Positive Leadership - where does emotion fit in?
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This much I know... about flourishing

- Emotion in organisations;
- Relationship to leadership;
- Challenges and diversity
- Thinking aloud/allowed
Emotion is complicated

But let’s not let that stop us

• Emotions and how they can be useful;
• How the interpersonal interacts with the emotional climate of a school;
• How societal discourses seep into the construction, meaning and politics of emotion
• Your emotional self and your leadership style.
Emotion?
Many ways to define emotions

- **Emotions** are feelings that are made apparent to others in actions of some kind.
- **Definitions of emotions**: Physiological, psychological and social changes, in response to an event, to secure survival and well-being.
- The terms ‘feelings’ and ‘emotions’ are often used interchangeably in the literature.
- An emotion is always a response to some cognitive activity that generates meaning for an individual. To understand emotions, we must consider *the way meaning is generated.* (Lazarus, 1968; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984)
What started my interest?

• ‘There is little research that speaks directly to the issue of work and emotions....industrial and organisational psychology ought to take the issue of emotions at work more seriously’ (p153)

• ‘Emotions are among the primary determinants of behaviour at work ...and profoundly influence both the social climate and the productivity of companies and organisations’(Pekrun and Frese 1992, p 154)

Powerful?

- Happiness
- Sadness
- Guilt
- Shame
- Anxiety
Views on emotion

• Use emotion to make judgements:
• Good or bad emotions
• Vital but interfering
• Acquires its force, credibility and value from how we talk about it, how we share it, and how we judge others by it.
• Many perspectives on emotion and the workplace from the psychological to the sociological – important to understand the viewpoint of the writer (as in all research).
Emotions cut to the core of people. Within and through emotion, people come to define the surface, and essential, or core, meanings of who they are. (Denzin 1984, p.2)

Leadership is about creating a framework of meaning for followers. (Fineman 2003)

Leadership as all about emotion
What do we know?

• Affect permeates organizations.
• It is present in the interdependent relationships we hold with bosses, team members ...emotions create and sustain work motivation.
• Affective and cognitive processes have been found to be inherently interdependent- “kind of thoughts we call feelings” Damasio (2005)-.
• Emotions are the processes that allow us to focus on problems as they arise, and change course if needed. (Oatley and Jenkins 2003)
• Research has demonstrated that certain emotions often aid in sound reasoning and effective decision-making rather than detracting from it (Seo and Barrett, 2007)
How does this relate to schools?

• Schools are places of ‘affective intensity’
• Feelings and their expression have significant implications for educational organising.
• Various authors have drawn attention to the affective aspects of educational organising.
• Feelings need to be more central in educational organising, but theorising/researching affect in schools is problematic.

SO....
Appraisal

• Cognitive emotion theory
• something is experienced – an event, which is then appraised
• Criteria for appraisal: relevance; implication; coping; normative significance
• Changes that result – autonomic physiology; action tendencies; motor expression; subjective feeling

A complex process with interaction between the components.
Social constructivist

- Studies on emotion are interlinked with people and places
- Not just an individual experience but firmly shaped by social structures and the norms and values of the organisation.
- Emotions produced through interpersonal work, but conditioned by culture;
- Affective processes (more commonly known as emotions) create and sustain work motivation.

- Governed by social rules that sanction what is appropriate to feel or express/gender/culture;
“Emotions arise when an individual pays attention to a situation, appraises it as relevant for his or her needs, values, or goals, and responds to that situation with loosely coupled changes in the domains of subjective experience, behavior, and physiology (Scherer, 2000).

