



香港教育大學

The Education University
of Hong Kong

Ly Sau Ting Ann, Chan Pui Ki Jeslyn, Lam Wing
Chung William, Yeung Siu Sze Susanna

MINDFULNESS

A Self-discovery
Journey for Teachers



Department of
PSYCHOLOGY

心理學系



香港教育大學

The Education University
of Hong Kong



Department of
PSYCHOLOGY

心理學系

MINDFULNESS: A SELF-DISCOVERY JOURNEY FOR TEACHERS

By

Dr. Ly Sau Ting Ann

Chan Pui Ki Jeslyn

Lam Wing Chung William

Dr. Yeung Siu Sze Susanna

MINDFULNESS: A SELF-DISCOVERY JOURNEY FOR TEACHERS

Authors: Ly Sau Ting Ann, Chan Pui Ki Jeslyn, Lam Wing Chung William, Yeung Siu Sze Susanna

Book Design: Amparo Leonila F. Esguerra

Editor: Chan Pui Ki Jeslyn

Research team: Yeung Siu Sze Susanna (Principal investigator), Ly Sau Ting Ann, Lam Wing Chung William, Chan Pui Ki Jeslyn

Published by:

Department of Psychology

The Education University of Hong Kong

10 Lo Ping Road, Tai Po,

New Territories,

Hong Kong

Website: <https://www.eduhk.hk/ps/en/>

Email: ps@eduhk.hk

Tel: (852) 2948 8544

Fax: (852) 2948 8454

©The Education University of Hong Kong 2022

First edition: May 2022

ALL rights reserved. No portion of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

The publication of the self-help book is sponsored by the Knowledge Transfer Fund of The Education University of Hong Kong.

Contents

Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Chapter 2 The first self-discovery journey: The forming of professional identities and related stress	4
Chapter 3 The second self-discovery journey: The search for autonomy in your daily professional lives and related stress	17
Chapter 4 The third self-discovery journey: The sense of belongingness in your daily professional lives and related stress	30
Chapter 5 The fourth self-discovery journey: Meaning-making in your daily professional lives and stress	45
Chapter 6 Resources for Teachers	57
Chapter 7 Conclusive remarks	62
About the authors	



Chapter 1

Introduction

Dear Readers,

As we all know, as a helping profession, teaching is stressful. And stress can undermine teachers' work performance as well as their wellbeing. Stress does not only affect our mental, but it also affects our physical health. With prolonged stress, we can get less sensitive in our emotional responses. For example, with long term work-related stress, individual teachers may be too used to it mentally and do not even sense the chronic emotional responses. But when you become attentive to your body, you can feel the emotional traces of stress, causing tension at various parts of the body; for example, stiff shoulders and neck, tight throat and chest are some of the signs of chronic stress. Other physical signs may include issues with sleeping, digestion and so forth. And when teachers' wellbeing is impacted by chronic work-related stress, we become easily frustrated, anxious, and exhausted. Our psychological resources for bouncing back from setbacks were depleted.

Much evidence has pointed to the positive impact of mindfulness in reducing stress and promoting a flourishing sense of existence. Majority of the time, we are caught up in planning for our future or reminiscing about the past. This habit obstructs us from experiencing the present fully. As if we were here but we are not truly here. This state of existence is the opposite of being mindful. For beginners, when we are practicing mindfulness, we stop all the talking, both outside and inside. When our mind starts to chatter, usually steering us away from the present, we gently recall ourselves back to dwell on the here-and-now. Yes, this goes against our lifetime habit! But, this newly found habit is giving us more joy and less stress in every moment of our lives.

This booklet is not only about teachers' stress reduction. This booklet integrated the approaches of positive psychology and mindfulness techniques to offer teachers a unique pathway of self-discovery, which allow for enrichment and further blooming of your professional life. This is achieved by two approaches:

1. Positive psychology approach with case illustrations and various self-examined exercises in understanding each individual teacher's unique work-related stress;
2. Guided mindfulness practices that contain two parts: firstly, helping individual teachers to dwell in the present with relaxation and clarity and secondly, helping individual teachers to tap into his/her unique psychological resources for success and happiness.

You knock on the door
of stress and distress;
surprisingly, it leads you
to an unimaginable
garden of beauty
within you!



3. I dearly hope that the above statement will make increasing sense to you, after you've engaged yourself with the content of this self-help booklet!

How to use this booklet?

This booklet contains four main chapters. Each of these chapters supports teachers to explore one existential concern in their professional lives: namely, your professional identities, your attribution of meaningfulness in the profession, your sense of work-related autonomy and your sense of belongingness in your work setting.

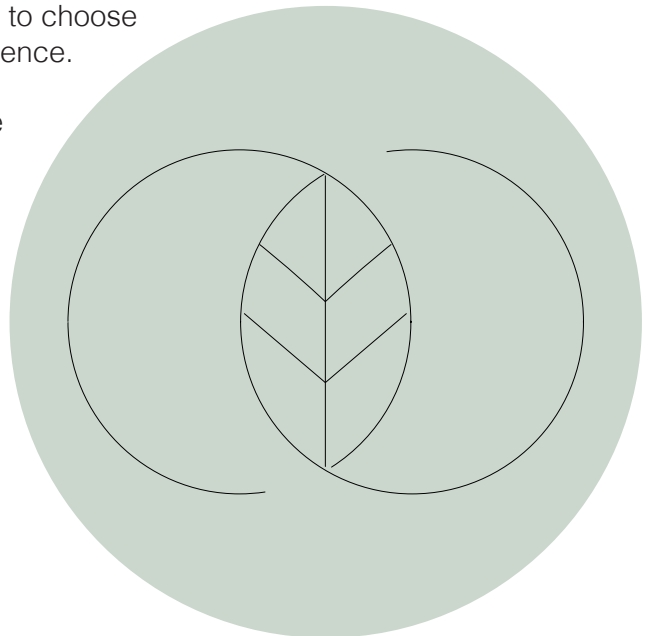
Each of these chapters consists of the following major components:

1. A guided mindfulness practice for you to tune into your self-discovery journey of wellbeing
2. A case illustration relating to the existential theme of the chapter
3. Self-exploration exercises and tools
4. Psychology knowledge about work-related stress and wellbeing
5. A guided mindfulness practice to enhance your wellbeing

Each of these chapters can be treated independently. Feel free to choose according to your preference.

For example, you may choose to begin with the chapter that is most relevant to your current work situation. Just set aside an hour for yourself every week and use this booklet as a guide to the beginning of your self-discovery journey!

Relax and enjoy!

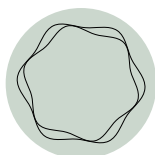


Chapter 2

The first self-discovery journey: The forming of professional identities and related stress

Checking in

Welcome to the self-discovery chapter about professional identities. In this chapter, we will guide you step-by-step to experience the following:



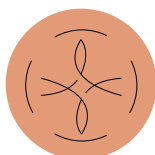
Step 1

A guided mindfulness breathing exercise for “mental flushing” to clear your mind for the coming activities



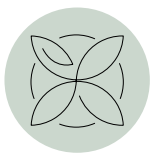
Step 2

Exploration of daily work scenario that might challenge teachers' professional identities



Step 3

Activities that help individual teachers to gain deeper insights into your professional identities



Step 4

Activities for enhancing individual teachers' abilities to become aware of the influences of various professional identities on your work-related stress




Step 5

Guided mindfulness meditation to re-claim agency over the development of individuals' professional identities

Step 1: Guided Mindfulness Breathing

1. Mindfulness exercise

- If you can feel your body is particularly tense and your mind raising with pre-occupied thoughts and negative feelings, you are encouraged to conduct a guided body scan meditation available in Chapter 6.
 - If your mind is relatively settled and your body is not particularly tense, you might wish to engage in the guided mindfulness breathing exercise. (You may refer to the mindfulness audio recording with the QR code)
- 
- Just a gentle reminder:
 - Whatever you experienced during the meditation - whether you consider them as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral – you don't need to hold on your mind to further analyse! Let them go! Stay with the presence!
 - Now you are ready to engage with the rest of the chapter!

Step 2: Exploration of Daily Work Scenario

2.1 Work scenario

To give (notes) or not to give (notes)

Ada, Miss Ng entered the staff room with a long face. Miss Wong asks her what is the matter.

- Miss Ng says: “My Geography class asks if I can provide them with PPT notes. Right now, I am writing the main points on white board and asking them to write their own notes. They can learn a lot by writing their own notes.”
- Miss Wong replies: “Yeah! But these days, everyone looks for conveniences and being provided with notes make students feel safer.”
- Miss Ng's voice is a bit quivering: “Well! The class is requesting me because teachers of other classes are giving out PPT notes!”

