragility before. We'll come back to that, Craig. That's a great question to look at. So in the middle, ferocious warmth, we are optimal, we are working, we're drawing from both, we're doing that dance, we're contextually able to move in and hold the space for people to stretch, but also hold the space for people just to be if they're not in a space to stretch, just to be able to know when to back off.

I think we haven't done enough of that for some people in term 1. We're just go, go, go and we've gone hard with the kids and they've needed us just to connect. And some schools just went so hard at assessment, assessment, assessment, assessment and yet they were then complaining about the fact that the kids were rolling all around the floor. How do we take time ‑ or fighting in the yard. How do we take time to connect when we needed to? Where is it that we need to make a stand about what we need to do?

The next stage is when we are getting a little bit frayed and we go into those defaults, so we're not as mindful around our leadership, and then the last one is absolutely the fragile states. Now, narcissistic leadership sits here, okay? So narcissistic leadership says I don't care what you think, I'll turn my charm on when I want, but actually I am also not coachable, and there's some really good evidence to say that there are a small percentage of leaders that are not coachable.

I think we've done an amazing job in Victoria. I think the shift in leadership development over the last decade has been extraordinary and the support around us to be able to be really mindful leaders means that we can think and talk about when am I going there and actually bring ourselves back to the centre with more support. But if you know you're heading towards these extremes, my suggestion to you is that you really think about what it is you need to get support for yourself and to do for yourself so that you can become more balanced again because fragility is not a great place to be and we know that, we've all been there, so how are we looking after ourselves?

Craig, just before we go on, how about when you value people but you don't feel valued as a leader, yet the school feels transformed, can you tell me more?

CRAIG: Yeah, sure. I guess I feel like I probably lean towards more of a warm leader than a results driven, but the results follow because of that. But sometimes I feel that as open and as supportive a leader as you can be, there's still people that don't trust or don't value I guess the piece of grass that we're on.

TRACEY: Yeah. Yep. And I do ‑‑

CRAIG: So do I ‑ as a leader, do you change your way and become more ferocious, but then you're not being true to your, I guess, moral compass or do you stick with, you know, the way that you lead and eventually, you know, that's for people to work out whether they want to follow or work with ‑ it's not even follow, it's work with and collaborate with.

TRACEY: Yes. I do believe that we need to always be looking at where are our boundary is being pushed. So if we have people that are actually not behaving in the way that we would have an expectation as the leader of the school that they would have and we've actually cocreated that, this is what we believe, say, professional behaviour to look at, then I do believe that's where we do need to bring in our ferocity because we're trying to lead transformation and if that behaviour is actually getting in the way of it, I think that's where we have to up the stakes a bit.

But do you know what, people who are really strong relationship‑driven people will still do it in a way that doesn't harm people, you know, but it does ‑ it can take us right out of our comfort zone that says yep, I actually need to lift the bar here because we're not getting as far as we need to get. It's also good to actually ask the question of ourselves do I just need this because I need this, you know, because I need ‑ I've got an unmet need in fact it's called. You know, I call it the unmet need puts us out into either more results or more relationship.

One of the things that can push us out of balance if we are relationship driven is a need to be liked or a need for feedback and so that can be just really interesting to explore and say do I need that or can I let it go? When we go more to results driven, we have a tendency to need to be right, but I do know a lot of relationship‑driven, hearts‑driven leaders that say, "I actually need to up my articulation of what I know to be right for this school" and so there's more confidence that they want to bring.

So I think it's a useful thing to just think about that, Craig. I don't know whether that helped you at all around that, but I think it's worthwhile exploring where is it that I actually need to lead a bit of that boundary stuff and tighten it a little bit. And I think Michelle has popped in, "I know when I start to feel resentful I need to get back to boundary work", yep.

I remember going and seeing Brene Brown with 5,000 of my closest friends at the Convention Centre in 2019 and she got us to talk about our values or think about what are our two top values and then she said, "And what do you do when you're working outside them" and said, "I get resentful" and I said yeah ‑ into myself, I didn't speak to her, but I absolutely, yep, I get resentful,

I get resentful when I am just ‑ all of a sudden I get resentful about people around me, I get resentful about what I'm doing, and then I went boom and I also go into victim, poor me, and I start complaining to the kids about the fact that no‑one ever does the dishes in a less than useful way that is never going to get them to do the dishes. And so just really understanding when I'm at my optimal and standing on my principles, how do I feel centred and secure and what is it that's going on for me that makes me wobbly that goes out to the sides?

