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Developing the Person in the Professional

Building the capacity of teachers for improved student learning: the missing basket – personal learning

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Introduction

If you travelled to Manunui School, Taumarunui, New Zealand in the centre of the North Island, where Lesley is principal, you would arrive at an impressive, carved entranceway through which you would have to walk to reach the school. However, it is likely that you would first stop to admire the carvings and wonder what they mean. On the vertical stands you would see what look like three squares of weaving. These represent the three woven flax baskets of knowledge that, Maori legend states, existed before mankind. Tane, the progenitor of mankind, of the forests and all creation, ascended to the upper realm and there obtained from Io, God-the–parentless, the three kete (baskets) of knowledge. Tane returned with the knowledge, placed them in a whare kura (school of learning) which he had prepared in advance and there created human kind from the earth. The three baskets represented the knowledge around us, the knowledge beyond what we see and experience, and the knowledge of spiritual realities.

The metaphors of the three baskets of knowledge provide a framework, not unlike others, within which the discussion of teacher development may exist. Our argument in this paper is that just as the development of students cannot just include knowledge of the world around them that can be experienced through their senses (the first basket of knowledge), neither can the development of teachers. Education would need to include the second and third baskets of knowledge to engage a holistic approach to teachers' and students' development.

Teacher development and subsequent changes in pedagogy are complex processes. This research report focuses on the literature and perspectives of theorists, researchers and educational leaders, as they explore the problematic nature of teacher change.

Theoretical perspectives

Hattie (2002) suggests that excellent teaching is the single most powerful influence on achievement. Therefore, if we wish to improve the achievement of all students, then we must improve the quality of the teaching they receive. In spite of improvements in achievement in both New Zealand (Hattie, 2002) and England (Fullan, 2003), there are still marked disparities in student achievement between those from more advantaged backgrounds and those from disadvantaged backgrounds or between those from majority cultures and those from ethnic minorities. In New Zealand, in spite of many initiatives to lift Maori student achievement over the last decade, our bottom 20 per cent, which largely consists of Maori and Pacific Island students, is getting further behind the other OECD countries, rather than making gains. Fullan (2003) states unequivocally that improvements in achievement mean little unless the gap between the disadvantaged and advantaged in our school systems is reduced. Hattie (2002) is equally unequivocal when he says, “Therefore, the focus is to have a powerful effect on achievement, and this is where excellent teachers come to the fore – as such excellent teaching is the single most powerful influence on achievement” (p.8). If we are to improve the achievement of all students, but more specifically those students who are struggling or failing in our systems, then we must improve the quality of the teaching they receive. A huge body of research exists on successful teachers and successful schools. Numerous
lists of attributes have been developed and presented as a result of this research. Hattie’s (2002) research on expert teachers synthesises the results of over 500,000 studies, for example. However, while it is useful to know what successful teachers/schools look like, the burning question which remains largely unanswered is – how do we move teachers on to excellence in teaching?

Andy Hargreaves (1994) stated, “We are beginning to recognise that, for teachers, what goes on inside the classrooms is closely related to what goes on outside it. The quality, range and flexibility of teachers’ classroom work is closely tied up with their professional growth – with the way that they develop as people and as professionals” (p. ix). The ways teachers teach are grounded in their backgrounds and their biographies. Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross and Smith (1994) suggested that we need to be “reflecting upon, continually clarifying, and improving” our “internal pictures of the world, and seeing how they shape our actions and decisions” (p. 6). Hargreaves and Fullan (1992, p. 7) stated:

Teacher development…involves more than changing teachers’ behaviour. It also involves changing the person the teacher is…Acknowledging that teacher development is also a process of personal development marks an important step forward in our improvement efforts.

Two years later, Senge et al., (1994, p. 194) made a similar comment:

The enthusiasm for personal mastery has, in fact, outpaced the development of ideas about how to instil it in organisations. We expect that to change during the next few years, as personal mastery becomes a more respectable subject for learning organisation research.

Over a decade later, it seems worth exploring whether the development of the ‘personal’ for teachers is, in fact, now a respectable subject for educational research and in teacher development programmes and processes.

For this exploration, it became important to clarify and define just what is meant by personal and professional development. There are a number of models that are useful for this consideration. Leithwood (1990), for example, suggested that there are three dimensions of teacher development that school leaders can and should influence: the development of professional expertise; psychological development; and career cycle development. Bell and Gilbert (1996) provided a similar model for the consideration of the inter-relationship between the personal and the professional. They argued that to be effective, teacher professional development should include social, professional and personal development. Like Leithwood (1990), they argued that teacher development programmes must address and support all three aspects of development for change to occur. They found that personal development and social development were intertwined and that frequently it was social development (the dialogue and interchanges with colleagues) that allowed teachers to develop personally. They also found that personal development influenced the pace of professional development and that professional development did not take place without personal and social development. To focus on one dimension alone did not promote the desired learning and development.

Duignan (2004) presents a framework of development in which he focuses on the “formation” of educationalists “as capable people and professionals” (p. 2). He argued
that it is not competence that is important but capability. Stevenson (as cited in Duignan, 2004) defines capability as:

…an all round human quality, an integration of knowledge, skills, personal qualities and understanding used appropriately and effectively – not just in familiar and highly focused specialist contexts but in response to new and changing circumstances. (p. 2, italics in original)

The development of capability is primarily about “expanding people’s capabilities so that they can lead valued and meaningful lives and, in so doing, make a significant difference in the lives of those they touch” (Duignan, 2004, p. 6).

Clearly, each of these models or frameworks recognises the need for teacher development to involve more than just the development of professional expertise. In fact, it seems professional expertise cannot be developed unless personal, psychological and social development take place. Unless there are changes in the beliefs and the social constructions of knowledge that individuals have about teaching and themselves, then teachers will not change what they do.

Personal development

This involves the individual in a process of increasing self-awareness, self-management, self-acceptance and self-responsibility (Bell & Gilbert, 1996; Duignan, 2004; Leithwood, 1990; Senge, 1992). This is, as Waters (1998) said, “a process of change by self of self.” And as Fullan (1991) said, “The starting point for what’s worth fighting for is not system change, not change in others around us, but change in ourselves” (p.59). Personal development recognises that for change to take place, individual beliefs and social constructions of knowledge need to be challenged, renegotiated and reconstructed (Bell & Gilbert, 1996). This includes where the person is in the lifecycle as well as their personal goals, dreams and visions.

Social development

Social development recognises, firstly, that learning is a social activity and takes place through a series of interactions (Nuthall, 2002). Therefore, individual or personal change almost always takes place in a social context and will involve social interaction. This is an acknowledgement that we need each other to grow and develop. Secondly, we all exist in social contexts. Therefore, we need to learn how to be more effective participants in these social contexts (Bell & Gilbert, 1996). It recognises that as we do not live in a vacuum; our actions affect other people and their actions affect us. An aspect of living effectively in social contexts is developing greater awareness of how our actions affect others and the effects that others have on us. Thirdly, it recognises that at the centre of each social context, there is a task or purpose (Timperley & Robinson, 2002). Social development helps us towards understanding and realising that purpose.
Emotional development

Emotional development is an aspect of both the social and personal dimensions above. This dimension recognises that interactions and experiences will produce emotional reactions. There is an increasing amount of literature that states that part of teacher development is recognising and understanding our emotional reactions as well as regulating and managing them effectively (Bell & Gilbert, 1996; Duignan, 2004; Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2002; Tomlinson, 2004) and the use of the term emotional intelligence is common.