Instead of thinking about whether Miss Ng is right or wrong or thinking about how she should deal with the situation, let us take Miss Ng’s perspective and understand her struggles more deeply by asking two questions:

1. How might Miss Ng feel about the class’ request?	2. What thoughts might have passed her mind in face of such a request?
<p>She might have felt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angry • Upset • Disappointed • Stressful • Resented • Unsecured ... <p>(please fill in more possibilities freely)</p>	<p>She might have thought:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Am “I” being challenged? • Do my students “dislike me” or my teaching? • Why should I “give in” because I am doing this differently than others? • Would my students complain about me to the higher management? What would be the approach of higher management? • “As a teacher”, should I forsake the benefit of students’ long-term learning (via note-taking) for the short term advantage of convenience? <p>(please fill in more possibilities freely)</p>

2.2 Self-exploration: Your struggles in workplace

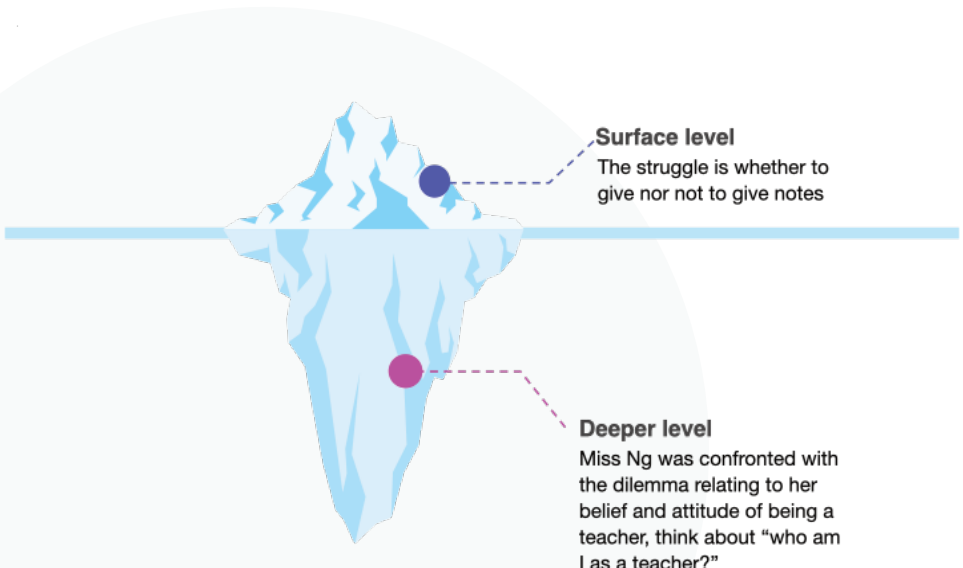
Have you been confronted with work situations that are similar to Miss Ng’s?

Similar scenario	What was your feeling?	What thoughts passed through your mind?

2.3 Inner struggles and professional identities

In the scenario, Miss Ng might experience struggles when handling students' requests. In her deeper thoughts, what might drive her to feel ambivalent?

- The deeper struggle points to her professional identity, which is:
The way how Miss Ng defines herself as a teacher
Related to the attitudes, values, knowledge, belief, skills and commitments that she has held towards being a teacher
- What factors can influence our professional identity?
Teaching and school cultures
e.g. expectations of school board, colleagues, students, parents and community Teaching experience
- How does professional identity relate to our work as a teacher?
Affect our decision making in work situations
Impact our ability and willingness to cope with situational change and to implement innovations in our teaching practice



Some noteworthy points about the development of identities for you to note:

- The formation of identities matters, it is one of the five core existential concerns of human beings.
- Identities are implicitly formed through interactions between individuals' perceptions and experiences.
- Identities do not have to be rigid, they are changeable.
- Rather than thinking about identities as something already formed, we can observe the constantly changing and forming of our own identities.
- An individual can have multiple identities.
- Multiple identities allow us to act differently according to different contexts and thus provide flexibility and coherence to our sense of self.
- The integration and recognition of the core of multiple identities give us a healthy sense of self.
- Being aware of the development of our own identities in general and our professional identities in specific, is an effective way to promote our overall wellbeing.



2.4 3-min Breathing Break

In the coming 3 minutes, let go of everything and focus your attention on your breathing.

(For this exercise, you may refer to the audio recording with the QR code)



Step 3: Diving into Your Professional Identities

3.1 Explore your professional identity: Who am I as a teacher?

Let's recall the time when you **first began** to enter the teaching profession, how much would you have agreed with the following statements?

- 1 Very Disagree 2 Disagree
3 Neutral 4 Agree
5 Very Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Teacher as an inspiration and a model					
2. Teacher as subject content deliverer					
3. Teacher as the one who helps students to excel beyond academics					
4. Teacher as the one who helps students to get good grades					
5. Teacher as the one who helps students to realise their talents and their goals in life					
6. Teacher as mentor who is influential in shaping students' characters					
7. Teacher as service provider					
8. Teacher as an employee of an educational institution					
9. Teacher as one of the stakeholders in education					
10. Teacher as a professional member who is under education bureau or board of education of a certain society					
11. Teacher as an agent to improve students' life quality					
12. Teacher as an agent to develop students as lifelong learners					
13. Teacher as a parent who would not give up on any individual student					
14. Coming up with your own					

Part B. Coming back to your **current self** as a teacher, how much do you agree with the following statements?

- 1 Very Disagree 2 Disagree
 3 Neutral 4 Agree
 5 Very Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Teacher as an inspiration and a model					
2. Teacher as subject content deliverer					
3. Teacher as the one who helps students to excel beyond academics					
4. Teacher as the one who helps students to get good grades					
5. Teacher as the one who helps students to realise their talents and their goals in life					
6. Teacher as mentor who is influential in shaping students' characters					
7. Teacher as service provider					
8. Teacher as an employee of an educational institution					
9. Teacher as one of the stakeholders in education					
10. Teacher as a professional member who is under education bureau or board of education of a certain society					
11. Teacher as an agent to improve students' life quality					
12. Teacher as an agent to develop students as lifelong learners					
13. Teacher as a parent who would not give up on any individual student					
14. Coming up with your own					

Part C. Compare your ratings in Part (A) and (B), are there major changes in the way you perceive your professional identities?

- 1 Very Disagree 2 Disagree
 3 Neutral 4 Agree
 5 Very Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Teacher as an inspiration and a model					
2. Teacher as subject content deliverer					
3. Teacher as the one who helps students to excel beyond academics					
4. Teacher as the one who helps students to get good grades					
5. Teacher as the one who helps students to realise their talents and their goals in life					
6. Teacher as mentor who is influential in shaping students' characters					
7. Teacher as service provider					
8. Teacher as an employee of an educational institution					
9. Teacher as one of the stakeholders in education					
10. Teacher as a professional member who is under education bureau or board of education of a certain society					
11. Teacher as an agent to improve students' life quality					
12. Teacher as an agent to develop students as lifelong learners					
13. Teacher as a parent who would not give up on any individual student					
14. Coming up with your own					

3.2 Self-exploration: Professional identity change

Take a look at the tables you have just done above, do you find any major changes in the ratings of your professional identities from the beginning of your career until now?

If yes, what are these changes?
What happened and how do you feel?

If not, what were your thoughts and feelings when you were engaging in the comparison?

3.3 Self-exploration: Your core professional identities

What are your three most important professional identities?

1

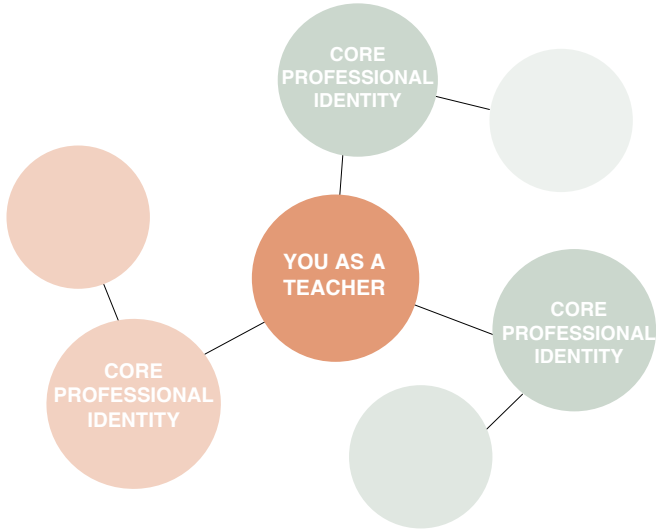
2

3

3.4 Self-exploration: Mapping your professional identities

Apart from the core professional identities, how do your other professional identities relate to the core?

You are free to use the suggested mind map structure below to map out your current professional identities as a teacher.



Being aware of your core professional identities can help you:

- Make daily professional choices that align better with your beliefs as a teacher
- Being flexible in multiple identities is the key!
- Remember as a professional dealing with many situations, you are developing multiple identities!
- Using them flexibly in different contexts strengthens your holistic sense of self.



3.5 3-min Breathing Break:

In the coming 3 minutes, let go of everything and focus your attention on your breathing.