This is where I think leadership is ‑ it's not academic theory, is it? It's peeling back the layers on who we are, understanding who triggers you. Like if you look at that, have you got someone who triggers you into being fragile? Have you got someone who frays you because they drag at you and you feel exhausted when you're around them? What is it that you're doing to put boundaries up for yourself so that doesn't happen?

Great, yep. I like that, Rebecca. I'm hoping everyone is reading that. "A fantastic leader always said you have to learn to live with the fact that not everyone will always agree. You aim for the collective and support people who fall outside that", yep. Because some people need more time, don't they? Some people need more time for it. And some people need to be seen for what they bring and sometimes we don't always do that and see that. Excuse me for coughing.

So here are some of the things that ‑ or two major things that I think create an environment where people can go out of balance and the first one is that unmet need. We can have an unmet need to be liked and so we tend to go more into fostering relationships, but let go perhaps of what we're trying to achieve because it might upset the applecart or we don't want to have that conversation, rather than creating a culture of movement ‑ or on the other side have an unmet need to be right and so when we have an unmet need to be right, we can push to be right and right and right and make other people wrong.

We also might have an unmet need of sleep, of a good diet, of time to exercise, of time to have joy, and so I think it's really useful to go I have a real need right now to take some time for myself, to just fuel up because if we don't, our tendency to be out of balance is even higher.

And the other thing that can help us or make us get out of sync is a lack of connection. So if we know we go very much to the head, our lack of connection can be about I've forgotten about the people, I've forgotten about the students, I've forgotten about the community. I've been so blinkered around what I'm trying to achieve.

And if I'm on the other side and I'm really very, very focused around relationships, I might have forgotten and lost connection to the strategy, the plan. So both connection pieces are super important and they can help us get back to centre.

Some of the best things can happen when we're all over the place and we're really up and our heart is going and we're really super ‑ our emotions are going everywhere is to have someone sit down and just say ‑ just write out what's going on for you and just get cognitive, just allow yourself to be able to put down some ideas on paper and that act of writing can just help settle our emotions because we name them.

We're very, very cerebral, very, very cognitive. Just going and sitting with the kids, going and sitting and having lunch in the staff room, can allow us to connect back into where people are at. So what are your strategies for getting back in the centre?

So I'm going to give you just a little bit of time and if we can put on some music, Damian, then that would be great. I would love you to just reflect and there is a Padlet that's going to come up ‑ maybe a time where you have been out of balance and just what way did you go and then were you able to actually recalibrate back to balance? You know, someone shared a story this morning of a parent coming in and absolutely verbally tearing the teacher apart, but that parent went away and came back in the afternoon and apologised and had a conversation and that was them recalibrating back to balance.

Did you have an unmet need or a lack of connection going on? What was going on for that parent was a really deep‑seated fear for their child and that triggered them into less than useful behaviour.

So we're going to give you ‑ we are going to give you five minutes just ‑ actually, I might give you ‑ no, I'm going to give you 3 minutes because what I'd like you to do is place card this for you to have some thoughts after when I give you some things around strength and shadow. So just 3 minutes just to reflect. You could duck out of reflection, but I reckon this is the hard work of leadership is to be able to sit and think about ourselves.

If you're in a group ‑ I know there's a couple of schools here ‑ you might just like to have a conversation at your tables where people might have shared an example where you might have gone out of balance, realised it. What did you do to get yourself back into balance and pull from the other side? There's a Padlet link in the chat box. You're familiar with Padlet.

KENDRA: There's some instructions on the Padlet as well, so if you're not sure, it's a little plus button on the bottom right‑hand corner of the Padlet screen and you can click on that and then add your thoughts.

TRACEY: Beautiful. Oh, thanks, anonymous. What a great reflection there, "going inwards, reflecting quietly, choosing carefully how I approach situations where I'm not necessarily wrong, but I'm not fighting to prove I'm right". Beautiful. Yeah, taking a break. How good is it speaking to people outside of school? You get a really good insight, don't you, and you go wow, I was really overreacting to that one.

KENDRA: Someone has put up there about going in to classrooms to see kids. I think that's one of the beautiful things about being in a school and I know something I miss working here at the Academy, but yeah, it just brings you back to earth.