Moral/spiritual development

Tomlinson (2004) and Hargreaves (1994) suggested that spiritual development provides a framework within which all the other development must take place. It provides the deep sense of security that allows teachers to face the discomfort of challenging themselves and changing their ways of being (Tomlinson, 2004). This encompasses development away from being governed or regulated by personal preference towards being governed by universal principles (Hargreaves, 1994; Leithwood, 1990).

Conceptual and psychological development

This is the movement from the concrete towards more abstract conceptualisation (Leithwood, 1990). Its development will allow for more creative problem solving as the person considers multiple perspectives and develops more integrated and connected knowledge (Tomlinson, 2004). Leithwood (1990) provides evidence which shows that a large proportion of teachers are at the lowest level of conceptual development using the psychological framework and that teachers typically settle in the middle stages of psychological development. He suggested that is not because teachers lack the innate ability for greater psychological development, but because teacher development programmes and school structures and cultures, “do not acknowledge the interdependence of psychological and professional development” (Leithwood, 1990, p. 159) and, therefore, teachers are not stimulated to develop psychologically.

Professional expertise

This refers to the development of skills and knowledge and understandings directly related to student learning (Bell & Gilbert, 1996; Leithwood, 1990; Tomlinson, 2004). To increase achievement levels for all students, it is argued that expert or excellent teaching, a high level of professional expertise, is required (Hattie, 2002).

Whatever the reason, if high levels of development in the dimensions outlined above are required for the development of expert teachers, and, if expert teaching does have the most profound effect on student learning, then low levels of development in those dimensions may also present a barrier to teacher change and improved student learning. The purpose of this argument is not to suggest that teacher development should be evaluated in terms of invariant stages of psychological development, but to make the point that there is strong evidence to suggest that improving outcomes for, particularly low socio-economic and ethnic minority students, will require high quality teaching. Such teaching, perhaps, requires high levels of development in terms of the dimensions of teacher development as outlined above. Therefore, it would seem to be essential for
teacher development programmes to encompass all the dimensions for personalised, holistic teacher development outlined above.

**Research project and methodology**

To travel together as International Research Associates with the University of Warwick and National College for School Leadership presented itself as an excellent opportunity to further an exploration of teacher development and the capacity of teachers and to begin asking questions about how much recognition there is of the holistic dimensions of teacher development among educational researchers and writers in England and New Zealand as well as (and, perhaps, most importantly), among school leaders and in school practices and processes.

In this research project we collected data from six school leaders and six educational researchers in England and, to add to the richness of the picture, a similar number of educational researchers and school leaders in New Zealand were interviewed and asked the same questions. These research participants were largely recruited through their involvement in a variety of professional development programmes or projects with the researchers. Thus it needs to made clear from the outset that as the research participant group was not chosen to be representative of school leaders and educational researchers and writers in general, the findings of this research project cannot be generalised across all schools in England or in New Zealand, but rather is intended to provide a picture only of what we found within the research participant group that we gathered data from to continue discussion about teacher development.

The research methodology employed qualitative research methods such as semi-structured interviews as conversations, general discussion meetings and focus group interviews. Each research participant was involved in one only of the above. Thus, for research participants, their involvement in the research project was limited to only one interview or discussion. The data gathering took place in England in May/June 2004 and in New Zealand in July and August of the same year. The data were analysed for themes and coded. As much of the data provided by school leaders was in the form of stories about teacher change, narrative analysis has also been employed and some of these narratives presented in this paper in their entirety. The purpose is that readers may find resonance with their own experiences as they reflect on the stories. Where there is dissonance, the reader may take the experiences provided here and add their own varied experiences and create a new understanding for both situations. In this way, the research findings will not be contained by and confined to the pages of this paper, but will grow and develop in the minds of the reader. Further, it needs to be noted that the researchers have frequently chosen to use the research participants’ words in preference to their own.

Thus far, an argument has been put forward from educational literature that, for significant teacher change to take place, teacher development needs to be directed towards developing the whole person. That is, it needs to take into account the multiple dimensions of social, personal, emotional, moral/spiritual, conceptual/psychological...
development as well as the development of professional expertise. Therefore, this research project asks the question: what are the understandings around teacher change among school leaders and educational researchers in England and New Zealand?

**Research findings**

We began our research asking questions around the building of capacity of teachers and about the relationship between personal and professional development. It quickly became clear that this question was problematic. While the educational researchers were largely able to respond to the question, it became clear early on that few school leaders had not considered the development of teachers and leaders in terms of ‘personal’ and ‘professional’. This may have been more a matter of terminology that a lack of understanding or consideration of the concept. Therefore, in interviewing school leaders it became clear early on that it was necessary to try to gather information about the multiple dimensions of teacher development through a different pathway. Hence we began to ask the school leaders about times when a teacher or teachers or the school went through a significant change period and we began to explore that. This question opened the floodgates, as it were, and the school leaders told us a number of very interesting stories about change within their schools. These stories revealed that while there was some significant lack of recognition of the personal aspects of the multiple dimensions of teachers’ development, there was also much more recognition than initial questioning suggested. The educational researchers, when interviewed, were more forthcoming with their perspectives around personal/professional development.

A New Zealand school principal was adamant that professional and personal development are inseparable, “You can’t grow professionally…unless you have commensurate growth in the personal sense.” He commented that he works to find a balance in his life in which the process of becoming enriched as a person also meshes with his professional responsibilities and the growth needed to fulfil those. Another New Zealand school leader said, “What has happened through my professional development …has really had a big effect on my personal journey.” But she also acknowledged that a significant personal happening in her life, her mother dying, had a profound effect on her professional journey. Most school leaders did not articulate the relationship between professional and personal development as overtly as this. However, through the stories they told of their own journeys’ or of the change (or failure to change) experienced by their teachers, they acknowledged this relationship tacitly.

**Personal dimension**

*Points in life cycle:* School leaders displayed a strong recognition of the importance to teachers and their practice of where they are in their life cycles and of the particular issues those teachers are facing at that particular time in their lives. The teacher with curriculum responsibilities, for example, who had recently had a baby and was no longer able to put in the time needed to do the job:

There is a little bit of discontent at the moment within the school because she has got a new family, and not only can she not, she doesn’t want to, and I fully understand this,
commit herself as much as she could in the past. She is an absolutely fine teacher… it is with the other stuff [curriculum responsibilities], she hasn’t got the time and she wants to get home to her baby and I understand that, of course that’s fine, but I am going to have to have a conversation with her ….she needs to drop another point.

Mentioned most frequently in the interviews were those teachers in their late forties and fifties – those nearing retirement who are struggling and in need of improvement in their practice – advanced in years of service and age.

Teachers can get stuck in a rut just like anybody else can. I know we like to think in education that teaching is more than just a job but I think that if people have been in a school for quite a long amount of time or have been teaching a particular year group for quite a long time, it is easy for people to become less motivated and less sort of involved. They seem to just go through the processes more.

Leaders attempted to deal with these teachers who were underperforming as a result of their time of life using several strategies. One such strategy is exemplified in the following statement by a school leader:

I would try and move the person out of the classroom and into a useful position but not as a teacher. They would be counselled into another job.

