

*The Professional Development Network  
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Leadership at the forefront:  
*Aligned and Alive!*

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Monash University

# Based on research with

- 35 principals in England, Ireland, Canada, the US, New Zealand and Australia
- 50 Canadian teachers
- 60 aspirant and incumbent leaders in a Texas Masters course for principal preparation
- 120 aspirant and incumbent school leaders in Australia
- 3000 Texas Secondary School Students

We teach and lead from who we are - as persons – and so it is important to know ourselves well and to remain open to new learning throughout our lives

The emotions are a vital avenue to understanding oneself  
(Greenberg & Paivio, 1997)

Leadership is a high wire act:  
It involves the continuous balancing of  
complex and competing interests, and  
among many other things -

- Inspiring followers
- Keeping the faith
- Maintaining composure
- Making decisions
- Sharing authority
- Trusting others
- Trusting self
- Being worthy of others' trust

In an online forum that was purpose built for exploring the emotions of leadership with principals and head teachers in England, Ireland, Canada, United States, New Zealand and Australia

Key learnings

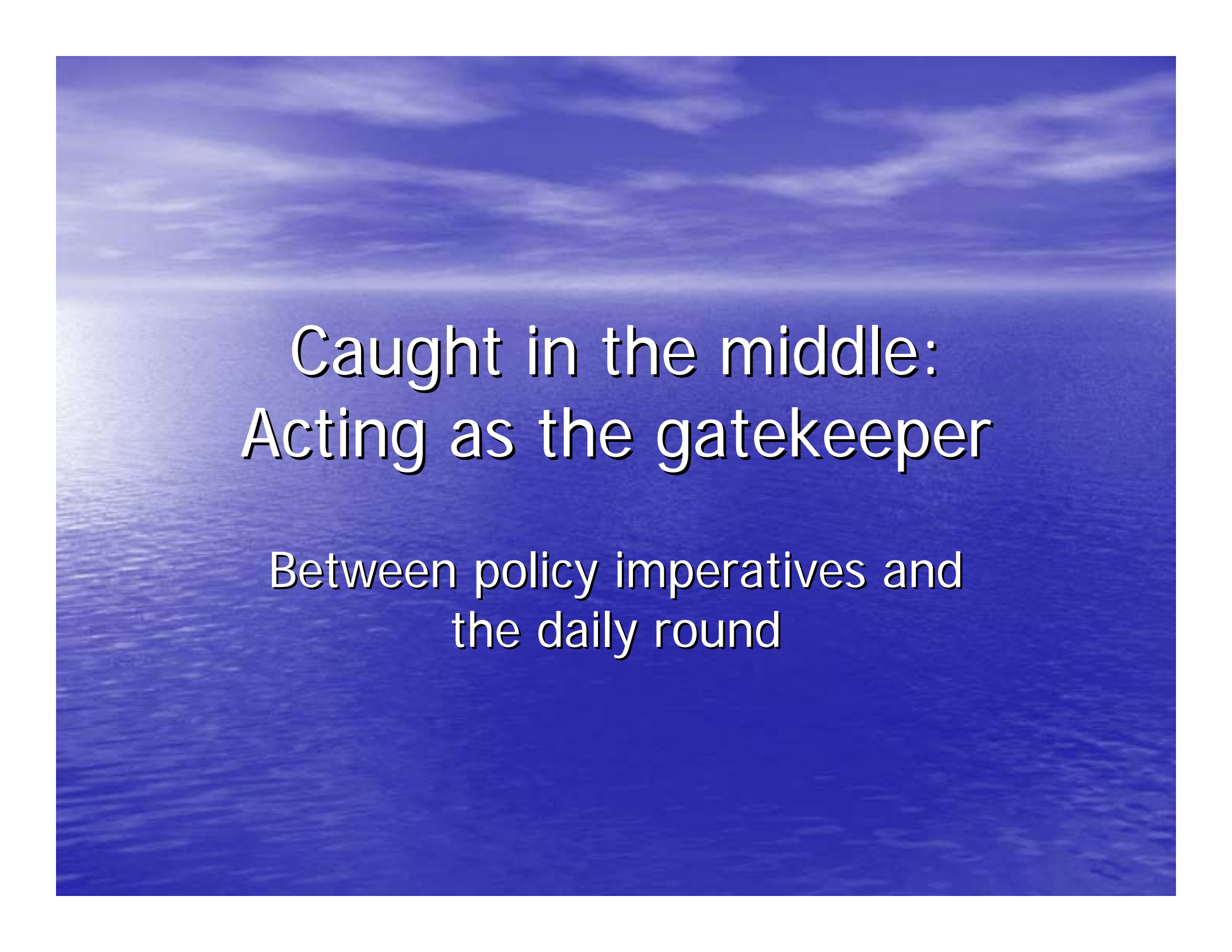


Emotional Control:

Essential


Traditional distance and even  
disconnect between principals  
and teachers

Seems to be required by the  
traditions of school culture



# Caught in the middle: Acting as the gatekeeper

Between policy imperatives and  
the daily round



The pressures for  
performativity are enormous


# One of them but separate

The conductor

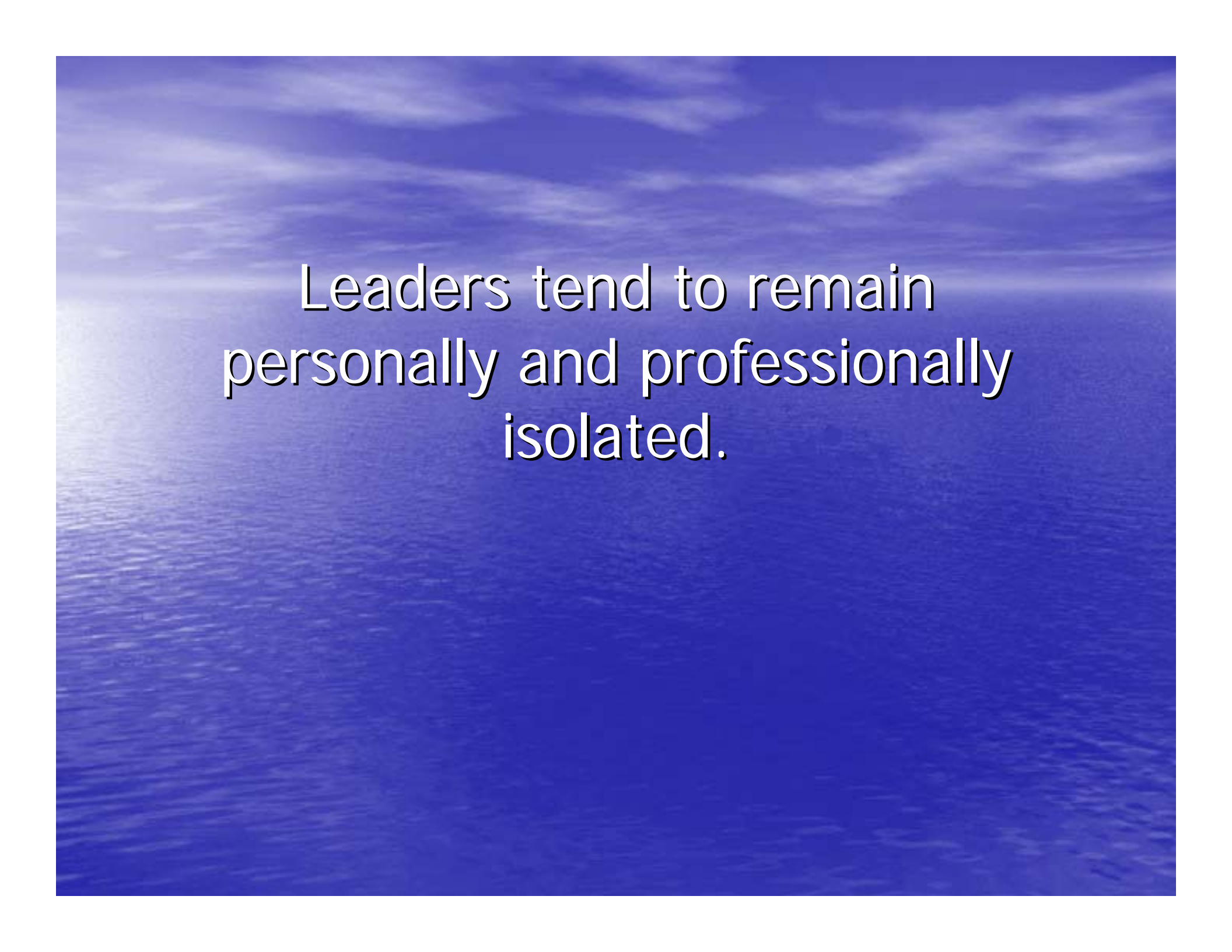
The chameleon

The benevolent dictator

Captain Kirk and the good mother/father



People see the position and  
not the person



Leaders tend to remain  
personally and professionally  
isolated.



No wonder it is lonely at the top!


# Emotional Control and Emotional Labour

(Hochschild, 1983)

Masking and manufacturing emotions:

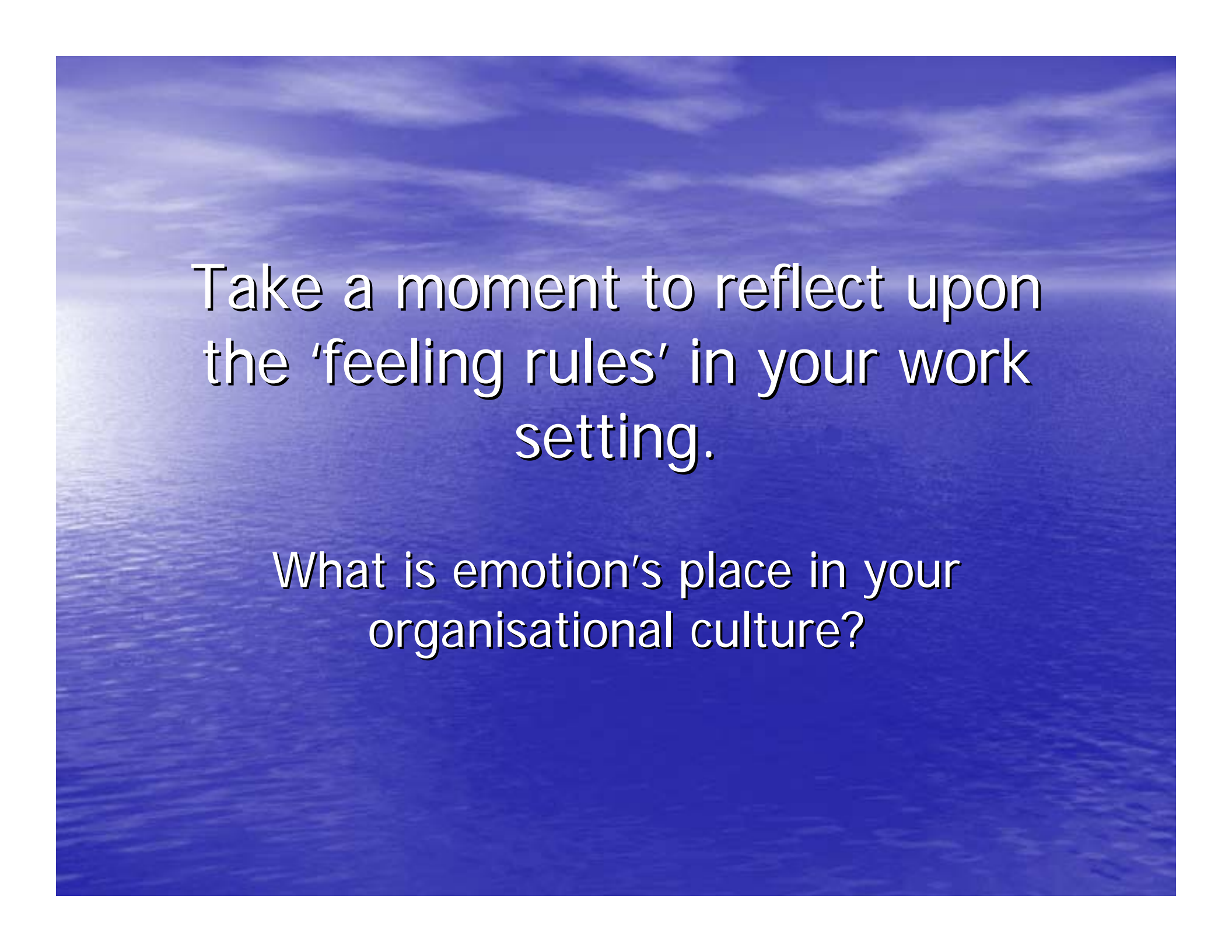
It just goes with the territory . . .

. . . but it takes a toll



Normatively the 'feeling rules' create an emotionally laundered professional discourse

The notion of 'professional' as unemotional is a dangerous fallacy:  
emotions are not optional



Take a moment to reflect upon  
the 'feeling rules' in your work  
setting.

What is emotion's place in your  
organisational culture?

The imperative to hide what we are actually feeling and to feign feelings we are not having – while often necessary and even desirable in education - can create a divided self

The result of continuous emotional labour of this kind, especially in relation to our professional peers, is emotional numbness (Hochschild, 1983) and its side effect: relational detachment

# Continuous emotional labour

can lead to a  
'dis-integrated' self.