TRACEY: Yes, beautiful. And, you know, in Ferocious Warmth, if you've got Ferocious Warmth, I actually talk about, you know, what are some really quick shortcut ways to recalibrate back and absolutely going and sitting on the floor somewhere with a bunch of kids is such a quick joy bubble.

Great. I like the time away, giving yourself pause. I think it's one of the things we learn when we become leaders, one of the first things is it's okay to say, "I'm not sure right now, let me have a think about it." I really like that. Fantastic, beautiful.

Okay, so keep thinking about that, keep thinking about those times that you might be out of balance and then let's have a bit of a play around with what you can do to identify where you might be. For the last part of today, we're going to have a look at this. I just need to get it back. I just want to find my PowerPoint. Beautiful, okay.

So you have got ‑ you will have a reflection sheet that you can download that helps you just do a little bit of diving into yourself. You can have a look and you can go okay, what was going on ‑ think about a particular time when you went out of balance, what was going on, what was the context, who, where, what? Did you ‑ do you know there was a trigger? Did someone say something particularly that went right against your values or your principles or was where you were at at the time or you needed that need to be right or to be liked? And then have a little think about what inner voice was going on for you, what were you saying to yourself at the time, and where is it that you might have had an unmet need or a lack of connection.

Then connect to your whys one and say all right, that's obviously a real reaction and it's put me out of balance, what do I need to do to pull from the other side, give myself time out to go and talk to someone who can really help me to level up or level down and what is it that I need to do to behave a different way next time? The more we can do this reflection stuff, the more in tune we are with our leadership. So you've got that to have a bit of a play around with.

The other thing I'd really love you to think about is focus on also what your strengths are. Here's some examples of both head strengths and heart strengths. And it can be useful to be able to know what some of your strengths might be. So what would be the ones that you would say are your top six to eight strengths? I have a whole bunch of strength cards and I get people to put them out and to have conversations as leadership teams around what the strengths are they can see that make a difference from that person, so it's a real valuing of each other.

Our strengths are so important. Do you have a lot of heart strengths, do you have a lot of head strengths, are there strengths that you would like to develop? Those people who are doing the work, longer‑term work with Vic, I'm wondering whether you can see there's some skills you've developed because it's absolutely a skill that I want and it might be to balance you up into that ferocious warmth leader.

And something that you can do when you're having some reflective time is to identify stories where you needed to draw on that particular strength heavily. So if you have done coaching, if you've worked with a coach, if you've done grow coaching, you'll know that stories are really powerful. Stories help us to see into who we are as a leader and we have strengths from both sides that we want to draw together.

Do you know that your strength of being open to influence means that people can come and have really in‑depth conversations with you because they feel psychologically safe? Or do you have a real strength of drawing from an evidence base really clearly when you're working with people? You know, identifying our strengths is number one in terms of being able to know where we start from. And do they interplay with ones from the other side? Where is it that you're able to make the shift and bring a strength from both sides together.

If you look at either of those lists, are there ones that you need really strongly now that you can work at going oh, actually ‑ thinking about ferocious warmth, I actually realised that I need to up the high expectations a little bit, you know, just maybe need to push a little bit of a culture of accountability a little bit more. Or you might be wanting to draw from the other side and say I need a bit more empathy for people because I've lost it.

I worked with a leader the other day and he's so stressed that he's lost all his empathy. I said to him, "Hey, I've worked with you for a long time and I can't hear your empathy in your voice." And he said, "Yeah, you're right, I've lost it." He needed to do some stuff to look after himself so he could bring it back.

So again, this is a really good one for you to have a reflection on and to do that beyond today, but I would like you to have a think about it, and I'm wondering if we can pop this in the chat box, when is it that a strength becomes too strong, there's too much gin in the gin and tonic glass ‑ choosing my favourite drink there. If we have got really great strengths and we are really ‑ say maybe we're really clear, what can happen if that goes to its extreme? And I call these the shadows.

So can everyone that's on ‑ can you just grab a strength from those lists, pop it in the chat box and next to that word put in what you believe can happen if you do it too much or what the effect can be on others when it's overpowering. So if we are overpoweringly nurturing at any point in time, what is the outcome.