Many schools are not large enough or well enough resourced for this to happen, therefore, they might negotiate with the teacher to relinquish their management responsibilities and just focus on teaching. The following describes a successful attempt:

The teacher came into the meeting saying, “I am really tired. I used to think I was a good teacher and now I don’t think I’m a good teacher anymore and I don’t think I’m doing a good job and I don’t know what I can do about it.” We talked and negotiated. And she decided the bit of the job that she enjoyed was classroom teaching and what she hated was being in charge of the English. Because she felt she couldn't motivate people. She didn’t feel organised. She didn’t want to run staff training. She didn’t want to do lots of data collection and statistical work. She wanted to teach. So we said, “Well why don’t you give that up?” And she sort of said that she didn’t realise you could. She asked, “What go back to a being a class teacher?” I said, “Yes. Give up all your points…lose the money but go back to being a classroom teacher.” And she said, “Yes! That’s what I would really like to do!”

Leaders spoke with understanding and compassion for these teachers – “They don’t want to take on a new inspirational project because actually they are tired.” Or, “Even those teachers that are not contributing as much as others, they still have huge amount of talent.” School leaders expressed understanding of the fact that there are times in teachers’ life cycles when they are unable to give as much as at others. Further, leaders are clearly committed to trying to work around and through these times. However, these strategies are only useful if the school is in a position to change the job of the person, or the person is in a position to take a pay cut or work fewer days, retire early, or has the mind set or energy to be motivated by a new task. It needs to be noted that in situations
when the needed change does not take place, school leaders become torn between the need to have teachers who are performing and their compassion for where the teacher is at. Several leaders spoke of facilitating early retirements when monitoring and accountability did not work.

One head teacher emphasised on several occasions that he considered it was very important for school leaders to recognise in practical ways that teachers have a life outside of school:

I’m always there and also show a real genuine interest in who they are and what they are. I am interested in their families and I support their families and that's really important….If my teacher's child has an assembly, well I say; “Go to that assembly. Go see your child’s assembly. We’ll manage here. It is really important that you are there for your children.” I have a real passion for people putting their families within the school context. The most important thing is that they value and work for their families. The school comes second. That is really important because if they are happy and fulfilled in their lives outside school; that will come into school and if they are not, I think people bring their baggage with them.

These leaders obviously did not see teachers as professionals only, separate from their families when they are at school. But rather, they recognise the importance of their wider personal life both to the individual and actually to the school itself. They believed that teachers will be happier as teachers when they are fulfilled in their lives outside of school. Further, as Hargreaves (1994) said, they recognised that teachers do bring their private troubles to school with them and therefore it was not useful to attempt to separate the person from the professional.

**Personal visions and goals:** Leithwood (1990) suggested that an important aspect of acknowledging the personal as well as the professional identities of teachers is that teachers have their own goals, plans and visions. He said:

Teachers are not passive recipients of principals’ strategies “to develop them.” Adopting the view of contemporary psychology….teachers actively strive to accomplish implicit or explicit goals they hold to be personally important in their work.

(Leithwood, 1990, p. 155)

To refuse to acknowledge this reality, is to create a situation in which teachers will be forced to make a choice – follow their own vision and work against the direction of the organisation, or suppress their own personal vision and follow the company line, without passion and without satisfaction (Senge et al, 1994).

The situation of the teacher, who gave up her management points just to teach, emphasises another area in which there is strong acknowledgement by school leaders of the whole person. This relates to the matching up of the teacher’s job with their personal vision. School leaders are well aware that teachers will be more satisfied and enthusiastic about their work, when what they are doing links closely with what they would like to be doing. A part of this is the recognition that teachers will work more
enthusiastically towards things that are personally important to them – things they can personally see are important and of value to them as individuals or as teachers.

However, in almost every case there is a limitation on the practical outworking of that acknowledgement – the vision of the school. Leaders will provide their staff with the opportunities to outwork their own personal vision provided it fits in with the overall vision of the school. They are unequivocal about this:

Professional development and performance management had to be closer together. If they couldn’t show me that this would impact on their practice and make them better teachers and make learning better, they didn’t get it. Dead simple!

Two school leaders talked about how they tried to marry up or align what teachers wanted for their own development with what they, as leaders, felt was best for the school development. They said they would try to ensure that over time teachers got what they wanted, but it might mean they had to wait until the next year or a couple of years later. Thus, school leaders do recognise the importance of teachers having a personal stake in what they are doing and feeling personally engaged and satisfied in their jobs. However, most of the participating school leaders also made it clear that school priorities came first.

*Personal skills:* In speaking of underperforming teachers, leaders recognise the importance of personal skills. The following statements school leaders made about underperforming teachers illustrated this:

I mean, if I do an observation, and I come in and say something like that, then it is always someone else’s fault. He thinks I am picking on him.

But also her whole body language and demeanour would be, “The world owes me a living.

This is more than just a person who’s not competent in the classroom. It’s a whole attitude problem.

He actually had no self-awareness.

These statements show some awareness that school leaders believe that a lack of personal skills such as self-awareness, self-responsibility, and self-understanding, are significant reasons for the underperformance of teachers. However, in spite of this, only one school leader actually spoke with clarity about the need to address the psychological or personal development of teachers, to create teacher change. Attempts, through our questioning, to see if school leaders would acknowledge the importance of the personal/psychological development of these teachers, were largely unsuccessful.

The school leader who spoke most explicitly about these skills described, for example, the importance of developing self-worth, self-belief and self-esteem in staff:
I understand people’s worth. If I have a talent, it’s understanding people’s worth and everyone has a worth. Even those teachers who are not contributing as much as others, they still have huge amounts of talent…. I think that once people feel that they are successful, once they understand they are good at what they do...once they understand why they are successful and that they are good, then you have a lot of self-belief and when you have a lot of self-belief you want to do other things. You want to move on.

This school leader also believed that experiencing success and increased self-belief will develop the increased self-awareness which is integral to creating changes in teachers’ belief systems. He went on to say:

Self-awareness. If someone does start to experience some success, and they feel good about that, it might affect their beliefs. Teachers will feel, “I want to be like that, cause I believe that that works. I’ve seen it work. It does work. I believe it works. I believe I can be like that.”

This leader focused most clearly on his own personal growth and development in the interview, as an example of what he was explaining in terms of personal change:

I had to go through a huge change myself, because I came from a school where the behaviours were much different to here. The philosophy was different. Everything was different. I had to learn from these people that these skills are not the same. You have to change yourself. You can’t just think that everyone else is going to change for me. I had to become more of a nurturing teacher….I have become a better teacher since being here and working with these people than where I was before. I can’t recognise myself in actual fact to the person I was three years ago. I’m a much better teacher and human being. And this school has enabled me to grow and teachers have grown.

It was perhaps, the school leaders who had reflected in the most depth about their own personal journeys of development, who also spoke most articulately about the need for the personal development of teachers. Thus it may be that school leaders develop a greater level of understanding about the personal dimensions of teacher development when they have been through significant personal growth themselves and have reflected on the impact it has had on them as educational leaders.

Perhaps not unexpectedly, among educational researchers, there was a far more overt recognition of the need for teacher change to involve the multiple dimensions of a teacher’s development. This was true of both New Zealand and England. One researcher made the following statement in response to my question: Do you see the need for teachers to develop personally or professionally in order to be effective members of learning communities?

