

***Love Teaching, Keep Teaching: The Essential Guide to Improving Wellbeing at All Levels in Schools* by Peter Radford**  
(Carmarthen: Crown House Publishing Company, 2020)

This book wants every teacher to get back to what they love about teaching and to do more of it, but in order for this to happen, teacher wellbeing must be prioritised. For Radford, if individuals reignite the passion they once had, then it will spur structural and collective changes. This, in turn, will positively impact students. The book is a call to arms: now, according to Radford, is the time to take the conversation around wellbeing further and to be change makers. In what's a very honest account, Radford is upfront with his reader: everyone can make a difference, but we must take the first step and make a different 'response' (p. 15)

This text is situated within the current retention and recruitment crisis, and its premise is to explore '[w]hat has gone wrong and how to fix it' (p. 3). The book has three parts, each focusing on a particular factor that led to Radford's departure from teaching. Part I concentrates on individual teacher wellbeing and how we, as individuals, must take responsibility for it. In Part II, Radford focuses on 'leadership, both in and out of the classroom' (p. 4). The final section is a 'challenge to change the culture of our schools and education system' (p. 10).

From the outset, Radford reminds his reader that they are human beings, not human 'doings' and, in order to flourish inside and outside the classroom, teachers must look after – and nourish – their whole selves. Throughout the book various wheel diagrams are used to show the different 'spokes' contributing to our makeup as individuals/leaders/school communities. The wheel image is important: individuals – and schools – are multifaceted, consisting of many 'spokes', so it's essential that a holistic approach is taken because, otherwise, we end up with reduced and impoverished schools and lives. Radford encourages the reader to complete their own wheels, giving themselves a score for each spoke. As well as being used individually, these wheels could be shared at departmental/SLT meetings to chart a school's journey of change.

In terms of individual wellbeing, Radford offers a note of reassurance to the reader, suggesting that the system results in us feeling as though we're failing. He encourages us to '[a]bandon' (p. 28) labels like 'perfectionism' and 'outstanding' and, instead, to celebrate ourselves as individuals. He urges teachers to dial-down their expectations to be the 'best' because this changes on a daily – even hourly – basis; therefore, aim for balance (which looks different for everyone) instead. 'Give yourself permission to be yourself and teach as yourself,' notes Radford. 'Abandon perfect. Commit to do your best. But remember to balance being your best as a dad or mum, and as a teacher, and as a friend and as a partner, and as a caregiver, and so on' (p. 28).

To help readers become a 'balanced' teacher, Radford uses the 'wheel of teaching', suggesting that eight key 'spokes' (involvement in school outside the classroom; planning/delivering lessons; teacher-learner relationships; feedback to students; admin; staff relationships; and innovative and creative input) are needed for the wheel to move. Radford shares practical tips and strategies, including managing email, and using CBT strategies to change our perspective on stressful situations and help empty our 'stress buckets' (p. 49). He also urges us to explore our core beliefs and rewrite them if needed because this will help us to gain clarity over our purpose and give us the confidence to keep asking 'Why?'. This questioning will then enable us 'to live and teach with balance, integrity and authenticity' and to 'slowly but surely change education for the better' (p. 99).

Whilst we are all leaders of our own lives and the domains we influence, Radford argues that those in a designated school leadership role actually need support on how to lead. 'We missed the point when we got promoted,' states Radford. 'We thought we were leading departments, projects and schools, but in fact we were leading people. It's just that no one ever told us how to do it' (p. 105). Radford explores how to support leaders in leadership, encouraging them to consider the type of leader they might be, drawing on a range of evidence-informed research, models and frameworks to inform his argument. The 'wheel of leadership' is presented to the reader and what a balanced leader might look like, and Radford argues that leaders need to be the change they want to see, and to take a 'person-centred, emotionally literate leadership' style (p. 193), where staff engagement is central. Radford shows his reader that '[w]hen teachers feel safe, invested in and valued, when their psychological needs are met and they have the freedom to be themselves, they flourish, innovate and give far beyond the

call of duty. A culture like this is either established or undermined by the team leader' (p. 119)

Extending this idea further, Radford argues that leaders at every level must be role-models. 'As leaders we should all be involved in a programme of learning, reading and discussing to develop ourselves, each other, our practice and our schools,' writes Radford. 'If we stop learning and pushing ourselves intellectually and practically, then we start regressing. We can't equip the next generation for the future if we are merely peddling the world we grew up in' (p. 154). A CPD book group is one suggestion Radford makes, adding to the idea that both the individual and the collective are key when it comes to transformation.

For Radford, we must view the individual (teacher, support staff, pupil, etc) and school culture holistically, celebrating everything we, as human beings, bring to the classroom and beyond. Radford offers the Game-Changing Index as a framework to show the diversity of a team, using this model to '[i]dentify' what constitutes a dynamic team and how to build one' (p. 167). He also advises that this type of framework could be implemented when recruiting staff. Adopting a holistic view, rather than one that is hierarchical, means we focus 'tasks around people, rather than people around tasks' (p. 180). Radford argues that this approach 'could create staff teams that flourish and take our schools in directions we never previously dreamed possible. The way it is now is not the way it has to be' (ibid).

Radford takes this latter point further in the final part of his text, proposing that the wheels of change can be taken to the 'macro level' (p.193) of education. Whilst Radford notes that 'some of the constraints and barriers inherent in the education system' have been 'inherited', we can still 'challenge and seek to change things' (p.193). When it comes to the 'wheel of education', the curriculum is one area we can question. For Radford, the curriculum must alter to reflect the shifting job market and world our students are entering. As with teachers, we must think about the whole child so that we're producing 'global citizens' (p. 208). Radford discusses the 'Rights Respecting Schools Award' as a framework and how it nurtures 'good human beings' (p. 210). Radford contends that '[h]olistic education, or some variation of it, is not merely an idea. It is a right. It is not a privilege; it is what children are entitled to. And it is our duty as adults to provide it' (p. 220). According to Radford, we must 'reshape our system and provision to deliver a truly rights-respecting education that successfully produces outstanding global citizens of whom we can be truly proud' (ibid).

Part of this ‘reshap[ing]’ is linked to measurement. In an educational climate promoting data and performance, holistic teachers, students, and schools can be side-lined; however, as Radford notes, ‘[t]he problem is that using one fairly simplistic measure never tells the whole truth’ (p. 221). In order to tell ‘the whole truth’, Radford proposes the following: ‘not to measure the outcome, the focal objective, but to devise a robust balance of subsidiary measures which will collectively enable us to tack our way forward for each student in our care’ (p. 226). This approach – including learning goals rather than performance goals – will keep the wheels of change moving forward because, as Radford claims, ‘[i]f we take a more rounded view of student progress, it will undoubtedly impact on the way we think about teacher accountability for that progress and lead to a more holistic appreciation of the multifaceted role of the teacher and, by extension, schools’ (p. 235)

For Radford, ‘to compare teachers on one or two crude measures devalues them and the teaching profession, and negatively impacts on the incredible human beings they nurture’ (p. 226). If we are to address the recruitment and retention crisis, and start a new journey, then we must begin respecting teachers as people. Yet, individual teachers must start valuing this too because each spoke on the wheel of a school has a part to play. So, let’s ‘give ourselves permission to imagine different ways of doing things’ (p. 194)

*Lucy Kelly*