So can you just grab one strength and it might be a strength that you have, so you've got really good experience of going yeah, that's what happens when I do it too much. Yes, great. Yes, absolutely. Carly, Marie, where you've got "consistent, can't be flexible or adaptable when occasion needs it", I love that you've named that because it's exactly what I've got on the back of the card is consistency can lead to, if we do it too much, an inflexibility that says I must do it like this because the consistency is important. Great. Yes, great. You've got it.

"Optimistic toxic positivity", let's have some people ground us. Great. I love it. Good, Taylor, I really love that insight, "I can become too focused on supporting others, forget to have self care or empathy for self" and we burn out, don't we? We end up having to go horizontal for five days.

Great, you've got it, you've absolutely nailed this, that all of these have got shadows, all of them, and that if we are awake to our leadership, we can identify where perhaps our strengths are going tipping over and becoming shadows.

So I used to work with a wonderful, wonderful leader. I loved him, you know, he was fantastic. There was one part that used to drive us up the wall, though, and that he was so open to influence to everybody's ‑ connecting to people and relationships that there was an incredible indecisiveness around the school because we didn't ‑ we had to listen to everyone so much that we got caught into almost this consensus and we didn't have that really good strategic decision making process in place. So have a think about where is it that sometimes your strength can turn into shadows.

And like the tightrope walker, when you feel that that's happening, what I want you to do is have a look at the strength from the head or the strength from the heart, the opposing side, and step into them so you can drag yourself back to centre. And sometimes we need other people to tell us that. And I think someone put that in the chat box, which was great, of perhaps needing someone else to tell me that I might have been saying things for people to like me rather than leading.

So here we have the drawing from both sides so that we can stay in this ferocity with warmth in the centre, the head and the heart. The QR code that's on the screen now, if you want to do a screen shot, if you want to grab a photo or whatever it might be, will take you to a whole downloadable page on my website where you can find out ‑ download a whole lot of these frameworks if you want to use them with your own teams.

For those of you who use ferocious warmth, ferocious warmth has got a lot of reflective pauses in it, so there's leadership teams all over Australia that use it as like a journal club to work at their leadership and to peel away the onion layers of leadership and contextualise it to their school. So you can always get in touch with me and I can send you some things out and certainly if you're interested in doing The Buzz Diagnostic, having a look at The Buzz Academy, the links in my website will take you there or you can just get in touch with me and we can send it through to you.

So ferocious warmth ‑ and this is also on the resources ‑ what are my strengths, what am I wanting to build, am I a aware when I go out of balance, am I aware of the heart shadows that might come up, the head shadows that might come up, and am I looking after myself enough to be able to contextually move to where I need to go, either head or heart?

The four principles are the things that hold us steady and one of the downloads you've got is the expansive mini book from out of the Ferocious Warmth book which talks about being the lead learner and leading a learning culture. But all four of those principles are really critical and we might do that in part 2, where we talk about that.

I do believe we need absolutely more ferocity to lead transformation for education. We have to push against things that aren't working. We have to be intrepid and courageous to be able to push the status quo, get more student agency, continue to fight against inequity, but at the same time, absolutely critical is the ability to inspire and connect people together and to do the work.

So I hope that that whistle‑stop tour through ferocious warmth this afternoon has given you some food for thought and given you some insights into your own self. Oh, so Alexandra and Antoinette, the links are in the QR code, you just actually take a photo of the QR code, but you can also go to ‑ if you just send an email to this ‑ to me, I can send you through the link because I haven't got it off the top of my head. I think it's just my website and then slash downloads, actually, might be what it is.

Great, beautiful. Thanks, Megan, excellent. I love that, VATL‑Downloads.

Folks, I'm really interested in any feedback you've got before we finish today and I hand back to Kendra that might be about your insights around this as a concept. I wrote it during COVID times in 2020. It got published in 2021. The feedback I get is that it resonates with people in terms of what we do every day, but I am really interested in feedback, I'm really interested in where does it push buttons, where does it not work for you, or can you see it helping you in terms of leadership. So please, if you want to come off mute, if you want to pop something in the chat box, I'd really appreciate that. Tania, lovely to see you here and thank you for that in the chat box. Anyone want to come off chat?

REBECCA: Tracey, I will. Rebecca Jones here, just saying I think sometimes it's about feeling like you've got permission to be a bit more the other side because I think sometimes when you're so stuck on one, you feel like you can't go to the other side because you'll lose what you've built in that one area and I think sometimes it's about having permission to swing the other way a little bit.