Emotional numbness  
is rarely far behind.

Typically in school cultures the silence about real feelings is co-maintained to *ensure continued membership in the community.*

Yet ironically, the result is dis-integrated selves and relationships robbed of the richness in genuine candour and authentic communication about the things that matter the most!

Roland Barth calls them the 'undiscussibles'.

What is left is something Andy Hargreaves and  
Ruth Dawe dubbed "contrived collegiality"  
(1994)

When we cannot discuss the things about which we  
feel most strongly, we have become mired in a  
politically pathetic wasteland that serves to preserve  
the status quo.

For deep change to occur,  
a change in the way we think and feel,  
and make sense of ourselves and each other  
is needed.

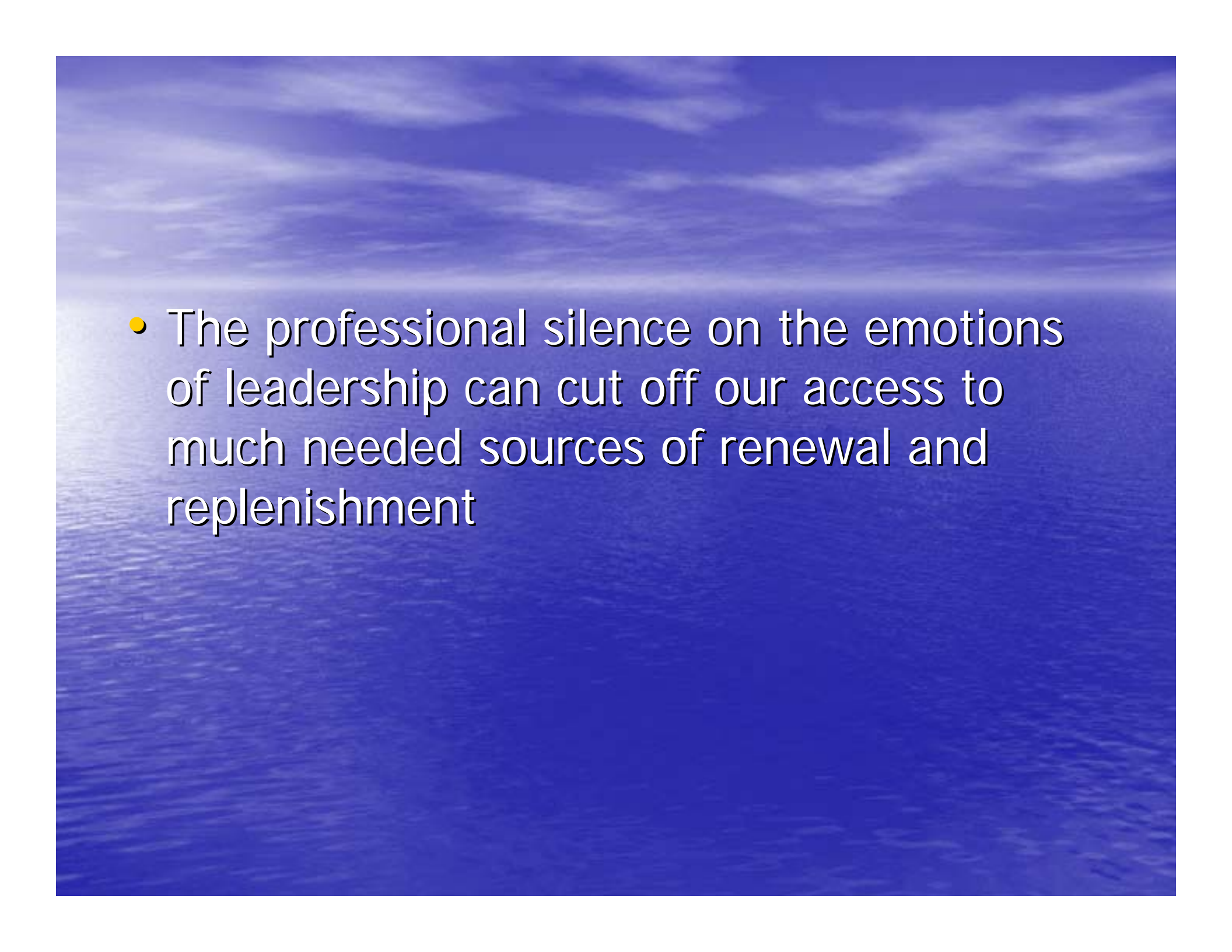
Leading change means disturbing  
the status quo – there is bound  
to be resistance and fallout.

If you are truly leading, you are  
going to get splattered. . . .



I am my school

Criticism of the school feels  
personal

- 
- The professional silence on the emotions of leadership can cut off our access to much needed sources of renewal and replenishment

# Professional Silence on Emotions: A paradox

The dichotomy between the way teachers and leaders believe they must seem, and the way as fully functioning individuals, they need to be. Emotional control is one thing. Emotional numbness is quite another.

- Our emotions keeps us connected to the fabric of the self, and our 'moral centre'  
Margolis, D. R. (1998). *The fabric of self: A theory of ethics and emotions*. New Haven: Yale.
- When we disconnect from our emotions we disconnect from a terribly important guidance system and soon we begin to lose our way . . .