Four elements: a situation, and the individual’s attention to, appraisal of, and response to it.”
Salovey and Mayer 1990

• [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0k8TcF-3ofY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0k8TcF-3ofY)

• Who would you regard as Emotionally intelligent and why?
Salovey and Mayer 1990

• ‘the ability to monitor ones’ own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions’. (1990 p. 189)

• ‘Emotional Intelligence involves the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought’. (Salovey)

• A set of skills to do with perceiving, understanding, managing and using emotion. “that makes sense to me, that sounds important’.
IMPACT of emotions

• Arousing emotions in the lab, and seeing how people in different emotional states behave:
• What do they pay attention to? What can they remember? How do they reason? How do they make decisions?
• How do they interact with others? Are they more or less willing to be helpful? (Isen)
• the psychological consequences of feeling states—the processes by which affect influences thought and action
• emotions as organizing processes that enable individuals to think and behave adaptively.
Emotions as inherent, emotions as socially constructed

• Roles and acting (Goffman)
• More Jungian/Bion etc -Understanding of the interplay between the rational and irrational forces Richardson (1973), blame, guilt
• Emotional labour (Hochschild)

• “Whatever emotion is in its biological stirrings or traits, what is most consequential is how emotion as a discourse is managed and manipulated by social actors’.” (Fineman, 2007)
Emotion and organizational cultures

- Emotion/Leadership embedded in and shaped by organisational routine
- Emotion and leadership practices are saturated with values, partialities and interests.
- People infer a relationship between the ability to control outward emotional display and the ability to make rational, objective decisions.
- Although caring about others and empathizing with another's pain or difficult circumstance is generally seen as a positive trait for leaders, women can be viewed as more sentimental and soft in their dealings with others at work.
Emotion and culture

• Embedded in and shaped by organisational routine
• Infuse interactions with predictability, meaning and order.
• The emotional society of the school - important strategic resource.
• Emotion and emotion practices are saturated with values, partialities and interests.
Leaders and imaginary

- Mutual process of attachment
- ‘significantly order social reality’ (Davel and Vier Machado 2002 p. 5).
- Mobilizing emotional resources.
- Use of narratives to manage meaning,
- Communicate core values
- Negotiate social order and identity
- Thro’ stories, legends, myths....
Leadership as an organizational quality

• Leadership is about influencing the behaviour of others - leadership is a property of the relationships in the organisation.

• Power is the capacity of individuals to overcome resistance, and there are various kinds of power e.g. expert, coercive etc.

• All basis of power depend on the beliefs of the others in the organisation, and are interrelated.
Leaders and the workplace

• Leaders tend to portray their leadership intentions, and the consequences of them, as rational because

• It is socially acceptable to do so.

• Emotion can define work relationships, and one of the ways that we can understand this is through the medium of stories, both informally as a leader and in research.

• Social bias privileges some forms of expressiveness over others – gendering of emotion
Narratives

• Help leaders express their emotions and help them to understand the organisational reality.
• At the same time narratives help them construct new realities.
• The ability to “play” the role of headteacher has emotional constraints, and is linked to the emotional health of the organisation as a whole.

Leadership narrative (Crawford 2009)
Personal interpretative framework (Kelchtermans et al 2011)
Talk and stories

- Oatley and Jenkins:
  - ‘In talk, we cultivate, define, and redefine, ourselves and our relationships by presenting out experiences to others- we elaborate our emotional bonds and antipathies with specific people we know.’

- Not neutral
- Stories can give legitimacy to our feelings. Fineman suggests that they are a key mechanism of expression.

- Stories not only represent personal emotions but also actively constitute the emotional form of work life. “The story is not a measure of the objective truth of an event, but is a fine indicator of our feelings and how we wish to present them.”(Fineman 2003:17).
Socially contagious

• School climate and mood
• ‘As the Head, you need to show a calm presence, and calm exterior. You may want to kill staff or parents, but....if the Head is not calm the school is not calm.’ (Eleanor) - regulation
Better be careful, Bart.
Look at those warning signs.
Researching feelings is problematic

Feelings are subjective – they do not exist as objects in an individual’s external world

Knowing/measuring feelings is problematic

• Feelings generated by the same event can differ
• They may be complex, contradictory and vary over time.
• Communicating knowledge about them is difficult for various personal, interpersonal and cultural reasons
Voices from the ‘top’

I sometimes wonder if someone will find me out!