I don’t think you can distinguish the two things really. I don’t think you can develop professionally without learning personally because all learning is personal, isn’t it? If you think about teacher change, you’ve got three main areas of teacher change. The first is skills. The second is attitude and the third is behaviour. Now it is pretty easy to change skills because you can train people in IT skills or whatever skills they are. It is more difficult to change attitudes and it is almost impossible to change behaviour. But unless
you change behaviour, you don't change classroom practice. Does that make sense? So if you look at professional development, a lot of the activity will focus on the skills base, rather than on how we change what teachers do in classrooms, because unless that's where the change is, we're not changing anything. We will have cosmetic school improvement and that's not what we want. Teachers will say they are doing it differently when they are doing exactly the same.

Another prolific educational researcher described the relationship between professional and personal learning in a similar way. He suggested that the two are mutually dependent. One cannot exist without the other because you cannot actually make a divide and say for example, “Now I am turning me off as a leader and now I am becoming me as a person.” He suggested that what is important in leadership, for example, is that the person and the professional are authentic. “I don’t think you can be an authentic leader without being an authentic person.” It would seem that personal and professional development are inextricably linked and yet the educationalists suggested that most of the teacher and leader development programmes are skills-based. One New Zealand academic suggested that all change must start with the inside of the teacher, that is, “the teacher as self, the teacher as personal.” He spoke of the Buddhist way of training teachers which is to focus on their internal dispositions.

**Emotional dimension**

There was some overt recognition among the school leaders that an individual's sense of self-identity is wrapped up in who he/she is as a teacher and as a person. One school leader put it like this, “people stake themselves and put so much of themselves, their identity, into a job such as this.” For this reason, leaders recognised that change will produce emotional reactions. “When there is change, there is a vulnerability that your identity is being shaped into something that perhaps you don’t recognise, that you have no control over.” This leader speaks of doing a demolition job on a teacher by shattering his illusions that he was doing a good job in his classroom which, not surprisingly, produced anger and frustration. But then she spent the next year “picking him up and bringing him back.” This demonstrates recognition of the link between a teacher’s job, their personal identity and their emotional well-being. Another leader spoke of the importance of praise in helping teachers to manage their emotional reactions through the development process. “I always start with the positive. I always put the good points first then I move subtly to how they could make it better because I really feel people will not change [unless there is praise]. I don’t think fear does it. It might make them change for a moment because they are scared. But I don’t think it embeds proper change.”

Another researcher said:

> It is a matter of creating opportunities whereby people actually engage ….it is back to authenticity where they actually really feel they have personally engaged outside their normal routine of experience ….But rather a predisposition to engage with oneself in certain ways. That there is the potential and capacity in people to go beyond the routine, the mundane, the daily.
Thus, an emotional engagement with learning is necessary for it to become embedded. Though the school leaders at times spoke of the emotions of teachers who were observed, there is a strong sense that the process of observation and reflection is a technical process. Support and challenge is presented as a technical strategy for promoting greater teacher performance, not so much for changing the person the teacher is.

One educational researcher spoke about teaching being "very, very difficult work." He mentioned a book just published by George Steiner on the world of the teacher, in which Steiner talks about it being "a very complex emotional relationship with a high degree of reciprocity." Another researcher said:

It is very skewed towards seeing professional development as a skill-based activity or a knowledge-based activity or a subject-based activity and not developing those personal components to be able to cope. So we have a recruitment and retention problem. Now I think professional development is not going to solve that problem, but I do think that doing personal development around managing stress, managing workloads, managing difficult colleagues, managing your principal [might solve the problem]. Not just managing, but also recognising. I think some of the most powerful work on leadership is about to emerge. It is an area the business world has recognised and gone into and that is the whole emotional terrain. We’ve not gone there. We’ve not accepted it. We’ve got a very rational model of leadership. Even distributed leadership doesn’t deal with it. It's a very cognitive model. It doesn’t deal with the affective domain. We are beginning to recognise the importance of the emotional dimension of leadership, the relational aspect.

Here recognition is being given to the current situation in both New Zealand and England in which many teachers are exiting teaching in their fourth and fifth years, and the suggestion made that teacher development programmes need to include the emotional dimension. Another researcher and officer working for an LEA recognised the need for the development of the whole person to enable teachers to cope with the personally demanding nature of the work:

I think there is a real case for that [personal as well as professional development]. I think one of the problems with teaching is that it is so knackering and it is not just knackering for one year, it is knackering every year. And you do a darn good job and the students get some reasonable grades and then it is just like a Greek myth, the seats that they just vacated are filled up with another lot and you do it all again. It occurs again and again and again. So one of the things we haven’t really cracked is the sort of affective dispositions it takes to do this job – to be one human being in a room with thirty other human beings and to give of ourselves in a way that is more personal probably than any other group of professionals. There is a real need to deal with the affective disposition, the emotional literacy of teachers. There has to be a way of dealing with the debilitating fact of being a teacher. Because you are going to deliver personally, you have to find some ways of having your energy recharged affectively. I’m being politically incorrect here, but isn’t one of the most awful things about teaching, dealing with the sort of dew drops of knowledge? As well as being the most marvellous exercise, teaching can sometimes be the most mundane job.
He went on to use DH Lawrence’s poem, ‘Afternoon in school – the last lesson’ to illustrate this.

It’s a lovely poem. He talks about the last lesson of the day and he’s got this lot in front of him and he is thinking, “Do I use this last tiny bit of energy that I have got to try to engage these indifferent children?” The image the poet uses is of using up the last few embers of himself at the end of the day. The energy won’t last through and so do I use it to try and get something out of this group with their scrawled stuff. You know, the pages and pages of scrawl that makes you want to vomit when you look at it and try and mark it. The poet asks himself, “Shall I do this? Shall I put myself through this again or shall I wait for the bell?” And he thinks for a moment and says, “No. I shall keep this little bit of energy for myself, because if I do not, I should end up hating the children. I shall keep this little bit of energy back for myself.” So I think there is something in that.

This researcher recognises that teaching is a personally draining and challenging job as well as a professionally challenging one and as such, feels that teacher development programmes should recognise the need to develop greater emotional literacy as well as reservoirs of strength to keep doing the job day after day, year after year, but also, to help teachers to maintain a balance in their lives — to keep something back for themselves. One LEA Officer said that if we invested practically in terms of the notion of the whole person, “You will probably have the seed that you have sown paid back in triple fold anyway.”

Thus there was strong recognition among educational researchers of the need for teacher and leader development programmes to include the emotional dimension of teachers’ development. There was also strong recognition of the need for the social development of teachers.

Social dimension

Another school leader describes the importance of “knowing the person” if you want to create significant change in teachers. When asked about strategies for creating teacher change including changing the underpinning beliefs that influence practice, one principal acknowledged that teachers need, firstly, to understand what their beliefs are and that people find that very challenging and hard to “get in touch with.” He said that the traditional way of dealing with such things is to send them on a course or to send them to observe some people. However, he said that this never worked for him because for change to occur there has to be connection somewhere along the way:

Real change is brought about through connection. Again, I think it is done through, “I can have a relationship with the strategy. I can have a relationship with the class. I can have a relationship with this teacher.” What you have to do is to make it make sense to that teacher. This new way of working has got to make sense. So that means it has got to be done over time. It has got to be done in a number of ways.