(You may refer to the audio recording with the QR code)



Step 4: More on Relating Work Stress with Professional Identities Struggles

4.1. Dealing with professional identities struggles

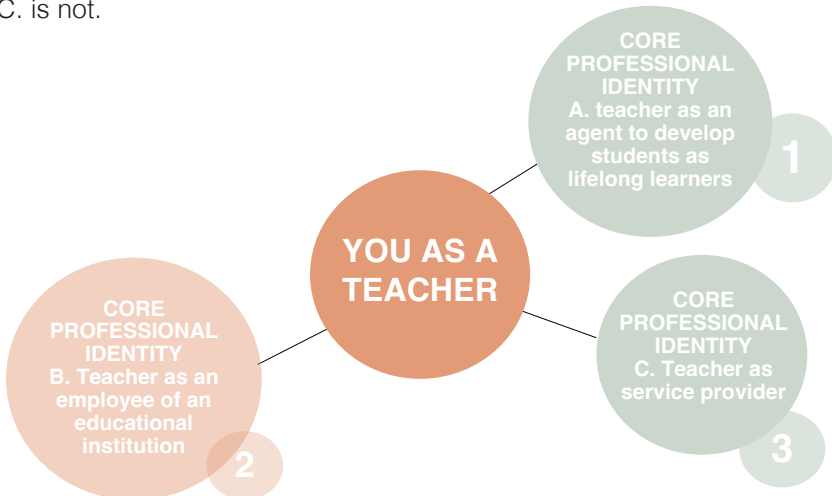
Referring to the “to take or not to take notes” scenario, we can try to identify her specific professional identities that might emerge in the scenario.

What Miss Ng might feel and think:	Professional identities
“I am responsible for promoting my student’s long term learning”	A. Teacher as an agent to develop students as lifelong learner
“I should entertain my students’ requests, otherwise my employer, the higher management of the school would expect me to do so”	B. Teacher as an employee of an educational institution
“I must satisfy the wishes of the students because I am providing educational service to them”	C. Teacher as service provider

4.2. Ranking the professional identities

Perhaps we have known Miss Ng’s professional identity mind map, we can try to rank order the importance of the professional identities that are involved in the scenario.

- Perhaps Miss Ng may find that both A. and B. identities are important, while C. is not.



- Hence, in this context, Miss Ng may:
 - Embrace the importance of her role in nurturing students' lifelong learning
 - Agree that as an employer of the school that she would not like to create trouble for the higher management
 - Consider the identity of 'Teacher as service providers' less relevant here

4.3 Generating solutions

After clarifying Miss Ng's priorities of the professional identities with the mind map in the exercise, we could provide advice to her:

- To provide PPT notes but only on main points, leaving room for students to complete the rest during or after class as to scaffold students to learn to take notes and explain her intention to her class
- Any other suggestions that you would like to contribute?

4.4. Self-exploration: Your core professional identity struggles

Looking back to the work situation you have written down that looks similar to Miss Ng's,

- Do you find your core professional identity being challenged in these situations?
- Are there more daily work stressful situations that place your professional identities in doubt?

Being aware of the influences of various professional identities on your work-related stress helps you:

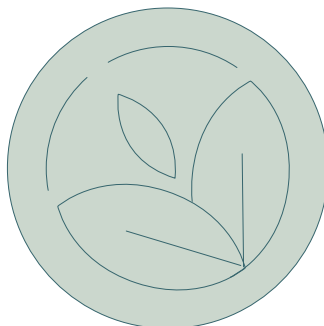
- Make decisions that are more aligned with who you want to be professionally
- Reflect upon how to integrate your multiple professional identities, which are constantly developing according to your experiences
Both levels of self-discovery can help reduce your stress and enhance your wellbeing

Remember you are the one in charge! Being aware of how your professional identities influence your daily work is the first step towards conscious selection and integration of “who am I as a teacher”!

Step 5: Guided Mindfulness Meditation Reclaim Autonomy over Professional Identities



Experiencing professional identity struggles could be stressful to us. Meditation is supported to be a good way to enhance our inner peace and self-understanding. Let's try the following mindfulness practice to help us reclaim autonomy over the professional identities. (You may refer to the mindfulness audio recording with the QR Code)



Chapter 3

The second self-discovery journey: The search for autonomy in your daily professional lives and related stress

Checking in

Welcome to the self-discovery chapter about the sense of autonomy in your daily profession. In this chapter, we would guide you step-by-step to experience the following:



Step 1

A guided mindful breathing exercise to pull your mind back to the present moment. As you are increasingly able to live fully in the present moment and to step back from being entangled by thoughts and emotions, we would gradually experience a strengthened sense of autonomy in our daily existence.



Step 2

Exploration of daily work scenarios that might challenge teachers' work-related sense of autonomy.



Step 3

Activities that help individual teachers to gain understanding into his/her sense of autonomy in work



Step 4

Activities that help individual teachers to become aware of the influences of the sense of autonomy on work-related stress



Step 5

Guided mindfulness meditation to nurture the sense of autonomy within individuals

Step 1: Guided Mindfulness Breathing

1. Mindfulness exercise

- If you can feel your body is particularly tense and your mind raising with pre-occupied thoughts and negative feelings, you are encouraged to conduct a guided body scan meditation available in Chapter 6.
- If your mind is relatively settled and your body is not particularly tense, then find your usual comfortable spot to prepare yourself for the meditation. You are strongly encouraged to create a constantly revisitable personal space hub for yourself. In fact, it is best to pave way to transfer a physically comfortable meditative spot to a psychological comfortable meditative hub! For example, in the beginning, you can establish a corner at your dwelling place for meditation. You may decorate the corner so that it is filled with an aura of peace and freshness. Then you may take an object from the corner that would remind you of such an aura to create a more movable meditative hub for your regular meditative practice. The object could be a candle, a stone etc. Gradually the sight and touch of that object may be enough to settle your mind and body for meditation.

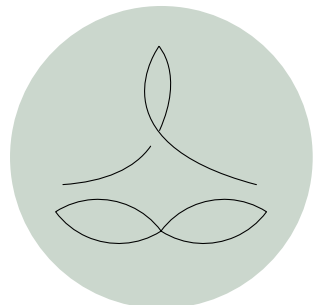


- After settling your mind and body, let us engage in the mindfulness breathing exercise. (You may refer to the mindfulness audio recording with the QR code)

- Just a gentle reminder:

Whatever you experienced during the meditation - whether you consider them as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral – you don't need to hold on your mind to further analyse! Let them go! Stay with the presence!

Now you are ready to engage with the rest of the chapter!

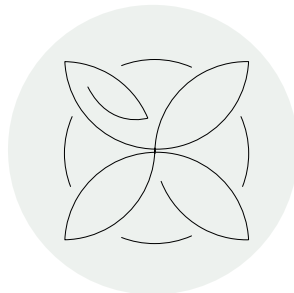


Step 2: Exploration of Daily Work Scenario

2.1 Work scenario

Where is my voice at work?

- Jo, Miss Chan, has become a primary school teacher three years ago. Because of her pleasant nature, she has often been assigned to teach junior level students. Other than teaching the subject-content, Jo also needs to take care of various kinds of needs of her young students especially those in Primary 1.
- Lately, Jo received a phone call from a P1 student's mother, demanding that Jo should change seat for her daughter in order to stay away from classmates who do not get along with her daughter. Jo believed that this was only the beginning of the term and the students need time and help to get to mingle together. Changing seats may thwart the opportunity for the young children to learn to socialize. Hence, Jo explained her thoughts to the mother and promised to keep an eye on her daughter with those sitting nearby.
- However, the mother became increasingly emotional during the phone conversation (so was Jo but she tried to stay calm). Drawing to the end of the phone call, the mother said, "Miss Chan, if you cannot understand the needs of my girl, I will try to make the case known to the school principal. I am sure he has more experience and should be more supportive." Jo feels very angry and, at the same time, scared that if the case goes to the principal, Mr. Wong. However, the more she thought about the phone conversation, the more she resented the idea of changing seat.
- Coupled with other demands from the panel head, school principal and other parents of her students, Jo feels especially stressful and demoralized by her work. The doubt of whether she should stay in the teaching profession is haunting her.



Instead of focusing on whether Miss Chan is right or wrong or thinking about how she should deal with the situation, let us first gain a deeper understanding of her stress by asking the following two questions:

<p>1. How might Miss Chan feel about her voice and sense of autonomy in work?</p>	<p>2. What might have passed her mind in dealing with the parent's demand?</p>
<p>She might have felt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angry • worried • insecure • discouraged • fearful • resentful... <p>(please fill in more possibilities freely)</p>	<p>She might have thought:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the mother telling me how to do my job? • Why does my job's decision need to be comprised? • Principal Wong might respect the parents' voice more than mine! • I have been trying my best to be a good teacher. Why so many complaints and so little appreciation! • If I 'yield', how can I safeguard my sense of volition in the profession? <p>(please fill in more possibilities freely)</p>

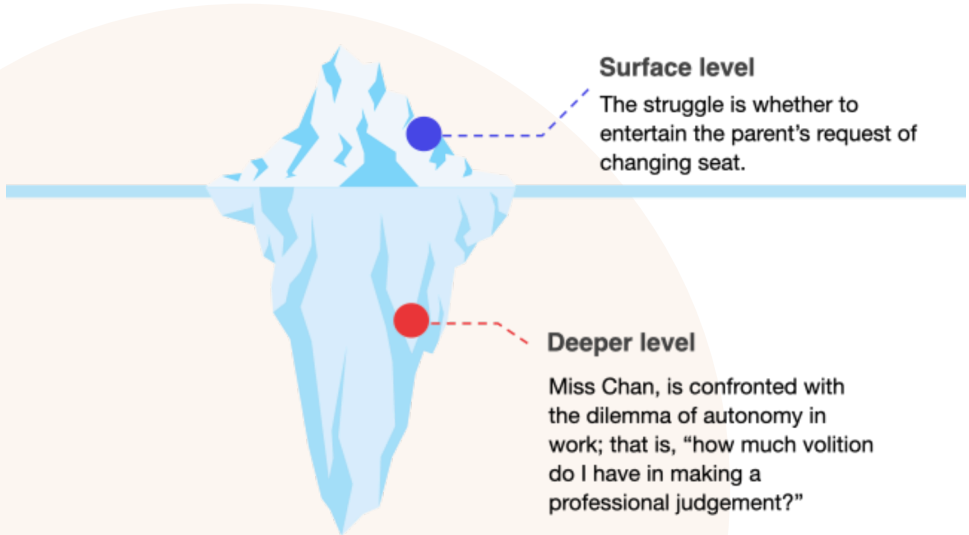
2.2 Self-exploration: Your struggles in workplace

Have you been confronted with work situations that are similar to Miss Chan's?