TRACEY: Absolutely, absolutely, permission granted because we need it, don't we? Love that insight. Thanks, Rebecca. Beautiful, that's great. Thanks, Megan. Jill Gray, great to see you and hear from you. I hope you're well. Fabulous, that's great. Thank you, Rebecca. And Terry, you had your hand up as well. Is Terry still here? Terry might have put her hand up or his hand up before they left.

KENDRA: Perhaps by mistake.

TRACEY: Thank you.

KENDRA: Someone else has their hand raised.

KERRY: Yes, it's me. It's Kerry. I just want to say I really appreciated everything that you've said today. I think that meeting in the middle and having that balance is so valuable and everything that you have opened up has made me reflect really hard and appreciated where I am in my leadership journey and makes me excited about the future. So I think that what you've done is fantastic. The program you've put together is awesome. Well done.

TRACEY: Great. Thanks so much, Kerry. I appreciate that. Wonderful, folks. I look forward to catching up with many of you across our travels. It's lovely to have people that I know on here as well as all these great aspiring ferocious warmth leaders, all absolute ferocious warmth leaders in your power, so thank you so much.

KENDRA: Thanks, Tracey, and there's lots of lovely comments in the chat that I hope you get to see them, but I know that our team will save them and you'll get a copy of them as well.

TRACEY: Great.

KENDRA: Lovely to hear all of this tonight. I think a really timely presentation for lots of us to think about as well in schools at the moment with everything that's being, you know, dealt to leaders and anybody working in a school that ability to reflect on, you know, the head and the heart and which way we tend to go and to have a bit of ‑ to stop and sit in the thinking sometimes before we act is so important in these times at the moment.

You've taken us on a lovely journey tonight. I loved starting with the joy bubble and I think we're finishing in a joy bubble as well with all these lovely things in the chat from people ‑‑

TRACEY: Beautiful.

KENDRA: ‑‑ about what we got out of tonight. I love it, someone has just written "humanising leadership" and that's a really nice way to think about it.

But certainly everything resonates with all the work that we're doing in schools and we're talking about, you know. I love the paradox of yet. We talk about, you know, yet as a power in terms of growth mindset, but that paradox of, you know, being realistic yet optimistic or being this but that and I just think that's such a nice way to think about leadership because, you know, to make sure we're providing the best environments where the best learning can happen, we have to challenge people and we have to make sure we're doing that, you know, challenging and supporting people at the same time to make the best outcomes for our kids, which is what it's all about.

So I'm really going to go away and think about, you know, how I'm going to be realistic, yet optimistic and I think I loved you said "what language I'm using and what infection I'm spreading", so I think, again, really important messages, particularly if you're a leader at the moment to make sure that your positivity, you know ‑ you create the environment from the top down, so really important things to think about.

TRACEY: Absolutely. Absolutely. We are culture shapers, yes.

KENDRA: Yes, absolutely.

TRACEY: Thanks so much, Kendra.

KENDRA: I've had that conversation so many times with SEALs. I think I've just got a couple of slides I believe that might be coming up from the Academy just to remind you of some of our other programs and also our evaluation.

But, yeah, I said at the very start, to those that are still here, well done, quarter to 6 on a school night is a great effort to put into your own professional learning and development. A lot of what Tracey talked about tonight reminds me of the Leading by Learning conversations and leadership program that we do, which is Viviane Robinson's work, which is really all about how do you manage task and relationship and have those courageous and necessary conversations. So really recommend that people that want to learn a bit more about how to tackle those sort of conversations, that's a great program that the Academy offers that you might want to enrol in. But also Teaching Excellence Program for next year is open for all our excellent, outstanding teachers that are on the line today, online with us today, that you can apply now and as well our Assistant Principal Connect next intake is open for registration online too.

So thank you, everybody. Thank you, Tracey. Thank you to our Academy team in the background who have done so much work to keep this going and wish everybody ‑‑

TRACEY: Fabulous.

KENDRA: ‑‑ a great night and a safe trip back from Perth whenever that is for you, Tracey.

TRACEY: Great, yes, a few days off, which will be nice. Thanks, everyone.

KENDRA: Enjoy.

TRACEY: Take care.

KENDRA: Thank you.