There is an alternative

Going *through* the emotions



Emotional wounding

It's Inevitable

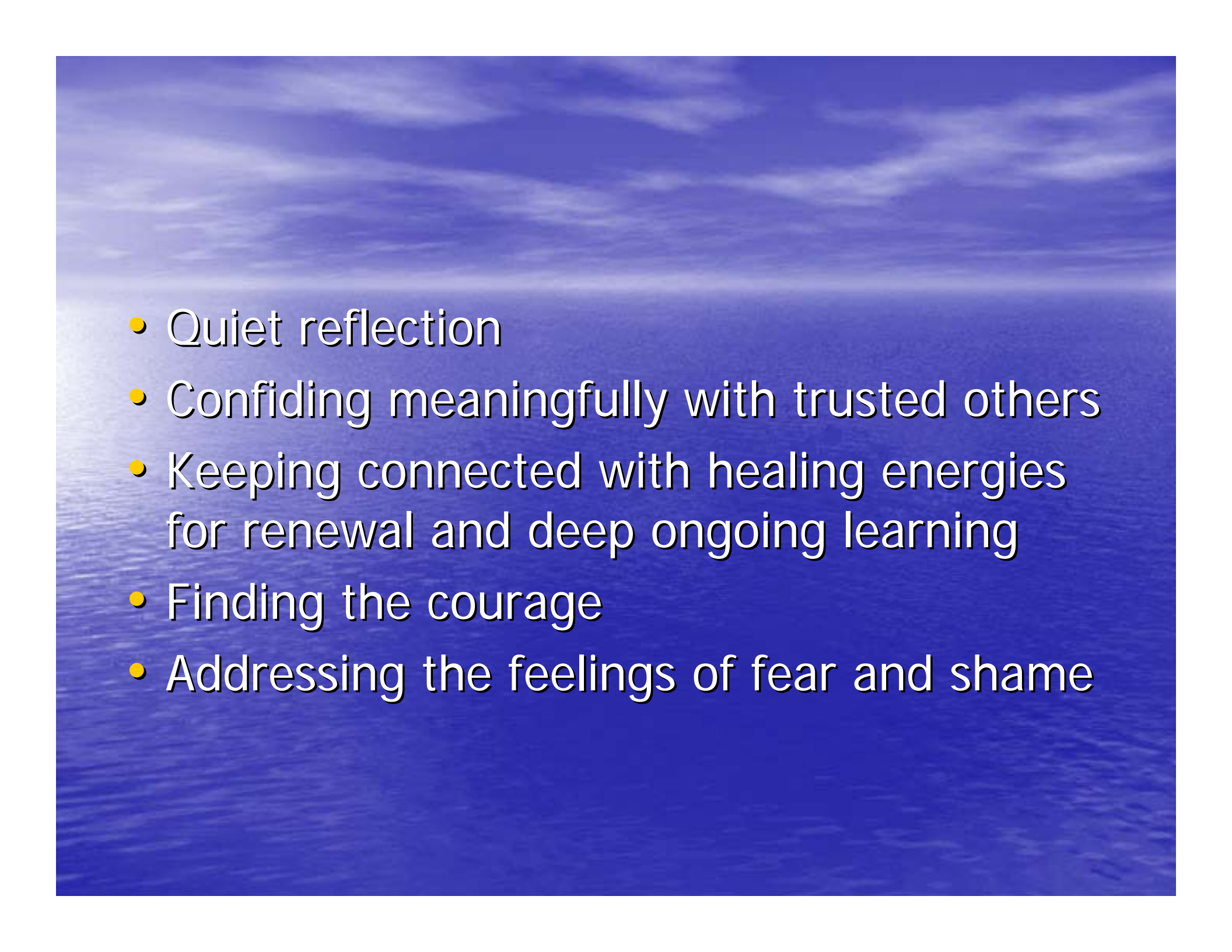
In a mid air crisis, put your own oxygen mask on first . . .

- Staying connected to your inner meaning making processes is just like putting on the oxygen mask.
- You have to look after yourself in order to be able to *continue to* look after others

# *The Wounded Leader*

Richard Ackerman and Pat Maslin-Ostrowski

- Recognising wounding
- Acknowledging the wound
- Reflecting upon the impact of the wound
  - Damage and withdrawal
  - Defensiveness and protectionism
  - Loss of trust

- 
- Quiet reflection
  - Confiding meaningfully with trusted others
  - Keeping connected with healing energies for renewal and deep ongoing learning
  - Finding the courage
  - Addressing the feelings of fear and shame

# Emotional meaning making


- Being proactively counter cultural by breaking the silence on emotions
- Counter-intuitively moving through the signals of emotional 'danger'
- Processing the pain

# Redefining the wounding experience

- As an opening
- An opportunity
- For purposeful storying and re-storying the self
- A chance to reconnect and go deeper
- An opportunity to rediscover and engage with our higher self
- An invitation to grow . . .

# Discovering the learning moment in a wounding experience

Can renew one's faith in leadership and trust that one's integrated 'self' can survive and even thrive even under pressure.



When we learn to trust that our  
integrated whole selves are safe

We can afford to trust others

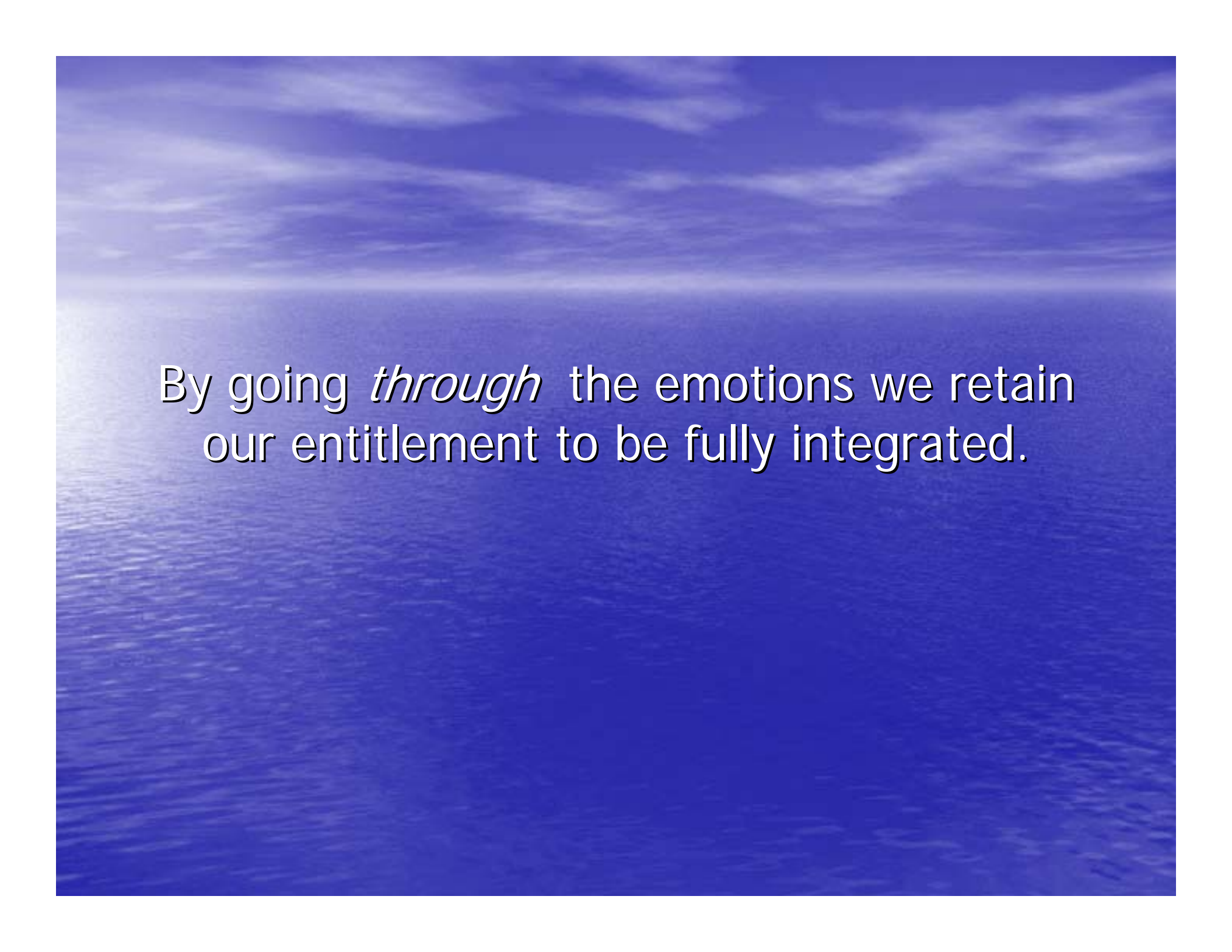
# We can achieve a genuinely “non-anxious presence”

Friedman, E. H. (1985). *Generation to generation*. New York: The Guilford Press.

