

Your Participation

Audio:

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Questions:

Submit questions and comments via the Questions panel. If we don't get to your question today it will be answered in a Q&A on our website.

Note: Today's presentation is being recorded and will be provided on the Health and Wellbeing Hub within 48 hours.



Feeling The Burn? Cultivating Self-Renewal Practices

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Supporting Educators, Transforming Lives

Today's Themes and Objectives



Main Themes:

- Feeling the burn? Dealing with present situation in as a resilient and realistic way as possible.
- External situation; Inner landscape; Embracing the discomfort comfortably.
- Use of cognitive reappraisal of beliefs as a mediator of our stress.
- Cultivating a practice of reappraising and renewal to moderate stress.

Main Objectives:

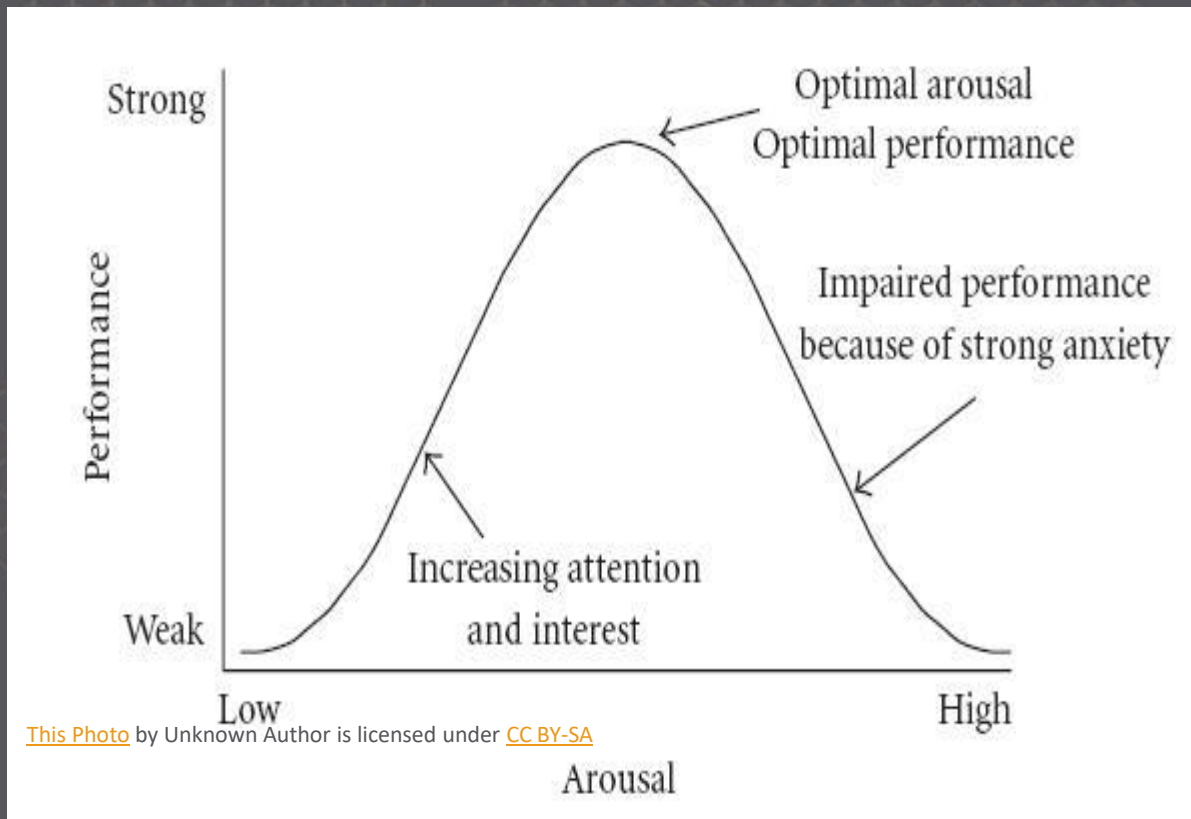
- Share experiences, feel empathy and support from presenter
- Reflect on own experiences currently – opportunity to reappraise
- Consider possibilities around cultivating renewal practices and what this might mean in practical terms for self.