He went onto say that this change is brought about, not by “bringing in a bag of tricks” but by actually working with people. He said:
You actually bring about real change by working with [his emphasis] people. Not by demonstrating, but by working alongside them and getting into the core of what it is. To really bring about change, you’ve got to get an understanding about what that person is about and what drives that person. You can’t just do it to people; you have to be with people.

Another school leader described how she had a teacher who was unable to relate to the other staff members. “She always felt that she was better than all the rest…and straight away she wasn’t prepared to listen to what any of the teachers had to say and what she had was important and she wasn’t going to change her way or even be willing to take part in syndicate meetings because they were below her.” This school leader decided to meet with her to find out what was important to her so that she could promote her interests and beliefs with the hope that after everyone had listened to her, she would begin to listen to others. Again, this is about knowing people and working to develop positive social relationships with them and helping them to do the same with others.

But being with people is not necessarily about socialising with them, because most of the school leaders we interviewed socialised very little with their staff. However, it is about making connections within the working context. Two leaders explained it in this way:

A school’s relationship between teachers and professionals are really important and that’s not about going out for a drink or going to parties and whatever. I hardly ever go out with my staff. I make a conscious decision that they need opportunities to be away from me and not have me there.

I don’t normally have any staff members in my house….I keep very much to myself as far as my little house goes. If I do a personal shout, I do it at school.

Two research participants who work with groups of schools to develop collaborative networks spoke of the value of collaborative learning for teacher development: “What’s clear is that collaborative learning is effective. Not all learning is done collaboratively, but a lot that is collaborative is effective.” While they described examples of collaborative networks that have enhanced the quality of the learning of teachers, they also spoke about the difficulties they had developing these collaborative networks in some schools. The degree of mistrust and competition made it very difficult. They made the following comment: “I still question whether teachers have got the attitudinal set and skills to really learn collaboratively across schools. It has actually got to do with personal relationships and trust at the end of the day that is going to work.” Collaborative learning is powerful and this is recognised by the funding that is being made available by the government to support collaborative relationships between schools, in both countries. However, according to these researchers many schools and teachers do not have the social or personal skills which would allow them to work in effective collaborative relationships.

Another researcher suggested that the essence of leadership is the:
...quality of the relationships that you build. It's as complex and as simple as that....I firmly believe the relational aspects are powerful. What's the difference between a school in challenging circumstances that is doing well and a very similar school that is not doing too well? It's the quality of the relationship between staff. It's the level of trust and that is another dimension that is coming to the fore.

Here it is being recognised that it requires quality relationships if schools are to become successful. This would require attending to the social dimension of teachers' development.

Moral/spiritual dimension

One school leader spoke of the need to be sincere, to believe what you say and say what you believe. He said:

It’s murder, isn’t it? Absolute murder [trying to be what you are not]. It’s interesting, because I was unsuccessful at [applying for] three or four other jobs before I came here and you look at a school and you think, “What do they want? They want this. So I’ll be that.” And you go to your interview and you’d be that - what you perceived they wanted. And how successful was I at it? I don’t know, but I think I did quite well. But what a disaster it would have been if I had have gone to that school and had to be that sort of person. Now I don’t believe any of that.

He was talking about being an authentic leader and developing alignment between who he was and what he does. Another, school leader spoke of her journey of personal/professional growth as a spiritual journey. However, perhaps not surprisingly, the dimension of the moral/spiritual was the area least spoken about by these school leaders.

Increasingly, however, educational writers are talking about the spiritual dimension of teaching and learning. This spiritual dimension is expressed in the literature and in this study as the moral dimension of the psychological. According to a New Zealand researcher this individual spirituality is considered to be essential for teachers because teaching is relational and we need to teach "not just with our minds but with our hearts and souls.” He said, “The heart of teaching is character. The most interesting teacher is the most interesting person.” It is as teachers “nurture this spirituality”, according to another researcher, that they develop the potential and capacity to go beyond the “routine, the mundane and the daily” and create the change that is essential.

The development of the spiritual dimension includes the process of bringing more closely together espoused theories and theories-in-action. According to one researcher the process of bringing these two more closely together is the process of developing authenticity as a person and hence a greater spirituality. One educational researcher in New Zealand described the personal development process and the development of
increasing spirituality, as the process of ‘renewal’ or ‘restoration’ of the person in order to get new revelation.

**Conceptual dimension**

One researcher suggested that the move towards a more reductionist and instrumental education system, has moved leaders and teachers “away from the ability to engage with conceptual complexity” and these areas of education and leadership [that we had been talking about in the interview], he states, “are conceptually complex." For example, “You need a rich vocabulary to talk about creativity. The work I have done recently on moral leadership, people have loved the activities…but they find the language incredibly difficult.” He went on to say:

What they can do is to actually often display remarkable insight in terms of their own practice and experience and so on, but if you ask them to move into an analytical level of discussion, then many of them find it difficult because we do not now train teachers to debate conceptually sophisticated ideas. I marked two lots of assignments last week. They were immensely professional in their caring and their compassion...what they did not do was to develop a…conceptual framework to inform their analysis and that's master's level. You would think that would be taken for granted but it is not….I think that many, many educationalists in this country [England] are impoverished.

This researcher again expressed the idea that teaching is a complex pursuit and that teachers who are not, “comfortable with a fairly high degree of sophisticated abstract conceptualisation, is simply going to become a technician. And I think that one of the issues for us in England at the moment is that we have got a lot of very, very good technicians who are driving up performance.” This researcher provided the following metaphor to describe the lack of focus on the conceptual dimension:

> We have a radio station in England called Classic FM which basically seems to be a classical music station. But, in fact, what it does is to censor all the difficult bits out of music and so it plays just the nice melodies. So it takes Beethoven's symphony and plays five minutes of melody but ignores the rest and I think that in some ways that is a metaphor for what is going on in this country. We are just focusing on the easy bits to talk about and we don't get into the educational challenging stuff….The whole mantra of this station is that music is relaxing and, in essence, I think, a lot of leadership development is about reassuring that here are some skills, techniques, strategies that will sort this out for you without ever testing the underpinning complexity or difficulty.

**National political context**

It became clear as the data collection continued that while there was significant recognition of the need for personalised development among educational researchers, and more limited recognition among the school leaders we interviewed, there were
significant restraining factors to personal teacher development in the schools. The most significant issue referred to was the national political context within which schools operate. While one educationalist stated that the English government had recognised the need to strengthen the ‘Developing Self’ part of the National Strategy, and as a result had included a new emphasis on emotional intelligence, they felt that the picture that is painted is quite a different one. One educational researcher described the English education context in the following way:

On the one hand you’ve got the national drive towards raising standards through accountability, which is premised upon a form of competition between schools and yet Network Learning Communities are premised on the complete opposite to that. So I think schools are feeling caught up in that inherent tension. They are getting mixed policy messages.