Similar scenario	What was your feeling?	What thoughts passed through your mind?

2.3 Inner struggles and professional autonomy

In the scenario, Miss Chan might experience stress and struggles when handling the parent's request. Miss Chan's struggle points to something deeper than having a different opinion with a parent. It points to a deeper inner struggle:



The deeper struggle points to her professional autonomy, which is:

- An individual teacher's sense of being able to determine within his/her profession.
- Such autonomy is closely related to the sense of volition in his/her daily work.

Some noteworthy highlights about the development of a sense of autonomy, in general:

- Autonomy matters, it is one of the five core existential concerns of human being
- The fostering of a sense of autonomy involves, at least the following three psychological processes:
 - a. conscious exploration of the spectrum of potential choices available in a situation
 - b. gaining clarity on your priorities of sense of purpose in work and/or in life
 - c. being aware of your perceptions about various consequences among choices
- At first glance, it might seem that the reality, involving different voices and rights from multiple parties, is often limiting our autonomy. With deeper insights into the development of one's autonomy would lead a person to realise that autonomy does not equate the amount of freedom nor the number of choices available in a situation.
- Understanding the process of development in your professional autonomy can help enhance your wellbeing as well as strengthen your sense of empowerment at work and in life.



2.4 3-min Breathing Break:

In the coming 3 minutes, let go of everything and focus your attention on your breathing. (You may refer to the audio recording with the QR code)



Step 3: Diving into Your Professional Sense of Autonomy

3.1 Explore your professional autonomy: To what extent do I feel like having a sense of volition (freedom to make decisions among choices) in work?

List out the top five major professional domains that involve frequent and/or important decision-making in your work:

List of possible domains, for example, may include:

- Curriculum development
- Learning and teaching
- Classroom management and discipline
- Extra-curricular activities
- Homework and other forms of assessments
- Staff development
- Administration and promotion
- School event organizations
- Others

Rank Order	Professional domains that involve your frequent / important decision-making	Any specific descriptions?

Then, select the top 3 domains, list out all the major stakeholders, including yourself, involved in the main kind of decision-making in each of these 3 domains.

Please specify your perceived weighting in the amount of say (in %) of each stakeholder in these 3 domains. You can use an example in each domain to help consider the weighting in the amount of say of main stakeholders:

First Domain	Major stakeholders (including yourself)	Perceived weighting of say in %	Specified example

Second Domain	Major stakeholders (including yourself)	Perceived weighting of say in %	Specified example

Third Domain	Major stakeholders (including yourself)	Perceived weighting of say in %	Specified example

Let us now examine the perceived amount of weighting of your say (%) in the 3 domains. Either focus on the domain that you perceive to have the least weighting in say OR focus on the domain that you really wish to have more weighting in say:

1. Who gets the most weighting in say in this domain? Why do you think so?	
2. What would you consider to be more “reasonable” weighting between the stakeholder that gets the most weighted in say and you?	
3. What are some possible reasons for you not to have obtained the desirable weighting of say in this domain?	
4. Think of yourself as an agent for change in this domain, what can you do or how can you act differently that could help to re-distribute the amount of weighting between the dominant stakeholder and you?	

- Being aware of which domain of work needs your attention with respect to sense of volition and exploring the stakeholders’ weighting of say, can help clarify areas of work that frustrate your sense of autonomy.
- Examining the existing relative weightings and desirable relative weightings, help to gain a sense of self-determination in the process of relating to the dominant stakeholder/s as well as in the process of expanding possible choices in your decision-making.



3.2 3-min Breathing Break:

In the coming 3 minutes, let go of everything and focus your attention on your breathing. (You may refer to the audio recording with the QR code)



Step 4: More on Relating Work Stress with Sense of Autonomy in the Profession

4.1 Dealing with professional autonomy struggles

Referring to the “Where is my voice in work?” scenario, we can try to identify the major professional domains that involve frequent and/or important decision-making in Miss Chan's work:

- Learning and teaching in class: School higher management 35%, parents 25% and Miss Chan 40%
- Classroom management: Parents 25%, school higher management 10%, and Miss Chan 65%
- Taking care of young students (inside and outside of classroom): School higher management 20%, parents 25%, and Miss Chan 55%

Domain of change:	To Miss Chan, classroom management is the domain which she wishes to have more autonomy.
Reasons for the established weighting:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School higher management invites parental involvement. • Parents might lack the sense of how classroom management could help their children to better develop. • Further, some parents may not be equipped with a variety of skills in handling their children's challenges on their way to grow.
Weighting gap:	<p>To Miss Chan, the desirable weighting in this domain is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent 10% • School higher management 10% • Miss Chan 80%
Rationale for change:	Miss Chan believes that with immediate frontline interaction with her students in class, she is the person who has the most updated information to adjust the classroom management plan.

Rather than taking the existing weighting as unchangeable or not under her control, Miss Chan could explore new possibilities with the desirable weighting as the target as well as the mindset of seeing herself as an agent for change.

As an agent for change:

- Focusing on the student (daughter). Explain Miss Chan's observation and understanding about the daughter.
- Invite the parents to provide additional information about the students.
- Explain the rationale of such classroom arrangement (random assignment of seating in the start of the term in P1). From previous experiences how children usually adjust to one another with teacher's and parents' support.
- Taken the parent's concern with Miss Chan's professional judgement, brief the parent on what Miss Chan will do to support the student while keeping the original seating for the coming 2 weeks.
- Also provide suggestions to the mother on how to help her daughter to adjust in a socio-emotional sense.
- Lastly, explain the benefit of such process in supporting her daughter to develop psycho-socially.
- As Miss Chan gains trust from parents, her sense of volition would increase in classroom management. She will feel more autonomy in this domain of work. This enhanced sense of autonomy would, in turn, allow her to become more open when relating with major stakeholders, while seeing a wider range of choices in her work.

Any other suggestions, you would like to contribute:

4.2 Self exploration: Your professional autonomy struggles

Looking back to the work situation you have written down that looks similar to Miss Chan's,

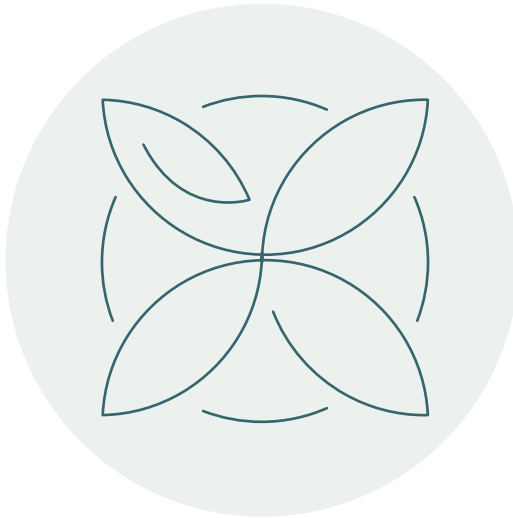
- Does the situation relate to your sense of autonomy being challenged?
- Are there more daily work stress situations that place a sense of autonomy in doubt?

- Being aware of how the sense of autonomy is related to your work-related stress will enable you to become increasingly self-empowered rather than other-empowered in your profession
- Developing growth mindsets in your profession and thus enable yourself to become a better teacher as well as a better person
- From seeing limited choices to an expansion of such, due to your choice of becoming an agent for change, will reduce stress and enhance your fulfilment in the profession.
- Rather than waiting for other stakeholders to ascribe the weighting of your voice in work, by exploring your sense of autonomy in the profession, you can be free and be creative to exert your influence in any professional context. This can enrich you as a teacher as well as those individual stakeholders around you.

Step 5: Guided Mindfulness Meditation on Autonomy



Experiencing professional autonomy struggles could bring us a low sense of control and self-doubt. Meditation is supported to be a good way to enhance our inner peace and self-understanding. Let's try the following mindfulness practice to nurture a sense of autonomy in ourselves. (You may refer to the mindfulness recording with QR code)



Chapter 4

The third self-discovery journey: The sense of belongingness in your daily professional lives and related stress

Checking in

Welcome to the self-discovery chapter about the sense of isolation in your daily profession. In this chapter, we would guide you step-by-step to experience the following:



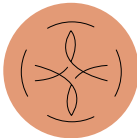
Step 1

A guided mindful breathing exercise to pull your mind back to the present moment. As you are increasingly able to live fully in the present moment, you are more likely to be in tune with your bodily states as well as more likely to experience an authentic connection with the larger world.