Non-doing has nothing to do with being indolent or passive. Quite the contrary. It takes great courage and energy to cultivate non-doing, both in stillness and in activity.

—
Jon Kabat Zinn



Feeling the burn? In a good way or not?



Recovery? Or Business-As-Usual?



- Staying Safe - Physically and Psychologically

- The virus “at-the-door” or over the threshold!



- Reduced opportunities to connect with each other.

- Not knowing what lies ahead. Working and living with uncertainty.

Staying Grounded – Cultivating Calm

- Noticing stress levels and when they peak.

- Getting “out of heads”...and into our bodies.

- Breathing.
- Taking a walk.
- Mindful moments

Maybe we are not here to “fix” it all?...



Awakening Compassion at Work – Worline & Dutton (2017)



Social Science perspective.

Four elements to waken compassion:

- Noticing that suffering is present in our organisation
- Making meaning of suffering in a way that contributes to a desire to alleviate it
- Feeling empathic concern for the people suffering
- Taking action to alleviate suffering in some manner.

3 aspects that close compassion down:

- When we blame
- When we believe another does not deserve our concern
- We decide that we do not have the resources to care

What is the “Million Dollar Answer” to Dealing with Current Difficulties?



Possible Sources of Stress and Distress Currently:

- Ever-changing national and local picture
- Ever-changing demands at national and local levels
- Out-of-alignment with purpose and daily reality
- What used to mediate stress e.g. out for coffee with staff group, visiting friends, having friends round etc; not possible

Difficulties

Our Choices?

Change the external circumstances

Change the internal experience

Embrace it and
Feel it.

Changing External Circumstances – Possibilities?



Challenges that are facing staff at this time:

- Virus at the door OR across the threshold.
- Physically distancing – feeling human
- Feeling out of the loop with other staff – confined to “bubbles”, issues with miscommunications
- Interactions reduced to merely the operational especially from managers
- Little leeway or none when setting up classrooms – distancing, surfaces, cleaning
- “Groundhog day” feeling – routines, behaviours – frustration
- Limitations with practical subjects
- External accountability

Practical options:

- **Use of Time**
 - Daily routine – letting go of attachment to outcomes when you need to
 - Boundaries
 - Chunking time-periods - realistic goals, possible smaller events to look forward to.
- **Use of Space**
 - Being outdoors more
 - Changing the physical environment
- **“Together Apart”**
 - Socially connecting whilst physically apart
- **Creating the right conditions for self-soothing e.g. Hygge, hobbies, mindfulness.**

Changing Our Inner Landscape



Challenges that are facing teachers at this time:

- Lack of physical team meetings and connecting face-to-face can feel isolating
- Messages? Recovery or “business-as-usual”?
- Own expectations as an Educator – last September/now; or “catch-up” for children and young people who missed whole term.
- Beliefs about what “should” be in place/done
- Rollercoaster of emotions – day-to-day; hour-to-hour
- Stress, Covid-fatigue and exhaustion
- Anxiety – “taking the virus home”?
- Guilt at having to self-isolate
- Anger and frustration e.g. latest renewed restrictions.

Possibilities to mediate stress and to support:

- “Less is more” – what is currently gathering momentum? More tasks? Less energy?
- Appraisals about situations
- Beliefs, Purpose and Self-Efficacy
- Mindfulness approaches



What is at my core? How does it support me...or not?



Not the burn, but build your core!

- Values
- Beliefs
- Mission and purpose
- Mantras
- Mindset
- Boundaries – sleep, nutrition, exercise
- Perspective
- Being “Team”

“Strong is what happens when you run out of weak!”

- Barry, Claire’s Personal Trainer, circa. 2005



Identity as an Educator –

Who do YOU THINK you are? What do you think you are here to do?

Self-efficacy – my belief in my capability and competence.

- Affected by levels of self-esteem and energy levels

Self-esteem is “earned” through participation in these three roles:

- Educator as a facilitator of pupil learning.
- Educator as participant in planning procedures and policies.
- Educator as a developing professional.