The competing policy context may be hindering a multiple dimension-approach to teacher development at the school level if context is ignored. This is illustrated quite clearly in the following story which was told by a school leader to set the scene for our interview:

A few years ago this school received a really good Ofsted. It made everyone feel good. Ofsted could see the difficulties we were contending with, and, given the circumstances, they felt we were doing a good job. However, a year or so later the LEA came in and they were very concerned at our achievement levels. They didn’t take the broader picture that Ofsted did. They didn’t take account of the difficult circumstances we were facing with our particular client group. They said this school was a failing school because our achievement wasn’t good enough. And we were put into a programme for the bottom 25% of schools in the LEA. A year before, with Ofsted, we were doing a good job, now we were failures! You can just imagine how we felt. Our confidence, our sense of self-esteem was shattered. We felt so low. It has been tough pulling ourselves back from that. Ofsted took a broader picture. The LEA was only interested in results.

An LEA officer used the metaphor of riding three horses at once to describe the national political context.

One of the big issues I have, and it’s a personal hobby horse of mine, is that we’ve come through a competitive, non-co-operative era in the profession, partly because we had some schools which were funded differently and more directly from the government and independent of Local Educational Authorities and that did set up a lack of co-operation between schools, whatever one feels about it politically. But now there is this big drive towards collaboration. But at the same time, the government is pressing on schools about being diverse and distinct. So they are riding three horses at the same time and the big challenge at local and national level is how that’s going to move forward.

This has created a situation in which schools have to respond to multiple, competing demands. This, according to one writer has created a situation in which schools that are under the spotlight to raise achievement are sticking to tightly structured accountability measures rather than innovating. One researcher said:
They feel the accountability apparatus upon them to such a degree that they feel disinclined to innovate. In fact, they go back to normative practice, so when inspectors come in, what they don’t see is innovation. They see pretty restricted forms of practice, because there is an inherent fear that if you do something new or innovative or different, children will probably jump out of the window. You can see that those teachers are disinclined to innovate in that way.

Schools which are already achieving well, perhaps, have more latitude to innovate and may be more open to teacher development methods which are directed at the multiple dimensions of teachers’ development.

As researchers, we became increasingly surprised by the lack of critique of the “sweeping changes” that had been “imposed upon schools” as interviewees spoke about them. It appeared, in a number of interviews, that people accepted them as a matter of course. Hargreaves (1994) suggested that where teacher self-development is linked to actions which address the realities of teachers’ work and which actively seek to change them, the process of personal development can be an immensely empowering one. However, he also stated that this change must take into account the voices of teachers and the contextual realities within which each teacher works. Real change in teachers cannot be imposed from on high without reference to the teacher. The change and restructuring, according to Hargreaves (1994) must, “be located within an ethical discourse and political parameters that guide the efforts of individual schools, teachers and their communities in the quest to improve as best they can, within their own settings” (p. 259). Sweeping changes that treat all schools the same will produce competence anxiety, guilt and decreasing morale, for when “the public realm of teaching performance is segregated and divorced from the private realm of personal feeling; when professional lives and personal lives become strictly detached from each other” (p. 150) fundamental competence anxiety will result. It would seem, therefore, that the very reforms that are intended to improve achievement may actually not be improving teaching.

In every interview with an English school leader or educational researcher, reference was made to the political context within which they were operating. This was not the result of questioning by the interviewers, but came up, almost inevitably, as a significant consideration in the discussion of teacher change. It was the opposite with New Zealand school leaders and educational researchers, who didn’t mention the national political context within which they were working. Thus, the policy context within which school leaders in New Zealand are operating is different from that in England in terms of assessment policies (no national testing and league tables until senior levels of secondary schools), formative assessment practices, the Education Review Office’s “Review and Assist” policy, rather than “assess”, self-management of teacher development and curriculum at the individual school level – perhaps these lead to greater feelings of autonomy and authority as educational leaders to take control of their situation? Most other issues and themes raised around teacher development were shared equally by those of both countries.
Discussion

Among all of the participants in the research study there was a strong recognition that the personal dimensions of a teacher’s life affects job performance. Leaders recognise that there are points in teachers’ lives when they may have more or less energy than at others or be able to work longer or shorter hours than others. Leaders spoke about the fact that they were torn between recognising the personal circumstances of teachers and the need to have teachers who are performing at the “top of their game.” Leaders described attempts to reconcile these differences. However, what was noticeable was that these attempts centred on changing the circumstances at school to meet the teacher’s need rather than on “changing the teacher” and his/her response to the circumstances through personal/professional development. This, in spite of the fact that it was recognised that many of the underperforming teachers lacked significant personal skills or emotional intelligence (e.g. self-awareness) or experienced negative emotional reactions such as becoming defensive and bitter at attempts to create change. Some reference was made to the need to develop the social dimension of a person. This was described by one leader as the need for connectedness and working with people if significant learning and change is to be the result. Little reference was made by school leaders to the dimension of the moral/spiritual except in terms of the need to be an authentic person, and there was no overt reference to the conceptual dimension.

While leaders spoke of the strategies they employed to create needed change in teacher performance, these largely centred on the development of professional expertise. Teachers were observed, monitored, sent to observe others and sent on curriculum courses, but little reference was made to providing overt opportunities to develop personal skills, social skills, emotional resiliency or increased abstract conceptualisation, for example. Thus, while there is considerable recognition of the dimensions of the “whole person”, little reference is made to processes that develop the multiple dimensions of a person – apart from the development of professional expertise. In fact, as leaders told their stories about underperforming teachers, there was from some a strong sense of getting to a point where all strategies to create change have run out and being at a loss to know how to proceed from there. This was expressed particularly strongly among English school leaders, who were very aware that underperforming teachers were affecting their positions on league tables. Perhaps, this points to the need for further awareness among school leaders of strategies which include the multiple dimensions of teacher development.

From this study, there appears, not surprisingly, to be a relationship between knowledge of the need for personal development and having been on a journey of personal discovery and development. Leaders who spoke overtly and articulately about their own journeys of personal development leading to quite dramatic personal and professional change (“You wouldn’t know me now!”) had more awareness of the need for their staff to go on a similar journey and of what that journey entailed. However, what also comes through strongly is that there are strategies and skills that can be developed or used to assist this process of making the links between personal and professional development. Thus, personal development can take place outside of the context of the professional and “if people are helped then they can transfer that into their professional lives.”
Educational researchers expressed awareness of the relationship between professional and personal development and of the need for both to take place if teacher change is to result. This recognition was expressed not so much through stories, as in the case of school leaders, but as theoretical perspectives. It would appear from this that the comment made by one of the researchers about the ability of school leaders to move towards abstract conceptualisation is in fact being illustrated through the data that has been gathered.

While school leaders illustrated, through their stories, the need for the development of personal skills to facilitate change; educational researchers spoke at greater length about the need to develop emotional literacy, greater abstract conceptualisation and the spiritual dimension to effect change. Thus a gap exists between the understandings of school leaders and the findings of educational researchers. Also notable was that, while there is an increasing recognition of the affective and personal dimensions in the National Strategy in England and in the programmes offered by NCSL, this recognition appeared not to have filtered down to the school leaders we interviewed and informed their practice in overt ways.

**Recommendations**

It is clear that just as addressing one single dimension of teacher development will not be effective in creating the type of change that is required to make a difference for disadvantaged students, so there is not one single action to be taken or single process to be followed that will make the difference in terms of a multiple-dimension-approach to teacher development. A complete package is required in which all aspects of “school” are aligned towards the goal of developing the whole person. This includes the policy context within which the school operates; the school’s culture; the school’s leadership; and, the school’s processes and programmes. Not surprisingly, perhaps, you will recognise much of what follows from literature on schools as learning communities and discussions of leadership. However, also included are some processes and programmes that are not being commonly referred to in current educational literature. It is here that this paper pushes the boundaries.