Step 2

Exploration of daily work scenarios that might trigger or add on to teachers' work-related sense of isolation.



Step 3

Activities that help individual teachers to gain understanding into his/her sense of isolation in work



Step 4

Activities that help individual teachers to become aware of the influences of the sense of isolation on work-related stress



Step 5

Guided mindfulness meditation to nurture the sense of connectedness both inside and outside of individuals

Step 1: Guided Mindfulness Breathing

1. Mindfulness exercise

- Go to your “personal space hub” to get prepared for the coming meditation. As explained, this “personal space hub” could be a comfortable corner of your home, a re-arranged working table, a token (stone, candle etc.) that reminds you to devote time and space for your wellbeing.



- This time, the meditation will be attentive to our bodily states. (You may refer to the mindfulness audio recording with the QR code)

- Just a gentle reminder:

Whatever you experienced during the meditation - whether you consider them as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral – you don't need to hold on your mind to further analyse! Let them go! Stay with the presence!

Now you are ready to engage with the rest of the chapter!

Step 2: Exploration of Daily Work Scenario

2.1 Work scenario

Where is my place in school?

- Dennis, Mr. Lee, is newly hired by a secondary school principal as a teacher. The school principal, Mrs. Liu is also quite new in this school. It is only her second year as a principal here. However, Mrs. Liu wishes to reform the school. At the end of the first year, Dennis has already felt exhausted. The majority of the teachers in the school feel resentful about the reform introduced and they perceive Dennis as on the side with the principal, as he is hired by her. Indeed, Principal Liu gives many opportunities to Dennis and trusts him. However, Dennis feels isolated from the rest of his colleagues. Together with the fact that the characteristics of the students in the school are quite different from those in his previously served school; it makes Dennis feel a larger gap with his current students.

- Every day he feels heavy stepping into the school ground and at the end of each day, Dennis feels exhausted and unhappy. He feels pressured by Mrs. Liu's high expectations, feeling marginalized by his colleagues. At the same time, Dennis feels less confident with his students and his work.
- Lately, in response to some reforms raised by the principal, the teachers have decided to boycott organizing the coming sport day event. They ask if Dennis, Mr. Lee, would join them. Dennis has his own standing on the reform, sometimes more aligned with Principal Liu; while sometimes more agreed with the rest of his colleagues. He feels stuck.

Instead of thinking whether Miss Ng is right or wrong or thinking about how she should deal with the situation, let us take Mr. Lee's perspective and understand her struggles more deeply by asking two questions:

<p>1. How might Mr. Lee feel about his sense of belonging at work?</p>	<p>2. What might have passed his mind in dealing with the conflict ?</p>
<p>He might have felt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torn • Angry • Anxious • Insecure, • Confuse • Very stressed • Exhausted • Isolated • Lonely ... • (please fill in more possibilities freely) 	<p>He might have thought:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To a certain degree, reform is necessary. • The principal is the one who offered me this job; how could I ally with others and go against her! • I am disliked by my colleagues and feeling like an outcast. • I am not the principal's pet! I also feel that the principal is going too fast with her reform. • I don't know where I stand in this school. • Why am I between the two parties? I am only here to be a teacher? • Worse is that even students here are not close to me! • Why am I here? But, I need the job! <p>(please fill in more possibilities freely)</p>

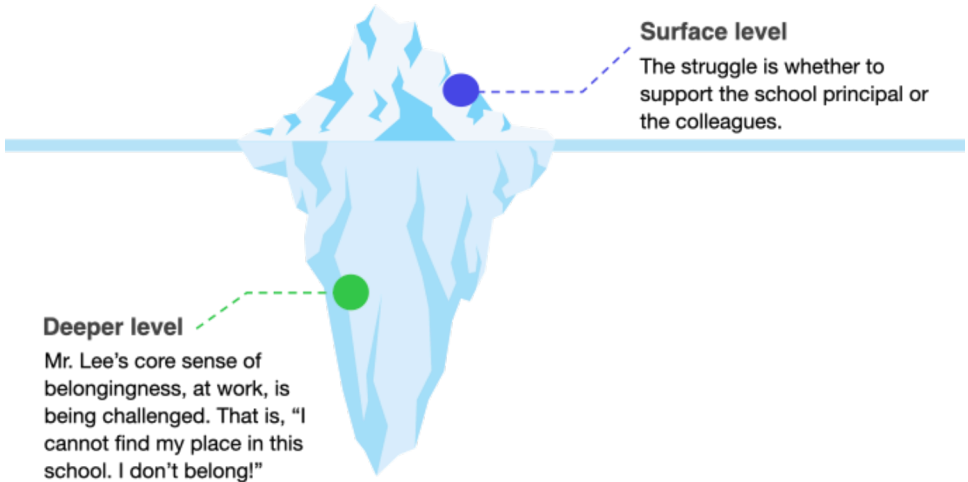
2.2 Self-exploration: Your struggles in workplace

Have you been confronted with work situations that are similar to Mr. Lee's?

Similar scenario	What was your feeling?	What thoughts passed through your mind?

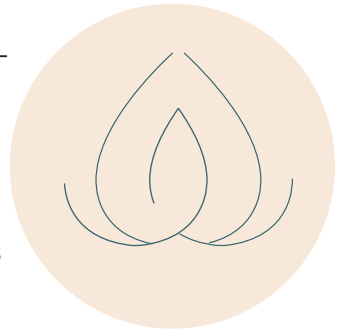
2.3 Inner struggles and belongingness

In the scenario, Mr. Lee might experience difficulties and struggles when facing political pressure from the higher management and his colleagues. Mr. Lee's situation points to something deeper than not knowing how to deal with the political siding at work. It points to some inner struggles.



The deeper struggle points to his sense of work-relatedness or belongingness, which is:

- An individual teacher's feeling of being accepted and respected as valuable member in the work setting
- This domain is very influential to wellbeing as well as to work performances.



Some noteworthy highlights about belongingness, in general:

- Relatedness or belongingness matters, it is one of the five core existential concerns of human beings.
- Isolation is the subjective experience resulting from not able to relate socially or feeling belonged. At worse, isolation could cause wide range of destructive emotions and a sense of self-doubt in worthiness, which undermines wellbeing.
- The development of a sense of belongingness involves:
 - (a) identifying the shared values and goals in a community,
 - (b) as an individual, knowing what you can contribute and at the same time, knowing your limitations,
 - (c) as a member, being able to set aside one's own opinions in order to appreciate other members' perspectives.
- Enhancing belongingness can promote one's work performance as well as wellbeing.
- Note that, although school ethos and higher management matters to belongingness, individual teachers can enhance his/her own sense of belongingness in his/her profession journey.



2.4 3-min Breathing Break:

In the coming 3 minutes, let go of everything and focus your attention on your breathing. (You may refer to the audio recording with the QR code)



Step 3: Diving into Your Professional Relatedness

3.1 Explore your professional relatedness: What makes you feel related and belong in school?

A. Reflect and give your ratings on the below statements with regard to your work in general:

- 1 Very Disagree 2 Disagree
3 Neutral 4 Agree
5 Very Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Every morning, I feel happy to step into the school.					
I feel I am a valuable member and am positively contributing to the school.					
I feel like I am part of the school.					
We have our own vision and we work together to make the school a better place for our students.					
Although we do not always agree with one another and although students are diverse in their needs, there exists a sense of harmony amongst us.					
We listen to one another and we voice out to one another, because we have trust.					
I feel welcomed in school.					
It is not just me! It is everybody working together to make what the school looks like today.					
When things are tough on the frontline, I have my teammates to support me.					
In work, I can often compromise without losing myself.					

** In general, the above statements try to tap into the five domains of social wellbeing (Keyes, 1998). These five domains include social contribution, social coherence, social actualization, social acceptance, and social integration.

- The higher scores of the above, indicate a better established sense of work-relatedness. Notice those items that you are scoring relatively high, those are the aspects of work that give you a stronger sense of relatedness.
- In contrast, items that you are scoring relatively low, are aspects of work that you wish to focus on enhancing your sense of relatedness. Perhaps you can even match your ratings of the above items with the five domains of social wellbeing in order to explore which social domains warrant further nurturing.

B. Reflect and give your ratings on the below statements with regard to your **relatedness with your students**:

1 Very Disagree 2 Disagree
 3 Neutral 4 Agree
 5 Very Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Every morning, I look forward to seeing my students in class.					
I can sense my students' trust and respect.					
In class, I feel like one with my students.					
We have our own class rules as well as learning objectives, we work together to improve the learning atmosphere.					
There are all kinds of conflicts and difficulties in class, I and my students would bring them up and talk with honesty.					
I talk to my students and listen to them. We trust one another.					
I feel welcomed in the classroom.					
I can be honest and genuine with my students.					
My students come to seek my guidance when they face different kinds of problems.					
When I feel low, interacting with my students boosts up my work morale.					

Teachers' sense of relatedness with their students contributes a big part of teachers' belongingness to work.

- The higher scores of the above indicate a better relatedness to your students. Notice those items that you are scoring relatively high, those are the aspects with students that give you a stronger sense of relatedness.
- In contrast, items that you are scoring relatively low, are aspects with students that you wish to focus on enhancing.