Self-esteem also requires self-acceptance.

Core Beliefs and Cognitive Appraisals –

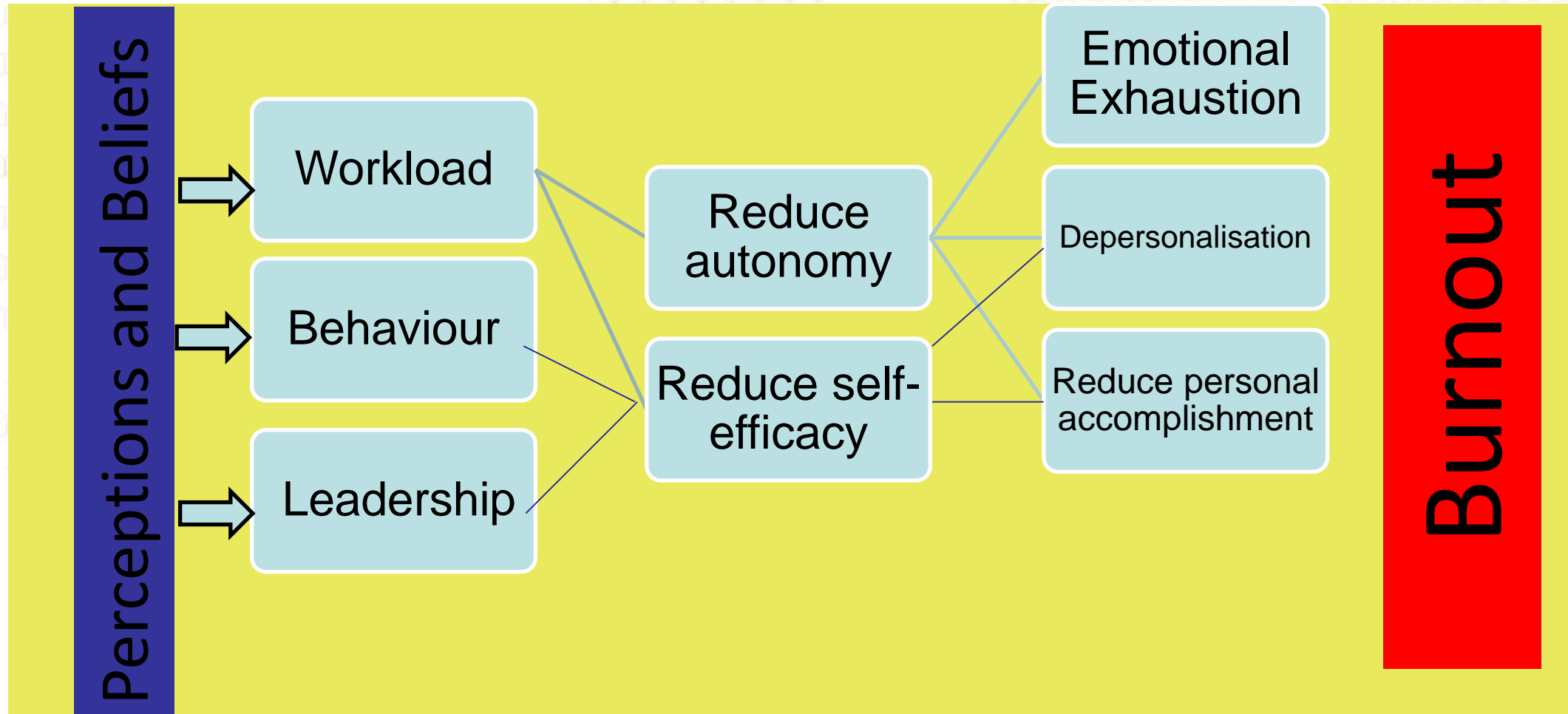
What do you think about yourself and your work? How realistic are these appraisals?

- Feeling 100% responsible for EVERYTHING that happens in your classroom/area?
- Feeling that you will NEVER make a difference no matter what you do?
- Feeling that you can do your best with the resources you have and relate to your pupils as best you can?