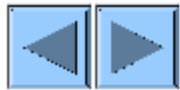
This is the greatest gift we can offer – our *presence to*, our ability to be *truly with* another, even when the person seems antagonistic (which we are encouraged to label as ‘being difficult’.)

Martin Buber calls this is the “I – Thou” relationship.

The reverence for the ‘The Other’ honours the wholeness in all of us.



By going *through* the emotions we retain  
our entitlement to be fully integrated.



# Discovering the power of emotional meaning making as professional practice

## FINDING "THE ZONE"

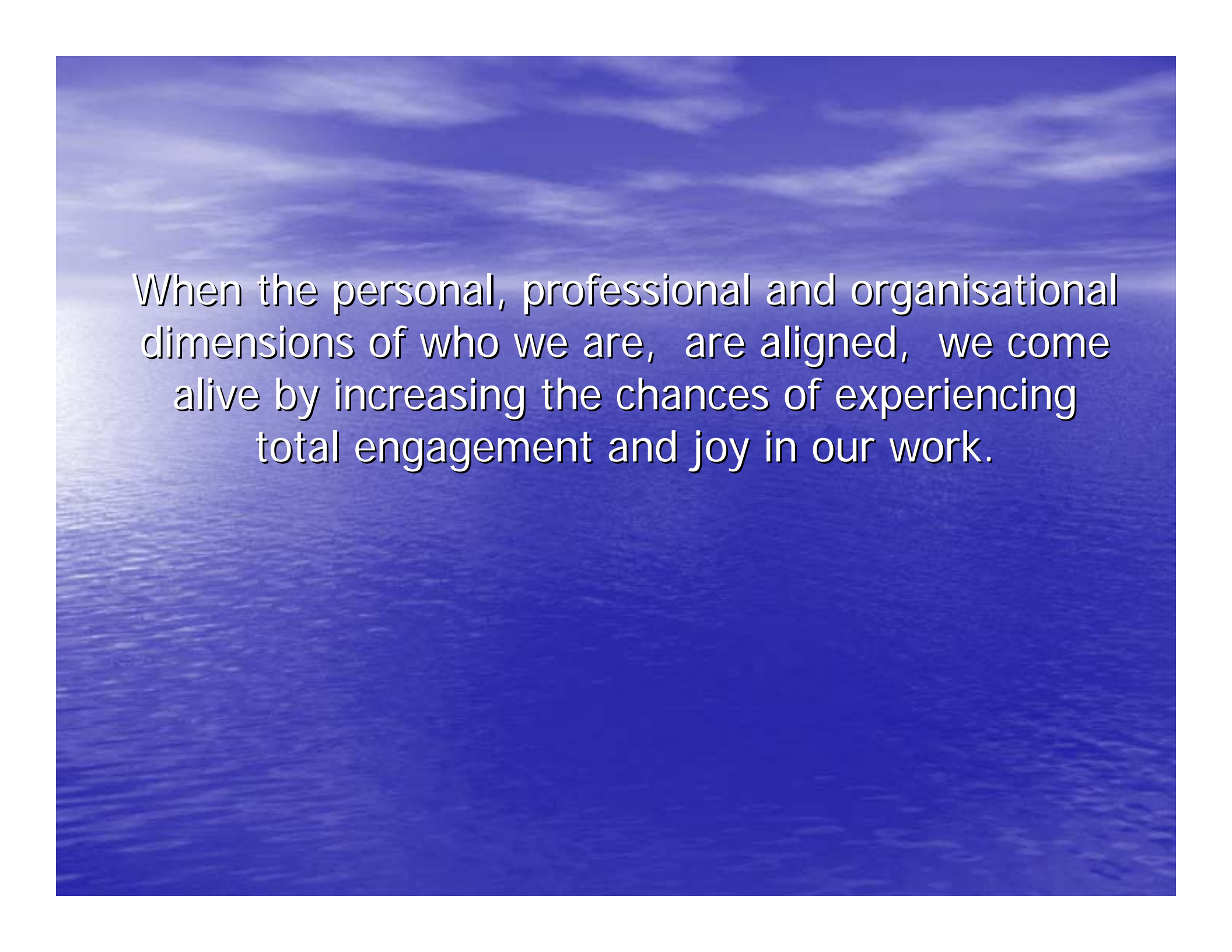


WHERE *PERSONAL* NEEDS, *PROFESSIONAL* INTERESTS AND *ORGANIZATIONAL* GOALS CONVERGE,

CREATES

**FLOW**

Figure 1. Where personal needs, professional interests and organisational goals converge.



When the personal, professional and organisational dimensions of who we are, are aligned, we come alive by increasing the chances of experiencing total engagement and joy in our work.

This state of total engagement leads to a sense of timelessness and effortlessness, referred to as

*Flow*

(Csikszentmihalyi, 1990)

# Emotional Epistemologies

- Emotional ways of knowing
- Emotional knowledge
- Stances or perspectives from which to experience emotions

# Emotional Epistemologies

- **Emotional silence**
  - avoidance and denial powered by shame.
- **Emotional absolutism**
  - the 'feeling rules' dictate rewards and punishments used to retain silence stifle dissent and garner seeming support
- **Transitional emotional relativism**
  - discovery of the meaningfulness of emotion
- **Resilient emotional relativity**
  - the embrace of emotional meaning making as a mode of seeing and being



Which stance best describes your professional relationships?