I feel I have to bounce around for parents. It’s like being a stand up comic, as you get anxious and of course people know that you are performing.

I felt wrung out, like a wet lettuce

I encouraged the staff to have ‘sod it’ Smarties to allow humour in failure and learn from it!
Performance

• I feel that there is a great deal of acting in headship. For example when I had to talk to that boy just now (he had had to reprimand a small boy for kicking a door.) I call this acting cross. I don’t often have to put on a happy face - I don’t lose my temper in school. (James)

• The danger to all of this is that your emotions, if not handled, might slip out somewhere else and colour your relationship with another person. (Ben)
Beliefs

The leadership literature suggests that being seen as a good leader does not just require agency, but also-

- **emotional control**—being stable, level-headed, rational, consistent, tough-minded, and not taking things personally (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011).

- Shields has called the belief in women's greater emotionality the “master stereotype” because “it serves as an overarching organizing principle for other related beliefs” (p. 3).
Diversity and Emotion

• Most recent research has begun to move towards diversity and also non-Western contexts.

• People's beliefs about what men and women should be like causes them to evaluate women or men who behave contrary to stereotypes as unlikable, undeserving of organizational rewards, and even subject to social and economic penalties (i.e., backlash effects).

• Research suggests that men and women are not thought to greatly differ in the extent to which they experience different emotions—just in the extent to which they outwardly express those emotions to others.

• Difference between ‘having emotion’ and ‘being emotional’
Diversity and Emotion

• Women/communal (i.e., warm, kind, nurturing, etc.) but less agentic (i.e., aggressive, ambitious, dominant, independent, etc.);

• Leadership roles require agency: fit between agency and the traits of successful leaders;

• When women do engage in agentic behaviours, they often experience backlash because they are seen as insufficiently communal

• Research has shown that when women engage in self-promotion at work (an agentic behavior and a violation of feminine norms of modesty and self-effacement), others view them as too dominant (Rudman et al 2012)

• Then, less likely to be chosen for leadership roles than women who fail to self-promote.
Emotional display rules

• Men and women are subject to different emotional display rules
• Female leaders can experience a mismatch in the emotional displays expected of her as a leader, and those of women in a society.
• Gender-emotion stereotypes create two complex arenas that female, but not male, leaders have to navigate in order to be successful:
  • identifying how much emotion should be displayed
  • identifying what kinds of emotion to display.
• Often women are judged when they display high-status, masculine emotions that convey dominance, such as anger
• People tend to make internal, rather than external, attributions for women's emotional displays (ignoring the situational and contextual factors.)
To think about

• When women leaders were described as making a decision and the emotional state was not mentioned, participants inferred that the decision was driven by emotion but did not make the same inference for the male leaders described as making the identical decision;

• As a consequence of the belief that her emotions influenced her decision-making process, participants viewed the female leader's (identical) decision as fundamentally worse than her male counterpart's decision and were also less willing to hire her.

• This evidence suggests that beliefs that women are more emotional than men may have consequences for how female leaders are evaluated.
Positive Leadership—Going forward

• Leadership - *creating a framework of meaning for followers*;

• Emotions as organizing processes that enable individuals to think and behave adaptively

• Different narratives of self important to emotional understanding

• Educational leaders need to help individuals look into themselves, to stand back from the demands of everyday life and reflect upon how current circumstances and problems provide new insights into who they are (Bottery 2004).

• Understanding different emotional frameworks from EI to the more psychoanalytic can help you flourish!

• If leadership is about establishing a framework of meaning, emotion is a key building block of meaning making
An emotion is always a response to some cognitive activity that generates meaning for an individual. To understand emotions, we must consider the way meaning is generated.

(Lazarus, 1968; Lazarus and Folkman, 1984)
Thank you