Self-Efficacy – Perceptions are real!...

But what is the reality?



What do you believe about yourself as an Educator?

- Suspending Our Limiting Beliefs



Beliefs often occur in 3 main areas:

- About Self as an Educator
- In relation to Others
- About the world/life conditions/current situation.

Supportive Beliefs - Examples	Limiting Beliefs - Examples
a. Overall, I have a really good, positive relationship with my pupils.	a. My pupils never behave well enough for me to teach well consistently.
b. I focus on what I can get done and achieve every day. Some days are more productive than others. I always try my best.	b. I never feel that I do a good enough job overall.
c. I ask for support when I need it, knowing that this is a strength.	c. If I ask for support, others will believe that I am failing.
d. Other have their own skill-set and aptitudes and I have mine. We all complement each other in this team.	d. I am not as good as the others and I have little to offer the team.

What are the needs of pupils in relation to ours?

Teaching is an “emotional labour” - Hothschild (1983)

“Nurturing Suffering” – Vansylke-Briggs (2010)

- Invisible form of stress that results from emotional ties teachers develop with pupils and *blurred* role as teacher takes on “carer” role

Mediators – How we judge what we see before us?

- Appraisals can be made instantaneously and unconsciously, based on: experiences, immediate perceived needs, anxiety etc.
- Reappraisals are made more slowly and consciously

If we do not slow down and make time to re-appraise, we may be doing ourselves more damage emotionally and energetically e.g. trust, relationships, sustainable energy levels – what else?

Resources

Mediators

Demands



Fig 1. Burnout Cycle,
Larrivee (2009)