C. Reflect and give your ratings on the below statements with regard to your relatedness with your colleagues:

- 1 Very Disagree 2 Disagree
 3 Neutral 4 Agree
 5 Very Agree

	1	2	3	4	5
Every morning, I feel happy to go into the staff room and greet my colleagues					
I feel I am a valuable member and am positively contributing to my colleagues at work.					
I feel like I am part of the team with my colleagues.					
In our department as well as in forming of various working groups, I and my colleagues work together to make the school a better place.					
Although we do not always agree with one another, there remains a sense of harmony amongst the colleagues.					
I and my colleagues, we listen to one another and we voice out to one another, in order to improve our work.					
I feel trusted and respected by my colleagues.					
I and my colleagues are proud of how we have contributed together for the school.					
When things are tough on the frontline, my colleagues are supportive.					
I can express my opinions and at the same time integrate my colleagues' perspectives in the process of working together.					

Working well with colleagues and feeling a sense of cohesion is an art. The sense of relatedness with colleagues is also crucial to your belongingness in work.

- The higher scores of the above indicate a better established sense of work-relatedness with your colleagues. Notice those items that you are scoring relatively high, those are the aspects with colleagues that give you a stronger sense of relatedness.
- In contrast, items that you are scoring relatively low, are aspects with colleagues that you wish to focus on enhancing. You can also do a similar scoring with respect to your relatedness to your supervisors.

Overall speaking, you score highest on your relatedness with students / colleagues / supervisors?

Can you reflect on how you contribute to establishing such strong sense of relatedness in this area?

You score the lowest on your relatedness with students / colleagues / supervisors? What are your challenges?

- Being aware of your work-relatedness with various stakeholders, allows you to identify what kinds of meaningful social relationships bring you joy and strength via a sense of belongingness.
- At the same time, being aware of your work-relatedness with various stakeholders also allows you to improve your belongingness with specific type of stakeholders.



3.2 3-min Breathing Break:

In the coming 3 minutes, let go of everything and focus your attention on your breathing. (You may refer to the audio recording with the QR code)



Step 4: More on Relating Work Stress with Belongingness in the Profession

4.1 Dealing with professional belongingness struggles

Referring to the “Where is my place in school?” scenario, Dennis should select work-relatedness with which stakeholder to strengthen first:

1. Work-relatedness with students
 2. Work-relatedness with colleagues
 3. Work-relatedness with the school principal
- Increasing work-relatedness with any stakeholders would potentially enhance Dennis’ sense of belongingness in the new school.
 - To Dennis, perhaps he needs to first improve his relatedness with students or with colleagues. Let’s say he chooses to improve relatedness with colleagues as first priority. Because this should significantly reduce Dennis’ confrontation with the existential threat of isolation. In this case, Dennis could try to self-explore the following:

- To Dennis, perhaps either he needs to first improve his relatedness with students or with colleagues. Let's say he chooses to improve relatedness with colleagues as first priority. Because this should significantly reduce Dennis' confrontation with the existential threat of isolation. In this case, Dennis could try to self-explore the following:

	Explanations	Examples	Benefits
a. Identifying the shared values and goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the key aspect to seek for common ground is shared values and goals; because this could washdown the apparent disagreements that caused individuals to group themselves into oppositional forces. • From working towards and arriving at consensus on shared goals, shared purposes would begin to develop and become evident. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible shared goals: Dennis can try focusing on the interests of the students; focusing on collaboration and problem-solving within the profession; • Possible shared values: Dennis and other colleagues may all wish to improve marks of students; include special needs students in class; enhance students' engagement in school etc. 	Promote social contribution and social acceptance
b. Knowing what you can contribute and at the same time, knowing your limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This insight allows an individual to grow within a team. • This insight also allows an individual to know his/her unique place in a team. • This insight allows an individual to curb his/her insistence on personal opinions and to welcome other team members to carry over. 	Dennis may find himself very apt at using IT to support co-planning of L&T while he may find himself not as apt in dealing students' emotional-behavioural issues.	Useful for promoting social coherence and social actualization

	Explanations	Examples	Benefits
c. Able to set aside one's own opinions in order to appreciate other members' perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This could only be achieved when an individual is willing to develop a sense of flexibility towards his/her own opinions and beliefs. • Note that there should be a balance between the ability to appreciate others' perspective and the confidence to express your own perspective, even when your perspective is not a popular one. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dennis may believe in strengthening parental involvement to help support students while others may advocate that increase in parental involvement means less autonomy and more accountability for teachers. • Dennis listens and marvels at their insights while still speaking out of how he thinks parental involvement could be beneficial. However, Dennis does not insist on more parental involvement; he respects the collective consent. 	Promote social integration

Any other suggestions, you would like to contribute:

4.2 Self exploration: Your professional belongingness struggles

Looking back to the work situation you have written down that looks similar to Mr. Lee's,

- Does the situation relate to your personal sense of work-relatedness being challenged?
- Are there more daily work stress situations that place a sense of work-relatedness in doubt?

Being aware of how the sense of work-relatedness is contributing to stress will enable you:

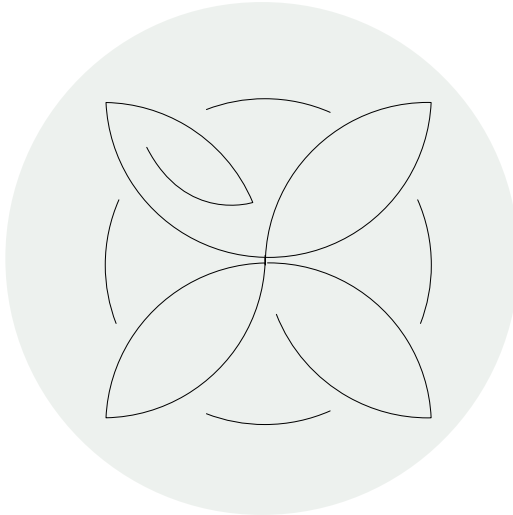
- To pay attention to the importance of your social wellbeing at work
- To go beyond the apparent conflicts among different stakeholders or among staff members to search for common grounds that bring us together in the profession
- To flourish in your daily work as well as to establish a buffer against challenges as you develop your professional self

Rather than feeling exhausted and isolated when being dragged into work politics; by exploring your belongingness with different stakeholders, you can further develop a clarity of where you stand within the larger profession. This development does not only enhance belongingness; it also nurtures identities, autonomy and meaning-making in your professional development.

Step 5: Guided Mindfulness Meditation on Relatedness/ Belongingness:



Experiencing professional belongingness struggles could make us feel isolated and unsupported. Meditation is regarded to be a good way to enhance our inner peace and self-understanding. Let's try the following mindfulness practice to nurture the sense of connectedness both inside and outside of individuals. (You may refer to the mindfulness audio recording with the QR code)



Chapter 5

The fourth self-discovery journey: Meaning-making in your daily professional lives and stress

Checking in

Welcome to the self-discovery chapter about **meaning-making** in your daily profession. In this chapter, we would guide you step-by-step to experience the following:



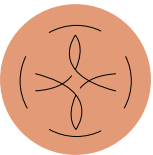
Step 1

A guided mindful breathing exercise to pull our mind back to the present moment. As our consciousness of the here-and-now strengthened, we would experience a stronger sense of fulfilment and meaningfulness in our daily existence.



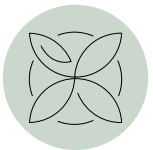
Step 2

Exploration of daily work scenarios that might challenge teachers' work-related sense of personal meaningfulness.



Step 3

Activities that help individual teachers to better understanding of what his/her work-means to each individual.



Step 4

Activities that help individual teachers' ability to become aware of the influences of meaning-making on work-related stress



Step 5

Guided mindfulness meditation to experience the expansion of meaningfulness beyond belief and value systems

Step 1: Guided Mindfulness Breathing

1. Mindfulness exercise

- If you can feel your body is particularly tense and your mind raising with pre-occupied thoughts and negative feelings, you are encouraged to conduct a guided body scan meditation available in Chapter 6.



- If your mind is relatively settled and your body is not particularly tense, you are encouraged to engage in the guided mindfulness breathing exercise (You may refer to the mindfulness audio recording with QR code).

- A gentle reminder:

Whatever you experienced during the meditation - whether you consider them as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral – please do not hold on your mind to further analyse! Let them go! Stay with the presence!

Now you are ready to engage with the rest of the chapter!

Step 2: Exploration of Daily Work Scenario

2.1 Work scenario

What am I missing in work?

- Carrie, Miss Leung is a kindergarten teacher, she is now teaching K3. As compared to lower levels, K3 kids have increasingly more homework to finish. As well, K3 teachers have to prepare kids for the graduation ceremony at the end of the year. Miss Leung realized that the homework support, parents' day as well as the graduation ceremony preparation take up a lot of class time. To the point that Carrie feels that the above duties are consuming over 60% of her time and mental resources in work.
- In addition, as the competition to survive becomes stronger among kindergartens, she finds herself unable to spend time supporting her students' emotional, social and physical development, which she finds most meaningful and fulfilling for her as a teacher. Instead, Carrie is spending an increasing amount of time and energy to engage in activities that could help the kindergarten to survive. To the point that Carrie feels decline in satisfaction with the meaningfulness of her daily involvement as a teacher. Lately, she feels exhausted, stressed and less enthusiastic in work.