With students

With parents

With professional peers

With superordinates

# The reinforcing spiral 'progression' of connected emotional knowing

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Unexamined  
emotional self

Experiencing self as  
emotional

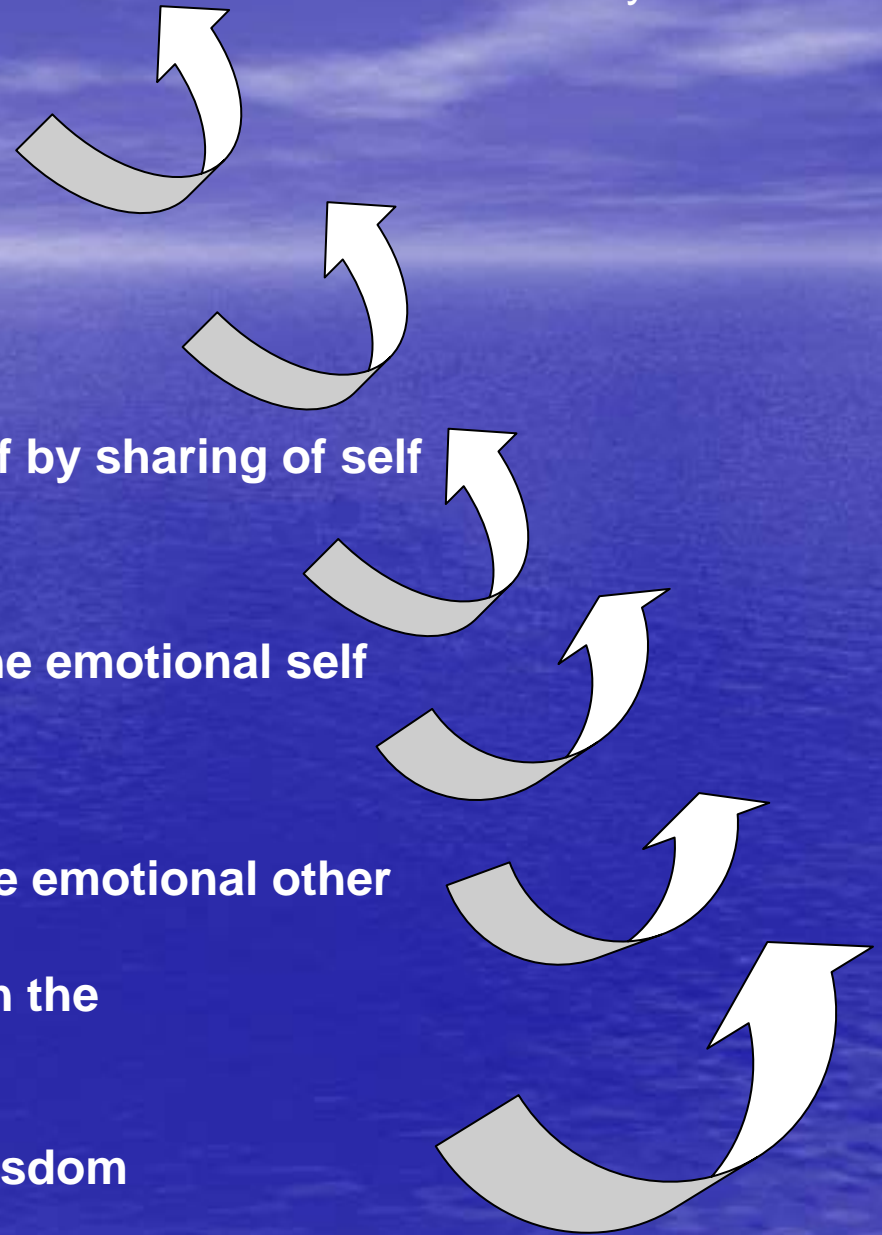
Restorying (Beattie, 1995) self by sharing of self  
as emotional

Connecting with the other through the emotional self

Reconnecting with the self through the emotional other


Connecting with the self and other through the  
emotional self as emotional knower

– deepening emotional wisdom



# Storying and re-storying ourselves

- By actively reflecting upon and sharing our stories of our inner experiences, we make textual rather than sub-textual, we put on the agenda - rather than leave languishing in a subterranean hidden agenda - the real needs we all have for respect, care and support for the unobstructed pursuit of professional possibilities.



When we trust that we are  
safe, we can thrive

# How safe do you feel in your professional setting?

Who or what fosters your sense of safety?

Who or what threatens it?

Reflect for a moment about the sources of these feelings, both external and internal.

By doing this you are going *through* the emotions. You are *emotional meaning making*.

# Trust in Schools

- Trust among *adults* in schools is predictive of student performance
- In perhaps the largest study of its kind - a 10 year study of more than 400 Chicago elementary schools - high levels of trust among adults were consistently correlated with the top quartile schools

(Bryk & Schneider, 2002)

# Defining trust

Tschannen- Moran & Hoy(1998)

- Benevolence
- Reliability
- Competence
- Honesty
- Openness

The more interaction the more opportunities to build trust by building relationships grounded in experience and learning first hand that people are trustworthy.

# Leadership activities

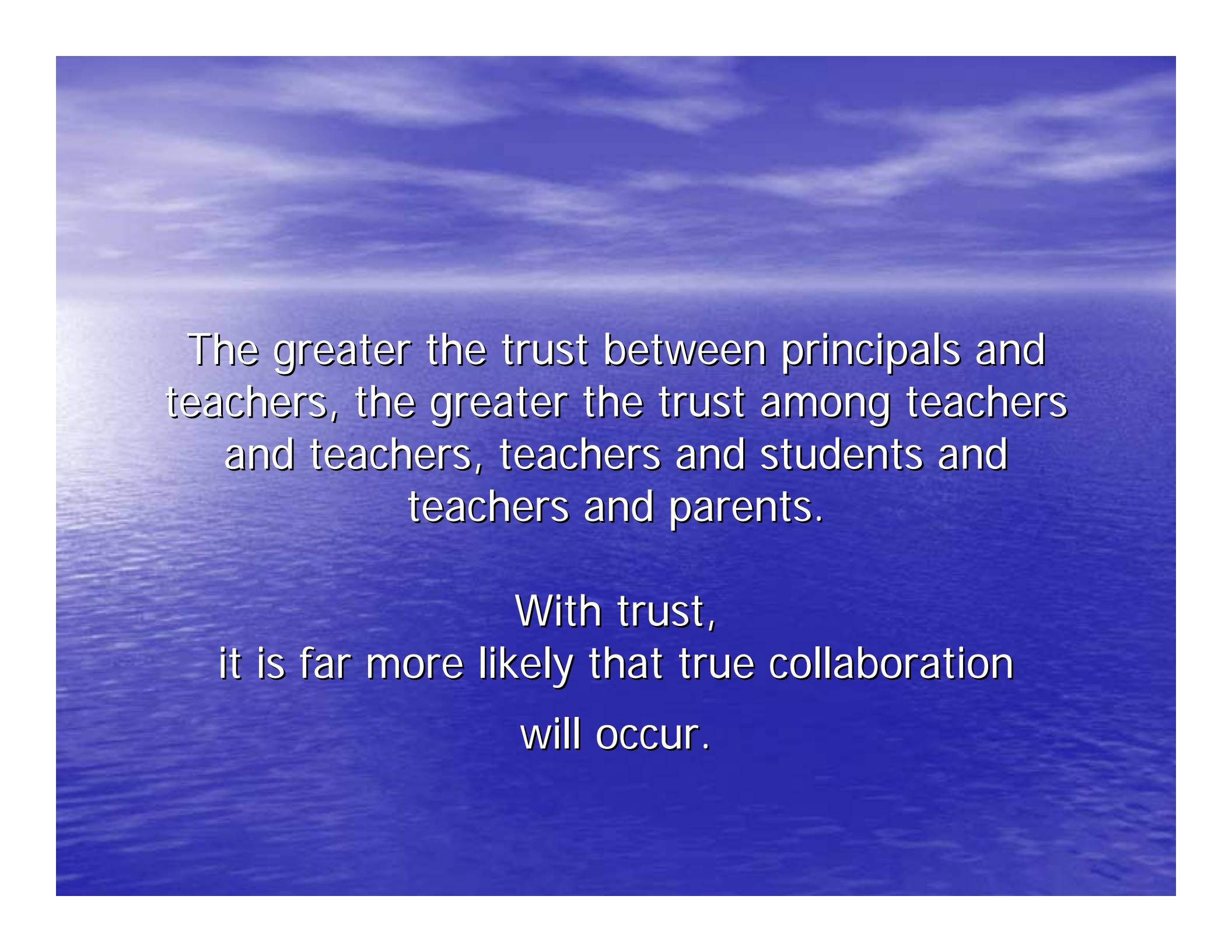
- Create collaboration opportunities
- Share in decisionmaking
- Communicate openly and freely
- Remain accessible
- Demonstrate respect, care and professional support
- Create organisational conditions that foster confidence and promote communication

