

Sticky Objects and HE teacher wellbeing: views on the positive from the UK and Saudi Arabia contexts

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The Research Project

- ***‘Sticky Objects’ and pathways to resilience and wellbeing: teacher understandings of and practices in positive psychology in their classrooms***
- Teachers working in EAP in universities in UK and Saudi Arabia
- Teachers researching their own contexts and developing their own practice and wellbeing
- Diaro App and interview data
- <https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/%E2%80%98sticky-objects%E2%80%99-pathways-well-being-resilience-teacher-understandings-practices-positive>

Emotions and Sticky Objects

“Emotions [...] shape, and are also shaped by, contact with objects”
(Ahmed, 2004: 7).



Benesch (2012 and 2017)

‘Sticky objects in ELT’

The Positive Psychology movement and Exploratory Practice

- Positive Psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihaly, 2000) is about helping 'people lead better lives' (MacIntyre & Mercer 2014: 154)
- Whatever we do, we need to focus on 'making life more enjoyable' (Allwright & Hanks, 2009: 241).
- How do we flourish? What is Quality of Life?
- Not just for individuals, but also for groups and institutions

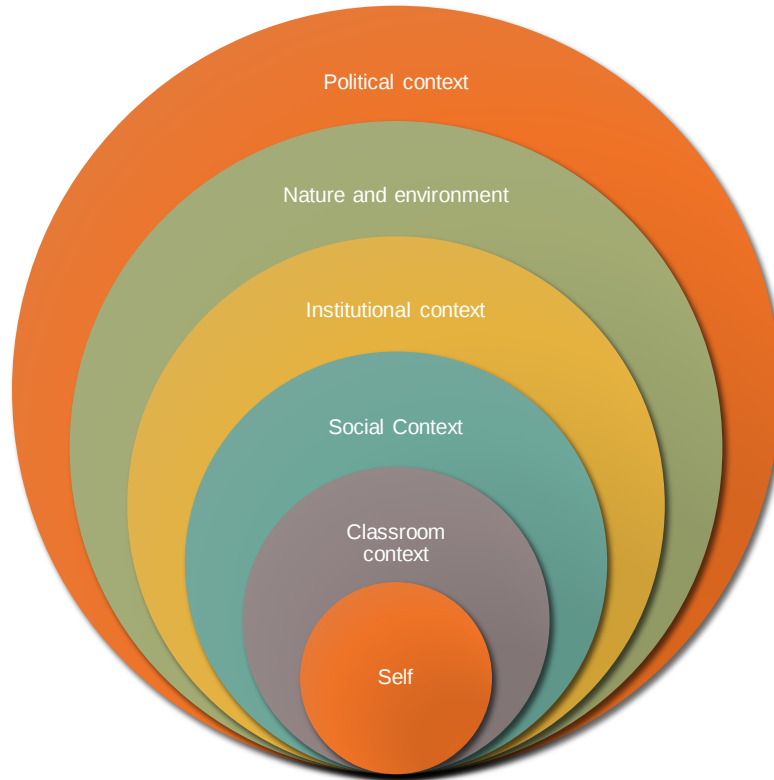
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However, it is simple if read in sentence when
 sentence, speech, or ^{thought} ^{thought} ^{thought}
 speaking and hearing further it will be understood. ^{clearly}
 People speaking this method need to think about
 words and their ^{which} conjunction, and this ^{ends to}
 * * *
 * * *
 increase their words power and as well as so
 to carry ^{then} it anywhere to ^{study} observe the language
 even in public transport.

Contexts



Themes

Building positive communities means.....

- Self-care
- Relationship with students
- Relationship with colleagues
- Autonomy
- Humour
- Valuing positive change
- Resistance as self-care (*'emotions as sites of resistance'* Benesch)

Personal : Teacher self-care



- Amal (Diary): I feel that **this is luxury for me** to pass [a particular shop] and get a cup of coffee I mean that I feel this is a luxury so it makes me really **happy**.

Interpersonal relations: relationships with students



Wafa (diary): After finishing the Mid Module Exam I brought pizza and surprised my students. They were so excited and grateful for me. I told them that you study and worked hard, so you need now to take a break and reward yourself. Of course, I joined them and we talked about our life and some of their interests. I felt so great because I was able to know more about my students and what they are interested in.

Interpersonal relations: relationships with colleagues



Kira (diary): *I had a nice relaxing lunch with my colleagues at work today. During lunch, my coordinator told me not to worry about teaching or not teaching on the summer programme*

...

To grow professionally sometimes all we need is to be surrounded by colleagues who make you believe in yourself. I feel lucky to be working in such supportive work environment.

Sharing a coffee



Nada:

***... so, it's not the coffee itself
it's the company that I have
around me.***

*So, when I have my
colleagues, which I'm in good
relationship with, it kind of
makes me feel safe at work*

Shared social spaces

Sara: Yes, at the teacher lounge ... we meet up about something, we, we learn from each other and we, like, lift each other. We motivate each other ... so it was a good thing to start the morning chatting with her.

Institutions and community:

It was like
I'd
discovered
gold...



Appreciation



Sandra (diary): *I attended our weekly staff meeting as usual today but to my surprise it was significantly shorter than the usual (which would make anyone's day).*

*The point I wanted to write about is the content of that meeting, **we were literally only invited to be thanked!** I felt extremely appreciated as it is always good to know you're on the right track.*

Notes of caution?

- 'The tyranny of positive attitude' (Held 2002)
- Neo-liberal discourse of self-reliance
- Accountability of emotions
- Manipulation of emotions to institutional ends



Enhancing the positive in workplaces

What 'secret door' could you ask your institution provide?

What is your institution doing in CV19 times?



A final positive note ...

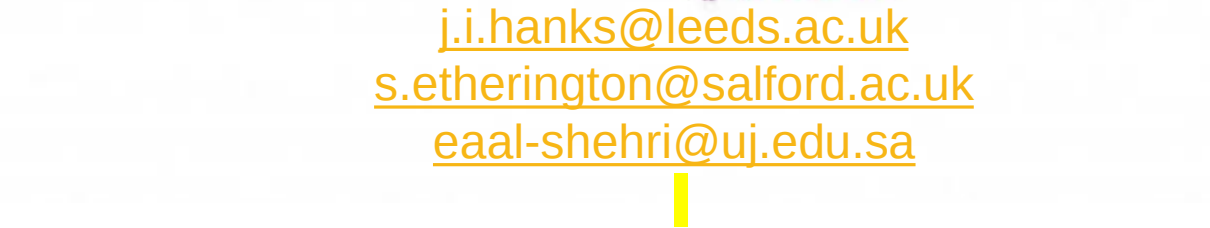
“Teaching is a radical act of hope. It is an assertion of faith in a better future in an increasingly uncertain and fraught present. It is a commitment to that future even if we can’t clearly discern its shape....

We teach because we believe it matters.”

Kevin Gannon (2020:5)



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