**Political context**

What type of policy context would support effective teacher development? According to the researchers in this project, the type of policy context would be one that is coherent and aligned. Schools would not be forced into competition with each other through the funding structures and league tables and then asked to collaborate. Policy would encourage innovation and creativity and would truly encourage schools to learn from each other. These would be recognised as priorities through the funding that is allocated and the accountability structures in place. Policies would acknowledge leaders and teachers as capable people and treat them with respect and trust by allowing greater autonomy to set goals and determine ways of working towards those goals. Policy would address the working conditions of teachers and would address the work/life balance in ways that empower teachers not disempower them.
School culture

An appropriate school culture will assist and support personalised teacher development. In the first place these school cultures would focus on learning and on people not on achievement results. They would be democratic with all contributions are valued and encouraged. Cultures that assist personal development are high trust. One leader said:

I don’t dictate what they [teachers] do. If they have professional time, I do not say to them, “I want you to do this. I want you to do that” because I have total trust that they will do the job. Sometimes I am taken advantage of. But everyone else more than makes up for that. So I am not going to spoil the pot just for that one person….You’ve got to look for the very best in people.

Leadership

The school leadership is very influential in terms of “whole person” teacher development. In situations where the political or even local context drives teachers towards having single criterion for judging success – student achievement – good leaders are able to protect their staff from this pressure or even to use it to achieve the school’s own goals.

Two school leaders interviewed in this project spoke specifically about the things that they were able to do to protect teachers from the policy context that was driving their school. Here are their stories:

There is enormous pressure on us externally to do this and that and the other thing. So one of my main jobs is to slow all that down; to stop people feeling under enormous pressure to do the next thing that comes along. I mean my bin is full everyday of bits of paper that people have sent demanding that we do this, that and the other thing. You just chuck it away, don’t you? I do manage to slow stuff down. I do manage to put things on a sensible time scale – staff meetings and inset training, so that people feel able to get on with what they need to do.

This school leader deals with the external pressure by reframing it:

Ours is a school facing challenging circumstances. But we are not interested in the quick fix solutions that this government favours. We want long-term, sustainable change. Our primary focus is teaching and learning. I can’t improve grades – but we need to get the teaching and learning right and the rest [improved results] will follow. We use the externally imposed standards as part of the package….as a resource. They are no longer imposed, but we have chosen to use them. I have relieved the pressure. I turned the wagon around and, now, rather than teachers being pushed by the wagon, the teachers are pushing the wagon. It was a case of matching external pressures to internal priorities. This is not a quick fix, but now there is an urgency in the school.

Both of these school leaders, in different ways, contain and confine the external demands by making them fit in with their own school priorities, timetables of change. These leaders clearly saw it as their role to protect their staff from external pressure.
Effective leaders recognise the value of all people. Distributed leadership is a structure that gives recognition to this fact. But it is also about giving people a reason to develop and grow as teachers and about empowering them to do so by giving them roles within the school over which they have, at least, some autonomy. Leaders who are concerned with developing the whole person do not present themselves as experts but acknowledge freely that teachers possess skills and abilities that far outstrip their own.

Teaching talking about learning is so much more powerful than the principal talking about teaching.

I believe that's how I run things, you know, I don't go around thinking I am the bees knees and stuff because I know I'm not. I know I couldn't teach in a classroom like these folks do. They're far more skilled at the teaching bit than I am.

These leaders clearly see that teachers are very important and have a role to fulfil that the head could not hope to, and therefore, are to be valued hugely.

Effective leaders also realised they needed to be authoritative about expectations around students achievement. As one school leader put it:

Yet, it was as I stopped treating teachers with kid gloves and acted authoritatively that significant change took place. I had just assumed that teachers' love of teaching would motivate them to do the best for children. However, as Fullan (2003) said, “Don’t get me wrong. The “I love to teach” strategy has not delivered anything either. We are not talking about being soft on teachers, but rather about being effectively demanding” (p. 55). This shows that there is a balance in all this - one that I had previously failed to recognise. I did I think become more effectively demanding.

**Teacher development processes**

The stories of teacher change (or lack of change) told by school leaders, focused on a narrow range of teacher development processes that were employed to turn around underperforming teachers. These processes largely came under the umbrella of support and challenge and involved observation, feedback on those observations, the provision of formal opportunities to reflect, further observation and monitoring. It also involved modelling strategies, challenging through achievement data and supporting through praise:

I'm a great believer – you get what you want if it all starts with praise….I always start with the positive. I always put the good points first then I move subtly to how they could make it better because I really feel people will not change [unless there is praise].

These teacher development processes were largely focused on improving teacher performance (and therefore, student achievement) rather than increasing teacher
capacity or capability. It was a technical process rather than a process for changing the person the teacher is.

When asked what effective leaders do, one educational researcher said they understand that “the real drive behind the school is learning [not performance] and that is learning not just for children, but for teachers as well.” This researcher went on to say that true learning communities cannot be developed in an instrumental way, but much more through relationships and values.

Emotional engagement with learning

A strong argument is presented by several of the researchers and writers interviewed for this paper that the multiple dimensions of the person may be most effectively developed when they take place in a relevant professional setting. To develop, for example, the emotional literacy of a teacher through a personal development course that has nothing to do with teaching and learning or the school context may not be effective. However, the fact that, as several of our interviewees illustrated, people can learn professionally through personal circumstances and vice versa suggests that all learning does not have to be domain or context specific but may happen in one context and be transferred to a new context.

Another underpinning idea about the multiple dimensions of a teacher’s development that came through strongly, particularly, but not only, in the interviews with researchers and writers, is the idea that emotional engagement with learning is essential if the learning is to be embedded. To create change, the experience has to, firstly, be felt, and the more strongly felt (ie the greater the emotional engagement) the greater the likelihood of learning taking place. One way of doing this is to take leaders and teachers “out of their comfort zones” and place them in a situation “of stress and anxiety” so that their ability to learn is heightened. It was suggested that this could be done through strategies such as role play and hotseats, psycho-drama, simulations or experiential outdoor learning.

However, providing an opportunity to engage emotionally with learning is not enough. People need to be able to see themselves doing it because, as one researcher said, “if I can’t visualise myself in a particular context, then I am going to find it very difficult to move there.”

Reflective practice

Outdoor experiences, involvement in group process such as psycho drama, simulations, hotseats, and role plays, for example, have little value unless they are followed by critical reflection. One well known English educational researcher suggested that the, “capacity to become a reflective practitioner” is perhaps the most important skill a teacher/leader can develop. He acknowledges this is no great breakthrough. The knowledge has been around for a long time. But reflective practices not only allow people to develop their
thinking, but allow the transferability of learning to different contexts. This reflection needs to be accompanied by clarity of focus and purpose. It is not “woolly” thinking where the mind roams this way and that. What is reflected upon is of the utmost importance to the outcome of the process: “The quality of the reflection and debrief will determine whether perspectives were changed or awareness raised.”