# Hoy and Tschannen- Moran:

- Based on studies in over 300 schools in the US they developed a scale to measure trust.
- When there was a greater perceived level of trust in a school, teachers had a greater sense of efficacy—the belief in their ability to affect actions leading to success.

- Trust tended to be pervasive: when teachers trusted their principal, they also were more likely to trust staff, parents, and students.

- The studies also suggested that faculty trust in parents predicted a strong degree of parent-teacher collaboration.




The greater the trust between principals and teachers, the greater the trust among teachers and teachers, teachers and students and teachers and parents.

With trust,  
it is far more likely that true collaboration  
will occur.



# Teachers and their leaders:

Looking through the lens of  
emotional meaning making



**PROFESSIONAL  
SUPPORT**

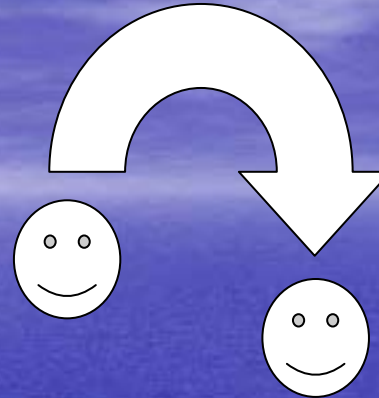
**CARE**

**RESPECT**

**principal**

**teacher**

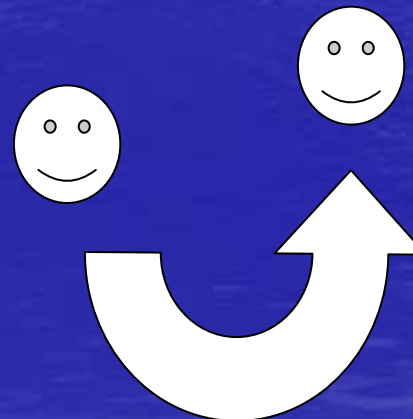
**Respect: Approval is offered from the superordinate position as evaluator**