Instead of focusing whether Miss Leung is right or wrong or thinking about how she should deal with the situation, let us first gain a deeper understanding of her stress by asking the following two questions:

<p>1. How might Miss Leung feel about her self-worthiness and meaningfulness in work?</p>	<p>2. What might Miss Leung think about her work allocation?</p>
<p>She might have felt:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less motivated • zestless • stress • helpless ... <p>(please fill in more possibilities freely)</p>	<p>She might have thought:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why spend so much time and effort on a graduation? My kids have to rehearse every day and miss their physical education lesson! • I'd rather spend time interacting with each of my students. But I am so exhausted already with preparing for parent's day and with guiding my students to finish their homework. • The parent's day and the graduation's day are both very successful, meaning that we have to keep them up next year! However, I do not share the sense of achievement with such success! <p>(please fill in more possibilities freely)</p>

2.2 Self-exploration: Your struggles in workplace

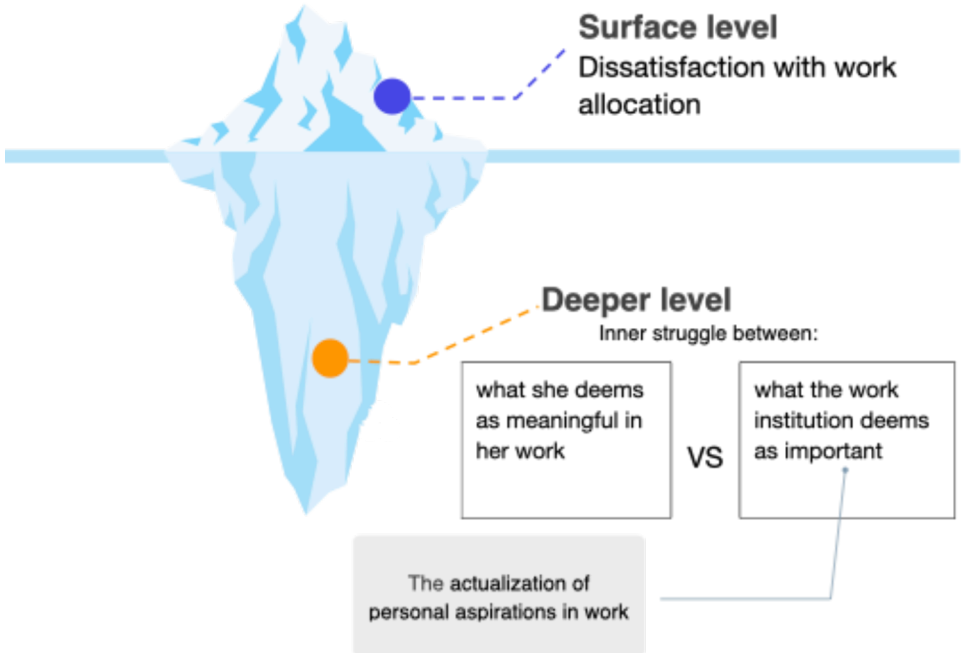
Have you been confronted with work situations that are similar to Miss Leung's, which challenge your sense of meaningfulness?

Similar Scenario	What was your feeling?	What thoughts passed through your mind?

2.3 Inner struggles and meaningfulness

Miss Leung's scenario is a signpost to something deeper than a dissatisfaction with work allocation:

It's alluding to the inner struggle: between what she deems as meaningful in her work and what the work institution deems as important—the actualization of personal aspirations in work.



- As individuals, we all have integrated specific belief-systems into our being. Subconsciously, these belief-systems would be called upon to make value judgement on what makes life meaningful for us.
- In the work domain, which occupies a large proportion of our lives, such psychological process is also at work to help us create personal meanings of our jobs. And we are, by enlarge, unaware of the working of such psychological processes.

Some noteworthy highlights about the meaning-making process, in general:

- Meaning matters, it is one of the five core existential concerns of human being
- When we are engaging in something that we deem as “meaningful”, we are more likely to be highly motivated, productive, experiencing positive emotions such as satisfaction, interest etc. As well, we are likely to have enhanced our wellbeing.
- Sense of meaning is closely related to our sense of purpose and self-worthiness; in specific to the teaching profession, the sense of purpose and self-worthiness of your existence in the profession becomes the platform for your work-related meaning-making process.
- A better understanding of your sense of purpose and your sense of worthiness in the teaching profession can help you to gain awareness of what makes your work meaningful to you.
- Gaining awareness of what work means to us can help us to (a) give a voice to our own values and (b) harmonize shared meaning-making in workplace
- Note that meaning-making is not a rigid, all-or-none, unchangeable process. The more conscious we are about this process, the more flexibility and ownership we have in negotiating our personal meaningfulness with others.



2.4 3-min Breathing Break:

In the coming 3 minutes, let go of everything and focus your attention on your breathing. (You may refer to the audio recording with QR code



Step 3: Diving into Your Professional Meaningfulness

3.1 Explore your meaningfulness in work: What makes being a teacher meaningful to me?

List out the 6 main domains of duties in work and rank order these items according to the **time and mental resources** you are spending on each:

Rank order according to allocation of time and mental resources		Main work-related domains
e.g. School-related internal and external events	e.g. 1	
e.g. Lesson preparation and development of new learning resources	e.g. 5	
e.g. Supporting students' extra-curricular activities		
e.g. Parental involvement		
e.g. Administrative work		
e.g. Teaching and being with students		

Revisit each of these 6 domains, rank order them according to the amount of meaningfulness and fulfilment that you get from each of these activities:

Rank order according to allocation of time and mental resources	Main work-related domains	Rank order according to meaningfulness to you	Gap
	e.g. School-related internal and external events		
	e.g. Lesson preparation and development of new learning resources		

Rank order according to allocation of time and mental resources	Main work-related domains	Rank order according to meaningfulness to you	Gap
	e.g. Supporting students' extra-curricular activities		
	e.g. Parental involvement		
	e.g. Administrative work		
	e.g. Teaching and being with students		

Are there big gaps in the rank ordering of work-related domains according to “time and mental resources” versus according to “personal meaningfulness”?

3.2 Self-exploration: Your core professional meaningfulness

In order to close these gaps, we have to examine why some domains are more meaningful to you than others...

Identify the top 3 most meaningful and fulfilling work-related domains and complete the following table:

Top 3 most meaningful work-related domains	How does each domain contribute to your sense of mastery in work? Why?	How does each domain contribute to your sense of autonomy? Why?	How does each domain contribute to your sense of purpose? Why?	How does each domain contribute to your sense of self-worthiness? Why?
e.g. Teaching and being with students				

Identify the top 3 most time and mentally consuming work-related domains and complete the following table:

Top 3 most time and mentally consuming work-related domains	How does each domain contribute to your sense of mastery in work? Why?	How does each domain contribute to your sense of belongingness? Why?	How does each domain contribute to your sense of autonomy? Why?	How does each domain contribute to your sense of purpose? Why?
e.g. School-related internal and external events				

From the above 2 tables, you can gain an overall picture of how your sense of meaningfulness varies across work-related domains. What do you think of this variation?	
From the above 2 tables, which element(s) (mastery, belongingness, autonomy and purposes) are crucially influential to your meaning-making process in work?	

Being aware of what makes your work meaningful can help you to make smart choices in your daily work. For example, if you realize that the sense of purpose and the sense of belongingness are crucial to your meaning-making in work, then you will naturally try to enhance such elements in your work style.

Especially in domains that really consume your time and mental resources, it is most beneficial to try to nurture the elements that support the sense of meaningfulness in your work.



3.3 3-min Breathing Break:

In the coming 3 minutes, let go of everything and focus your attention on your breathing. (You may refer to the audio recording with QR code)



Step 4: More on Relating Work Stress with Meaningfulness in the Profession

4.1 Dealing with meaningfulness struggles in workplace

Referring to the “What am I missing in work?” scenario, we can try to identify the major work-related domains that are consuming Miss Leung’s time and resources:

- a. Graduation
 - b. Parent’s day and other related activities
 - c. Helping with homework
 - d. Lesson preparation
 - e. Interacting with her students
- To Miss Leung, perhaps being with students and teaching them are most meaningful in her work. The element of belongingness and purpose of educating the youngsters are core to her meaning-making process in work.
 - What Miss Leung found most fulfilling – interacting with students – has become the lowest priority in terms of job allocation (big gap).
 - While the top rank in job allocation priority – graduation – is ranked as not so fulfilling in meaningfulness to Miss Leung (big gap).

	Meaningfulness in job	Job allocation
Priority	(high priority) interacting with students	(high priority) graduation

	(low priority) graduation	(low priority) interacting with students

The big gaps are the stress zone for Miss Leung:

Identified Gaps in Domains	Sense of mastery in work? Why?	Sense of belongingness? Why?	Sense of autonomy? Why?	Sense of purpose? Why?	Sense of self-worthiness? Why?
Interacting with students					
Graduation					

4.2 Generating solutions

After gaining insights into Miss Leung's challenged job-related sense of meaningfulness in the exercise, we could provide advice to her:

- Miss Leung may make use of the graduation ceremony preparation to enhance the belongingness with her students. Rather than trying to aim at practicing good dance steps among students, she could use such practices as means to develop her students' emotional and social competence. This may serve to achieve the purpose of educating her students as well as increasing the sense of belongingness between teacher-and-students, which are the two main elements that contribute to work meaningfulness to Miss Leung.