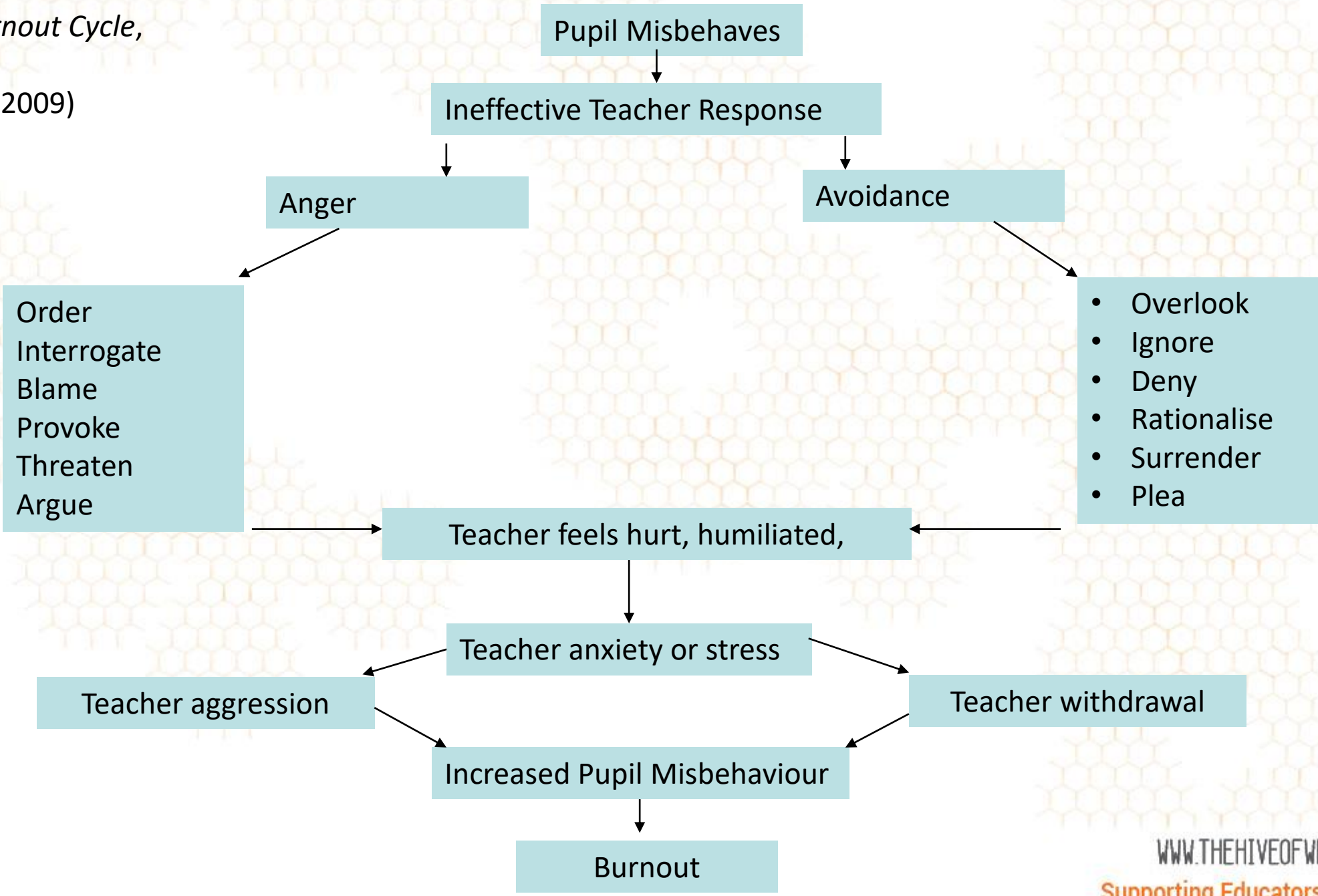


Fig 2. Renewal Cycle,
Larrivee (2009)