**Coaching/mentoring**

Coaching and mentoring were repeatedly mentioned by educational researchers and writers as well as by school leaders – particularly in England - as professional development processes that support the multiple dimensions of a person’s development. Interestingly, there was much less familiarity with coaching as a professional development process among New Zealand school leaders. One researcher suggested that second to reflective practice in terms of developing the qualities of a person is coaching and mentoring. He said:

> In these workshops that I run, I tell them in the final analysis – if you want to take away one concrete thing that you can begin to learn to do in your schools it is that everybody is coached and everybody learns to become a coach. And that in many ways, if you want to know what leaders do all day, the chances are that genuine, authentic leaders are spending much of their day coaching and facilitating.

In the final analysis, he suggests, “it is only feedback and coaching that will actually transfer into behaviour”. Thus, if real change – not just change in skills and attitudes but change in behaviour - is the desired outcome, then coaching may well be the most important development process.

One New Zealand principal told the following story:

> I became very unhappy with professional development. We’d send someone off on a course and they’d come back and supposedly spread the word. But I think the take up from that sort of professional development was next to nothing. So I then started to experiment with whole school professional development and so everybody received the same message with the theory being that then everybody would understand it. However, as I reflected on that over the last couple of years, I began to change that too. I realised that everyone still needs to hear the same message but then from that we need to come down to…smaller groups…, and now I’ve found that working with coaching with four people at a time, the amount of discussion and the amount of change in thinking that occurs seems to be even greater. So it seems that you need that top layer, but you need to look at how you can trickle it down so you can get to that much more personal level so that people can them apply it.

Coaching is a process that works at the personal level as well as the level of professional expertise (Robertson, 2005, forthcoming). Through the use of reflective practices, it encourages individuals to examine their practices, beliefs, attitudes and behaviours and, through that reflection, gain understanding about themselves which leads to change. It is a process that recognises that teachers are “people” as well as
professionals and it is a respectful process that gives the power to change to the teacher who is being coached.

These ideas suggest, therefore, that coaches cannot end up coaching simply because they are a senior teacher or simply because they are appointed as a coach, but to be effective, particularly in aiding the personal development of teachers, they need to be carefully chosen and they need to be provided with skills and support to do the job. These coaches need to be able to focus the reflection as well as model themselves as learners. Thus it would seem that coaching can be powered up by careful choice of coach.

**Creativity and the arts**

Several researchers and writers in New Zealand and England referred to the importance of creativity and the arts. One researcher made the following statement:

> I am increasingly thinking that there is an additional dimension which is about the creation of personal knowledge in the broadest sense and because of my own prejudice I think it has a lot to with the arts and creativity and so on.....That means, I think, and this could be real heresy – that leadership development might be about reading novels. It might be about watching movies. It might be about poetry. It is really interesting there was a flurry at the end of the 90s, in the States, of publications actually saying that management development ought to include engagement with the arts. And that it may be that going to a concert and talking about the emotional experience of the Beethoven quartet or whatever is actually a better use of time than yet another session on how to jack up standards.

A New Zealand researcher spoke about how she would get school leaders on her courses using metaphors and poetry to talk about their values and beliefs and what they think leadership is. She said that "They struggle initially because they've never been challenged to be creative but they talk later about it being the most profound impact on themselves as leaders."

Another New Zealand researcher, in speaking about the spiritual dimension of teaching, referred to the need for teachers to be renewed and to receive revelation. He suggested that this can come through stillness and contemplation, awe and wonderment, gaining new understandings of who I am and “creating and creation”. For this New Zealand educationalist, creative acts are necessary to help in the process of restoring, reviving and renewing teachers.

Thus, while many school leaders were stating quite categorically that professional development needed to line up with meeting school goals, some educationalists were saying that given the “debilitating” nature of being a teacher, teachers have got to be provided with opportunities to be recharged affectively. This isn't about involvement in “unstructured or aimless” courses, which serve no purpose, but about being involved in creative pursuits which restore the delicate balance and renew the teacher.
Cross-cultural experiences

When asked what an educational researcher had seen that had had significant impact on teachers’ attitudes and behaviour, she spoke of cross cultural links:

Well, I think the cross-cultural links are pretty powerful ways of changing attitudes and behaviour because you get a sense that it is not always quite like this…We know if we look at the Netherlands, or other European countries, they don’t have a principal. They don’t have leadership in the way we have leadership and unless you are exposed to that, you have no way of understanding what the democratic school might look like and how leadership might be very different. So I think those sort of cultural exchanges are important and I guess that is why the college is so important because it does that work.

A New Zealand principal spoke of cross-cultural experience as a way in which he can be enriched as an individual, including growing as a professional. He spoke of going to another country and seeing the way the educational system reflects the society it represents and the way it is shaped and delivers education. Sometimes he said, he just goes to network and be a part of the professional life style of the person and, “I find I get personal growth from that.”

As this research has shown, there is a lot of recognition in the profession that teacher change occurs through a multiplicity of experiences in life, and that the personal experiences we have affect the professional person we become – and yet, in education, the thinking around teachers’ development has not yet been aligned with that of students’ development, where holistic education and a focus on multiple intelligences has been long recognised as vital to effective development and successful education.

Conclusion and key points

- To be effective in providing the quality teaching required to improve the achievement of all students, including low socio-economic and ethnic minority students, it is essential for teacher development programmes to encompass the multiple dimensions of a teacher’s development – social, personal, emotional, moral/spiritual, conceptual – as well as professional expertise.

- Personal and professional development is inextricably linked, with development in the one area impacting on and supporting development in the other.

- While there is strong recognition among school leaders that the personal dimensions of a teacher’s life affects job performance, there is little recognition of the need to address these dimensions in teacher development programmes – which are still largely skills-based.
• Few school leaders recognised the need for development in the moral/spiritual and conceptual dimensions.

• Among educational researchers in New Zealand and England, there was far more overt recognition of the need for teacher change to involve all the dimensions of whole person development.

• Educationalists who had been through significant personal growth themselves and had reflected on its impact on their leadership, spoke most articulately about the need for the personal development of teachers.

• A gap exists between the understanding of school leaders and the findings of educational researchers. The increasing recognition of the affective and personal dimensions in the National Strategy in England appears not to have informed the teacher development practices of the school leaders in overt ways.

• The national political context, with its drive for results and competing policies, is a significant restraining factor to whole person teacher development.

• There is not one single action or process to be taken to address whole person teacher development. A complete package is required in which all aspects of “school” are aligned towards developing the multiple dimensions of a person. These aspects include:
  a. the political context
  b. the school culture
  c. the school leadership
  d. the teacher development processes
     - emotional engagement with learning
     - reflective practice
     - coaching/mentoring
     - creativity and the arts
     - cross-cultural experiences

It was paradoxical that while there was a strong recognition from school leaders, and from teachers themselves, that effective development of people is complex and multi-dimensional, there was very little authority or commitment to focusing on aspects of teachers’ development other than that which is skill-based and the knowledge which is related to curriculum and pedagogy.
Some questions for school leaders

1. Could a teacher/leader justify that the watercolour painting class they are taking or their abseiling experience is part of their professional development?

2. In what ways are teachers’ creativity and critical thinking, for example, enhanced through their professional development activities this year?

3. How much focus is there or should there be on a leader/teacher’s resilience and stress management?

4. What changes first – a teacher’s values and beliefs, or a teacher’s practices?
References