- Focus on enhancing the sense of belongingness and sense of purpose in any domain of her daily work.

Any other suggestions, you would like to contribute:

4.3 Self-exploration: Your professional meaningfulness struggles

Looking back to the work situation you have written down that looks similar to Miss Leung's,

- Does the situation relate to your personal sense of meaningfulness being challenged?
- Are there more daily work stress situations that place a sense of meaningfulness in doubt?

Being aware of how the meaning-making process is related to your work-related stress will enable you:

- To adjust your sense of purposes etc. to enhance the sense of meaningfulness in your daily work
- To make decisions with a clear orientation to make your job meaningful and interesting to you (this is found to enhance work performances and wellbeing)
- To become aware of what your Job means to you, also allow an increase respect for others' needs in search of meaning in their profession

Rather than feeling pressed by top management or feeling that the monthly salary is the main relief to work stress, the self-discovery on “what makes my job meaningful” would lead to lowering of stress and enhancing wellbeing.

Step 5: Guided Mindfulness Meditation on Meaningfulness



Step 5: Guided Mindfulness Meditation on Meaningfulness

Experiencing professional meaningfulness struggles could reduce our job satisfaction and lead to burnout in the long term. Meditation is supported to be a good way to enhance our inner peace and self-understanding. Let's try the following mindfulness practice to experience the expansion of meaningfulness beyond belief and value systems. (You may refer to the mindfulness audio recording with QR code)

Chapter 6

Resources for Teachers

After reading this book, you may be prepared for the new journey – integrating what you have discovered and learned into your everyday affairs of life. We hope to be with you at last, by providing the following resources that could be helpful in your journey ahead.

1. Other Relaxation Exercises

Body Scan Exercise (身體掃描練習)



Diaphragmatic Breathing Exercise
(腹式呼吸法練習)



Progressive Muscle Relaxation Exercise
(漸進式肌肉鬆弛練習)



i

ii

3-min Breathing Break
(when stressed/with strong emotions)
三分鐘呼吸練習 (當感到強烈的壓力/情緒)



2. Well-being Self-test

壓力測試

請回想一下自己在過去一個月內有否出現下述情況：

	從未發生	間中發生	經常發生
1. 覺得手上工作太多，無法應付。	0	1	2
2. 覺得時間不夠要，所以要分秒必爭。例如過馬路時衝紅燈，走路和說話的節奏很快速。	0	1	2
3. 覺得沒有時間消遣，終日記掛著工作。	0	1	2
4. 遇到挫敗時很易會發脾氣。	0	1	2
5. 擔心別人對自己工作表現的評價。	0	1	2
6. 覺得上司和家人都不欣賞自己。	0	1	2
7. 擔心自己的經濟狀況。	0	1	2
8. 有頭痛/胃痛/背痛的毛病，難於治愈。	0	1	2
9. 需要借煙酒、葯物、零食等抑制不安的情緒。	0	1	2
10. 需要借助安眠藥去協助入睡。	0	1	2
11. 與家人/朋友/同事的相處令你發脾氣。	0	1	2
12. 與人傾談時，打斷對方的話題。	0	1	2
13. 上床後覺得思潮起伏，很多事情牽掛，難以入睡。	0	1	2
14. 太多工作，不能每件事做到盡善盡美。	0	1	2
15. 當空閒時輕鬆一下也會覺得內咎。	0	1	2
16. 做事急躁、任性而事後感到內咎。	0	1	2
17. 覺得自己唔應該享樂。	0	1	2

計分方法：將每題分數相加，得出總分

0-10分：精神壓力程度低但可能顯示生活缺乏刺激，比較簡單沉悶，個人做事的動力不高。

11-15分：精神壓力程度中等，雖然某些時候感到壓力較大，仍可應付。

16分或以上：

精神壓力偏高，應反思一下壓力來源和尋求解決辦法。

情緒自評量表

請小心閱讀以下每一個句子，並在其右方選擇一個數字，表示「過往一個星期」如何適用於你。答案並無對錯之分。請不要花太多時間在某一句子上。

	不適用	頗適用，或 間中適用	間中 發生	經常 發生
1. 我覺得很難讓自己安靜下來	0	1	2	3
2. 我感到口乾	0	1	2	3
3. 我好像不能再有任何愉快、舒暢的感覺	0	1	2	3
4. 我感到呼吸困難（例如不是做運動時也感到氣促或透不過氣來）	0	1	2	3
5. 我感到很難自動去開始工作	0	1	2	3
6. 我對事情往往作出過敏反應	0	1	2	3
7. 我感到顫抖（例如手震）	0	1	2	3
8. 我覺得自己消耗很多精神	0	1	2	3
9. 我憂慮一些令自己恐慌或出醜的場合	0	1	2	3
10. 我覺得自己對將來沒有甚麼可盼望	0	1	2	3
11. 我感到忐忑不安	0	1	2	3
12. 我感到很難放鬆自己	0	1	2	3
13. 我感到憂鬱沮喪	0	1	2	3
14. 我無法容忍任何阻礙我繼續工作的事情	0	1	2	3
15. 我感到快要恐慌了	0	1	2	3
16. 我對任何事也不能熱衷	0	1	2	3
17. 我覺得自己不怎麼配做人	0	1	2	3
18. 我發覺自己很容易被觸怒	0	1	2	3
19. 我察覺自己在沒有明顯的體力勞動時，也感到心律不正常	0	1	2	3
20. 我無緣無故地感到害怕	0	1	2	3
21. 我感到生命毫無意義	0	1	2	3

計分方法：

抑鬱總分： 第 3,5,10,13,16,17,21題分數總和

焦慮總分： 第 2,4,7,9,15,19,20題分數總和

壓力總分： 第 1,6,8,11,12,14,18題分數總和

情緒健康程度

類別	抑鬱	焦慮	壓力
正常	0-4	0-3	0-7
輕度	5-6	4-5	8-9
中度	7-10	6-7	10-12
嚴重	11-13	8-9	13-16
非常嚴重	14或以上	10或以上	17或以上

3. Well-being Tips

Our website for teachers' well-being



疫流停課．不停「愛」- 心理教育短片系列



Tips on being joyful for Adults



Tips for teachers' wellbeing website



4. Useful books for teachers well-being

Supporting Teacher Wellbeing: A Practical Guide for Primary Teachers and School Leaders



A Little Guide for Teachers: Teacher Wellbeing and Self-care



5. A teacher's sharing about her burnout



Chapter 7

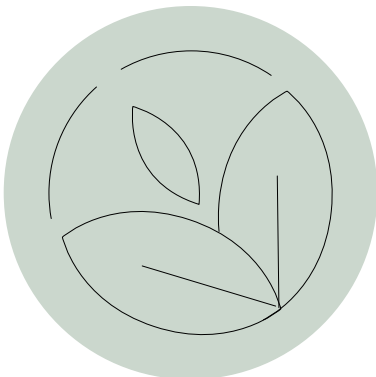
Conclusive Remarks

Dear Readers,

If you are reading this passage, I would assume that you have engaged yourself with the self-discovery journey provided by this booklet. Thank you for making such continuous effort to practice mindfulness and to discover your potential psychological resources.

With this booklet, you have explored core aspects of yourself as being a member of the teaching profession. These include your professional identities, your attribution of meaningfulness in the profession, your sense of work-related autonomy and your sense of belongingness in your work setting.

Thanks to this internet era, countless tools and perspectives are readily available for promoting your wellbeing. The key is integration! For example, with professional identities, our exploration is heading towards integrating the different hats we are wearing during work and yet remain flexible and in cohesion with who we are! Towards such an exploration of self-integration, the most crucial integration is between what is going on outside and what is going on inside us. For that, we need to find ways back to know ourselves. To this end, in concluding this booklet, I am celebrating the beginning of your self-discovery journey.



No matter what you see in your secret garden, see them with freshness and wonder in your eyes! You will find the true beauty of mud and dry reeves.

About the Authors



Dr. Ly Sau Ting



Dr. Susanna Yeung



Ms. Jeslyn Chan



Mr. William Lam

The project team under the Department of Psychology at the Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK) has worked on research projects promoting positive psychology in educational settings. The first author, Ann Ly, is a guest lecturer in the Department of Psychology and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at EdUHK. She is also an experienced mindfulness practitioner with research expertise in teachers' well-being. The project leader, Susanna Yeung, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at EdUHK who has been conducting intervention research and studies related to teacher development. The project team member, Jeslyn Chan, has a solid foundation in psychology and counselling with academic and practical experience. William Lam, the project team member, possesses a strong background in psychology and social work, plus an extensive understanding of the latest research and development in mental health. Underpinned by the research evidence and professional practical experience, the project team develops materials and offers resources with an aim to foster teachers' self-care, well-being and resilience development. Through professional seminars, taster workshops, establishing website and publicizing the developed materials, the project team disseminates research findings and resources that support the flourishing of teachers' personal and professional development.