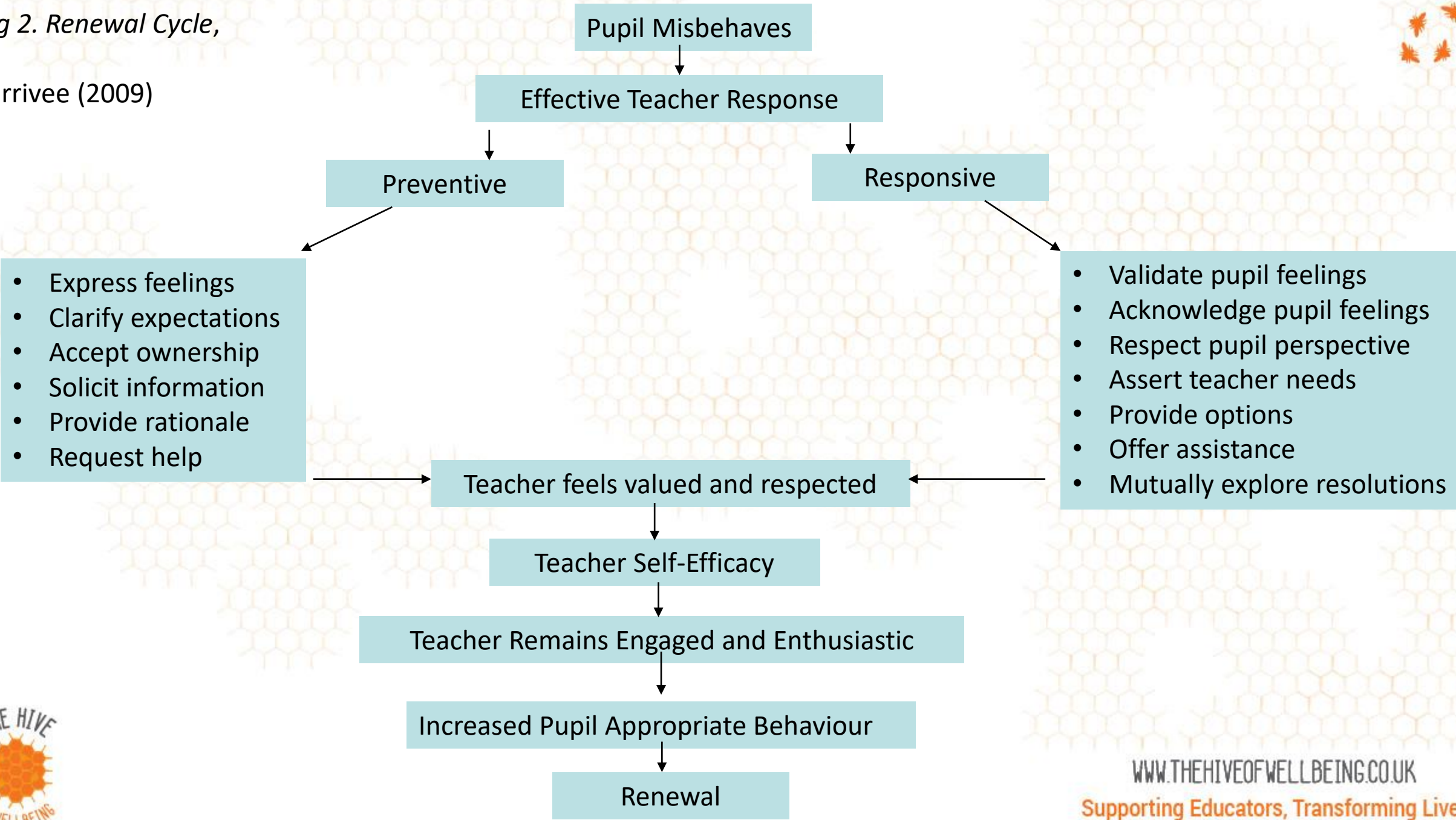
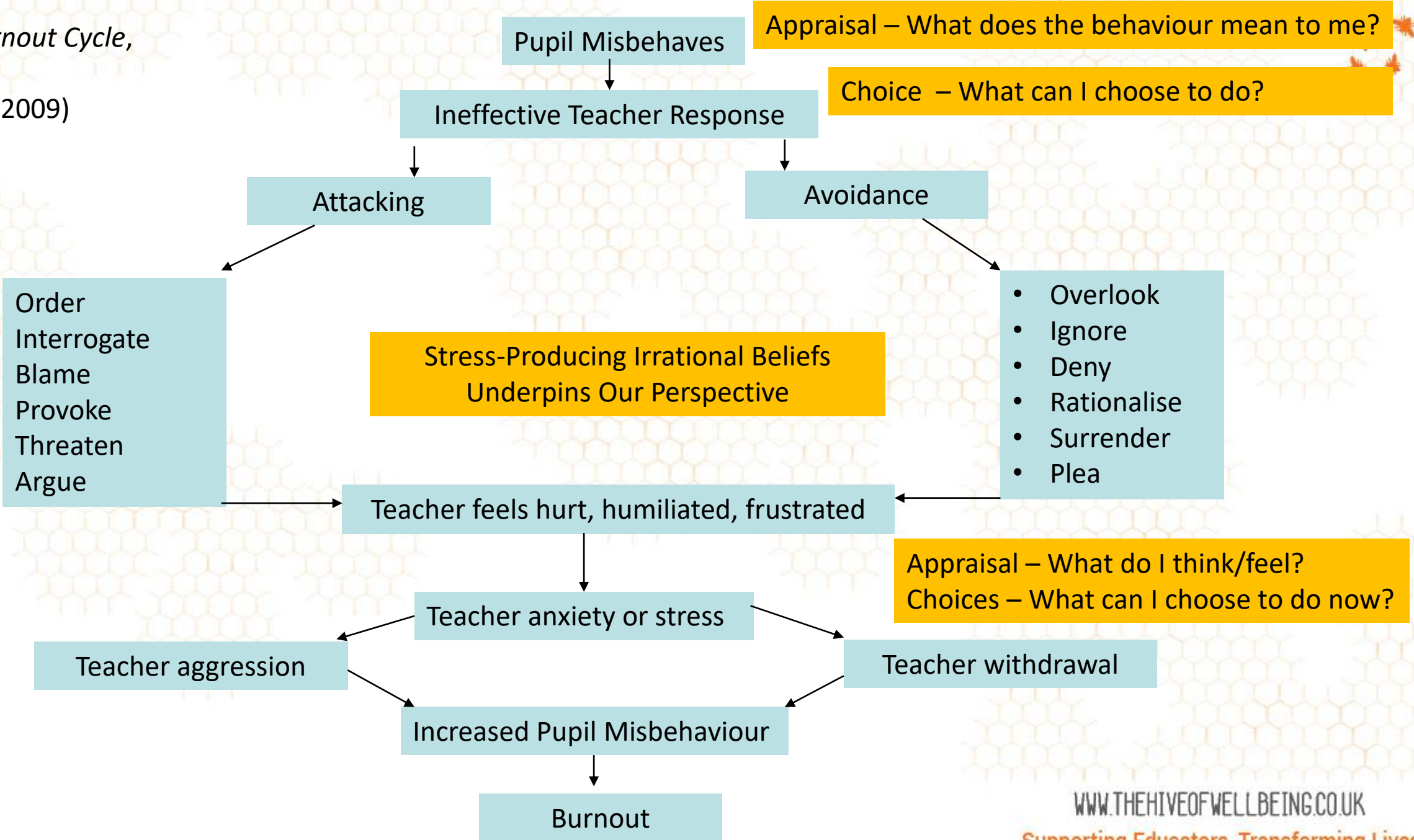