**Care: Open, sensitive communication and collaboration creates relationship**



**Professional support: Capabilities of teacher are upheld, extended, or developed**



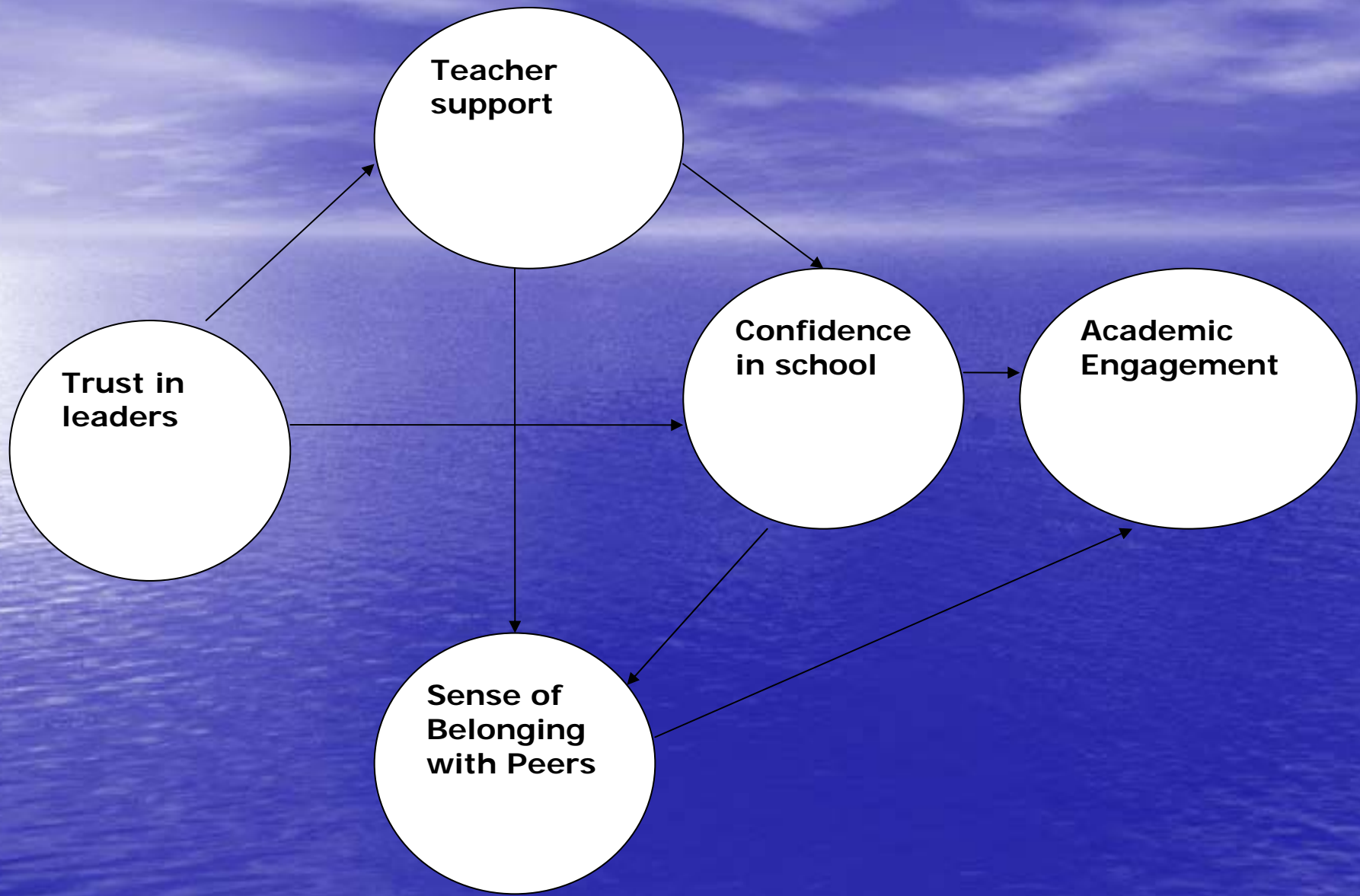
# Leading with Teacher Emotions in Mind

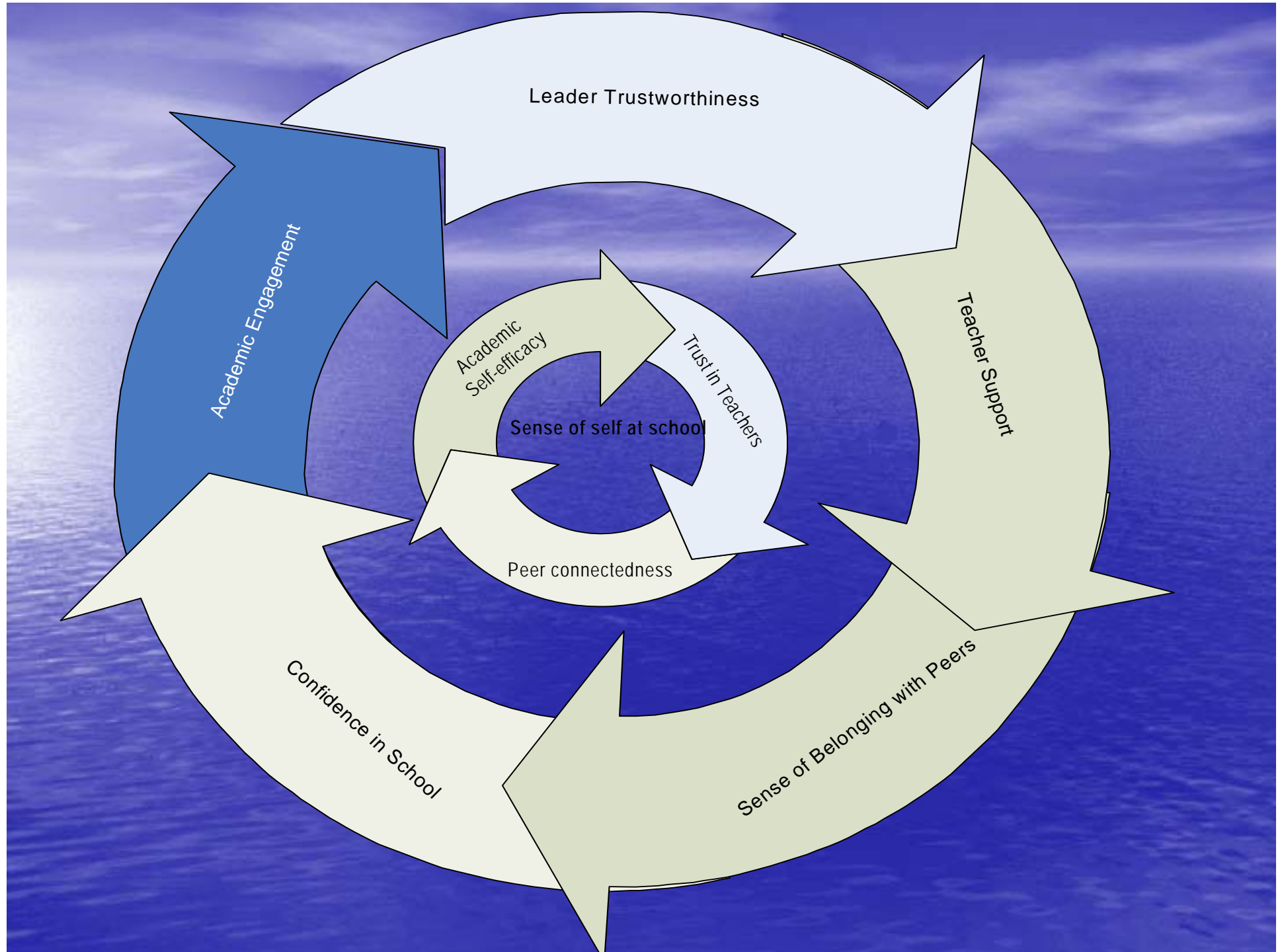
(Leithwood & Beatty, 2008)

- Job Satisfaction and Morale
- Stress, Anxiety and Burnout
- Individual and Collective Self-efficacy
- Commitment and Engagement
- Teacher Motivation and Educational Reform
- Setting Directions and Developing People
- Redesigning the organisation and Managing the Instructional Program
- Leader emotions

# Student sense of connectedness with school

- Student engagement and academic optimism
- Successful Schools are physically, socially and emotionally Safe and Healthy schools
- Student sense of connectedness with school and sense of belonging with peers comes through their relationships with teachers and in a shadow effect, through shared perceptions of the trustworthiness of school leaders





# Leadership is everyone's responsibility

- The leading edge is the personal connection we experience in relationship with others

# The Front Line of leadership

- Without a sense of personal safety, creativity and openness to new learning become blocked

# The Front Line of leadership

- By co-creating and maintaining expectations that every person is entitled to be a work in progress, worthy of respect, care and support and considered for their ideas and aspirations, the cultural currency in our schools can shift dramatically

# The Front Line of leadership

- Collaborative culture building is profoundly affected by valuing and honouring the process of emotional meaning making and providing it with a place of honour, *at the table*, and squarely and *explicitly on the agenda*.

For our students, our teachers our  
parents and ourselves, it all begins  
inside . . .

*Emotional Leadership in Action Takes*

- *Courage*
- *Counter-intuition and*
- *Commitment to Connectedness.*

A blue-tinted photograph of a vast ocean under a cloudy sky. The water is a deep blue with gentle ripples, and the sky is a lighter blue with wispy white clouds. The horizon line is visible in the distance.

Thankyou