



DECEMBER 2019 • ISSUE 13

QUARTERLY

Dear Friends
Welcome

AT A GLANCE

- Sharon reflects on the "Building Emotional Strength in Teachers" research study
- Activities at the Sharon Faye Foundation
- Acknowledge, Feel, Respond
- Feel to Heal 2020



BUILDING EMOTIONAL STRENGTH IN TEACHERS

This three-year project was the Foundation's inaugural empirical research study in a public primary school in Western Australia, in collaboration with Edith Cowan University's School of Education (ECU). We designed a pre-test post-test study and ECU collected data before and after the intervention.

The intervention involved a group of ten primary school teachers working with me for two hours per week, over a 30-week period in 2018, to build Emotional Strength.

Those of you who have been through the Emotional Strength process will understand some of what these teachers may have experienced. It is challenging! Those of you who have worked with me to change your parenting style will understand what it takes for a teacher to change their teaching style. Developing self-awareness and dropping into the space of '*what you don't know that you don't know*' takes something.

My hypothesis is that working with the teachers will enhance the student's learning experience, without working directly with students. This implies that when teachers are well, students benefit.

During the design phase, we identified three variables of interest: Teacher Burnout, Teacher-Student Engagement and School Climate.

We achieved some encouraging results.

TEACHER SURVEYS

Teacher Burnout:

- Statistically significant reduction in teacher burnout.

- Increase in positive job-related feelings (e.g. I feel I am positively influencing people's lives through my work; I feel very energetic)
- Reduced negative job-related feelings (e.g. I feel burned out from my work; I feel emotionally drained from my work; I feel like I'm at the end of my rope)

Teacher Engagement:

- Statistically significant improvement in teacher engagement (e.g. I am enthusiastic about my job; At my job, I feel strong and vigorous; At my job, I feel very resilient, mentally; When I get up in the morning I feel like going to work)
- Reduction in negative work-related feelings (e.g. It is difficult to detach myself from my job)

STUDENT SURVEYS

School Climate:

- There was a slight improvement in school climate, but Emotional Strength training did not improve school climate statistically. In the next school project we will measure class climate rather than school climate.

Student Engagement and Disaffection in the Classroom:

- Student engagement is a key contributor to school success. Engagement predicts grades, test scores, attendance, retention and academic resilience. Research also suggests that engagement acts as a protector against risky behaviour such as substance abuse and avoiding the pitfalls of adolescence. However, student engagement is declining, and teachers are at a loss how to re-engage disaffected students.
- Disaffection is more than student disengagement. Behavioural disaffection includes passivity and withdrawal of participation in learning activities. Our study *Building Emotional Strength in Teachers* delivered a statistically significant reduction in behavioural disaffection and a further reduction in emotional disaffection, including a statistically significant reduction in anger, and a reduction in boredom and worry in the classroom.

The Sharon Faye Foundation is committed to improving the wellbeing and engagement of Australian teachers and students. This and future Education Pillar research initiatives will evaluate the practical application of Emotional Strength - engaging deeply with our emotions to identify and challenge the unconscious beliefs that prevent positive change and inhibit our potential for growth. In alignment with our motto of *Educate – Research - Disseminate*, Tristan and I have been diving deep into the data to inform future research. We look forward to sharing our findings in 2020 and will keep you updated as publications and events develop.

*Imagine if
... schools were safe*

FOUNDATION NEWS

In the **March 2019 newsletter**, Sharon reflected on her journey in preparing the Sharon Faye Foundation Strategic Plan, and in the interim our purpose to *Advance global research on human emotion, to change the way emotion is understood in everyday life* has driven a period of great activity. Alongside our research activities, and with your help, we have been increasing the profile of the Foundation through community events. This has been so rewarding and cemented our commitment to share the empowering message of Emotional Strength.

Consequently, the Strategic Plan has been revisited many times to ensure that it has kept up with the Foundation's growth. With Sharon's insightful leadership, and a motivated team, the Foundation is always in a state of dynamic activity – this is the beauty of Emotional Strength, we just keep tapping into unexplored resources! That being the case, we are proud to 'release' the Strategic Plan and allow it to begin its work in the world.

You can view the Strategic Plan from the Publications area on our '**Research**' page at the Sharon Faye Foundation website.



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STRATEGIC PLAN

2020/23



*Imagine if
... people could feel*

ACKNOWLEDGE, FEEL, RESPOND

We are nearing the end of the year and a time when the minutes on the clock can seem to tick over faster and we may become preoccupied with extra considerations and general busy-ness. During times of tension or anxiety, it is common to revert to conditioned patterns of behaviour to cope – we may become short-tempered, drink too much alcohol, disconnect from loved ones and instead focus on our to-do list. When operating from this position we are also disconnected from our real human experience.

We share with you Sharon's strategy to help bring your awareness back to your body and to the present moment, to reconnect with yourself.

You are invited to practise this technique at any time – sitting at traffic lights, waiting for the kettle to boil, standing in line, walking your dog.

ACKNOWLEDGE - FEEL - RESPOND

These three little words are really powerful and will help you to build Emotional Strength (regardless of whether you are starting your Emotional Strength journey, or a veteran) and will keep you coming and going, in and out of your body, all day every day.

ACKNOWLEDGE what is going on in your internal world.

FEEL your body on the chair or your feet on the ground. Feel your breath coming in and out of your body. Where does the breath go once inside you? Where does tension hold in your body – is your jaw clenched or shoulders hunched?

You may find yourself going into analysis - why am I feeling this way right now? What happened? But that is not feeling. That's thinking. Remember every emotion is functional. Try to hang out in the feeling. It's an amazing experience but it takes practice.

By engaging with our emotions, the intensity of their experience reduces and we can continue to take action with a sense of awareness and spaciousness.

RESPOND: You don't have to think about how you are going to respond, the response comes from connecting to yourself. You may find you have less desire to 'act out' and are able to move forward in a way more aligned with your true values and purpose.

This small process of Acknowledge, Feel, Respond is living with Emotional Strength – being open and vulnerable to your emotions and responding in the moment.

FEEL TO HEAL 2020

We are delighted to announce that the second Feel to Heal family lap-a-thon will be held in Autumn 2020.

Feel to Heal is an initiative of Renee, a friend of the Sharon Faye Foundation, to raise funds for our ground-breaking research into emotion, to change the way emotion is understood in everyday life.

You can read about Renee's inspiring commitment to Emotional Strength in our **March 2019 newsletter** and in our **June 2019 newsletter** we shared highlights of the 2019 Feel to Heal. Over at our **Website Gallery** you will find snapshots of the day, capturing the fun we all had and are looking forward to again next year!

For the team here at the Foundation, we are so honoured to be able to spend time with you, our friends and community, and eagerly look forward to this event.

We will provide information on how you can register and be involved closer to the date.



BE A PART OF THE SHARON FAYE FOUNDATION COMMUNITY

The Sharon Faye Foundation's goal is to create healthy families, businesses and communities and you are an important part of our story.

We are interested in your feedback and would love to hear from you for possible inclusion in future newsletter editions. Your Emotional Strength story may resonate with another and become a ripple, radiating to change the way emotion is understood in everyday life.

hello@sharonfayefoundation.com.au

DONATE

No matter the size, every donation helps us to further our research and impact.

If you would like to donate to the Sharon Faye Foundation, please follow this [link](#) or **contact us** for details.

The Sharon Faye Foundation is endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient and donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

SEE YOU NEXT TIME

Sharon Faye Foundation Team



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