Fig 1. Burnout Cycle,
Larrivee (2009)



Cognitive Reappraisal – A Way of Coping and Renewing

Mental Filtering >>> Confirms our biases

Stress-Producing Irrational Beliefs:

Demands about Self

Demands about Others

Demands about the world/life conditions



“Hot Thoughts”

Creating Stress-Reducing Rational Beliefs about:

- Self as a Teacher
- In relation to others
- In this current situation

- **Make time** – CLPL hours
- **Keep a journal** – focus on a reflective question each week; analyse responses to pupils; pattern of “pushing my buttons”
- **Identify patterns of behaviour and thoughts** – what’s the underlying belief? How helpful is this?
- **Modify situation** – external or internal?
- **Do it with your class** – finding the time and giving yourself permission!

“Working through difficult emotions is essential to becoming a reflective practitioner”

Barbara Larrivee, *Cultivating Teacher Renewal*, p86

Keeping it conscious – journal/notebook/phone notes/chat!



Situation	Feeling/ Emotion	Hot Thoughts	Evidence to support Hot Thought	Evidence that does not support Hot Thought	Alternative thoughts that may support? How do they feel? How do I now feel?
e.g. Not enough support in place for a pupil	Anxious Frustrated at situation	“I am failing this pupil. I am useless at my job.”	Pupil is not achieving potential. Resources are not in place. As a teacher, my job is not being fulfilled.	Not all resources can come from me, realistically.	I am doing all I can to support this pupil. I may have to accept that this is how the situation is for now. Perhaps others can support me in a different way with this.

**"A diary is useful during conscious, intentional, and painful spiritual evolutions."
André Gide, *Journals: 1889 - 1913***



“Feeling the Emotions and Doing it anyway!”



“Teachers are emotionally committed to many different aspects of their jobs. This is not an indulgence; it is a professional necessity...

...Without feeling, without the freedom to “face themselves, to be whole persons in the classroom, they implode, explode – or walk away.”

Nias, (1996) *Thinking about Feeling: The Emotions in Teaching*

“Breaking down? Or Breaking Through?”

- **Facing Ourselves**
 - Diary/Notebook/Virtual Chats/Coaching/Counselling
 - “Speaking our truth” safely
- **Habits and triggers –**
 - Know when you are “on repeat”
 - Change it up! Time, Space, Thoughts!
- **“This too shall pass”**
 - What I feel today, I may not feel tomorrow
 - What do I need right now?

Laugh a little, live a lot!

Helplines Available



Claire Lavelle – The Hive of Wellbeing – info@thehiveofwellbeing.co.uk
phone: 07951345287

CAMHS – www.camhs-resources.co.uk

Breathing Space – www.breathingspace.co.uk – phone: 0800 838587

Mind UK – www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk – phone 0300 3231545

Scottish Women's Aid – <https://womensaid.scot/contact-us/> - phone: 0800 027 1234

Samaritans - www.samaritans.org 116 123

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