

Managing Emotions and Coping in a Context of Work Intensification

Cameron Hauseman
University of Manitoba

Abstract

Work intensification has heightened and accelerated the need for Canadian school principals to manage their emotions. This case explores the emotional aspects of a contemporary principal's work in a large urban school and highlights effective coping strategies and approaches used to regulate her emotions. The teaching notes describe several activities that can strengthen leadership capacity and ensure that participants engage with current research on emotions and work intensification. Activities include identification and evaluation of coping, emotional regulation strategies, scripted and improvisational role play, and structured reflection.

Keywords: school leadership, principals' work, work intensification, managing emotions, emotional aspects of leadership

Case Narrative

Stephanie is an experienced principal with nine years in the role at three different secondary schools. She is in her second year as the principal of Bayside Secondary School. Bayside is a large comprehensive secondary school with approximately 1,300 students enrolled. The school is located in Bridgetown—a highly diverse, urbanized, and rapidly expanding metropolitan centre with a total population of over 700,000 people. The municipal government views the community surrounding Bayside as a “priority neighbourhood” due to low socioeconomic status.

Although Stephanie loves her job, her work continues to be impacted by several aspects of work intensification, a phenomenon experienced by principals across Canada (ATA 2017a; 2017b; Hauseman, Pollock & Wang, 2017; Pollock, 2016). Work intensification limits Stephanie's ability to effectively manage her emotions and perform as an instructional leader (Hauseman, 2018). Specifically, Stephanie has noticed her workload intensifying over the past five years, as she is working longer hours and the pace of her work is increasing (ATA, 2012; Hauseman et al., 2017; Green, 2004; Pollock, 2016; Starr & White, 2009). Like many contemporary principals, the proliferation of information and communications technology (ICT) is another factor that intensifies Stephanie's work—she responds to well over 100 emails, from a variety of stakeholders, every day (ATA 2017b; Pollock & Hauseman, 2018).

Managing emotions has likely always been a part of being an effective school leader (Pierce, 1935). One result of work intensification in the past few decades, however, is that the emotional aspects of contemporary principals' work are heightened (ATA, 2017a, 2017b; Pollock, 2016). For principals to experience success in the role, they now *must* effectively manage their emotions (Hauseman, 2018). The case below describes a typical day in Stephanie's life as the principal of Bayside, which includes many of the emotionally challenging situations she encounters. This case demonstrates the impact of work intensification on the emotional aspects of principals' work and documents strategies for coping and effectively managing emotions in a positive manner.

A Day in the Life of a Contemporary Principal

Stephanie wakes abruptly at 5:30 a.m. and immediately checks her email. Since putting her phone down at 10:30 p.m. the previous night, she has received 30 new emails. She sighs heavily and takes her phone into the bathroom. Although she tries to get at least seven hours of sleep each night, which her doctor suggested would help her better manage her stress and emotions, a solid seven hour rest is rare. Sitting groggily on her toilet, she reads message after message informing her that she needs to schedule follow-up meetings for numerous teacher performance appraisals, and complete various reports for the district office. Then Stephanie moves into her office and continues working on email until 6:30 a.m.

“Crap,” she says, looking at the clock. “I need to pack my gym bag.”

As she pulls on her pantyhose, she hears the email notification on her phone going off repeatedly in the other room. She can already feel the tightening in her chest; it was getting worse day by day—as soon as she starts to fall behind on her daily tasks, the anxiety starts to set in.

“Maybe I just need to sweat it out,” she said out loud to herself.

An hour later, she leaves the gym feeling a bit lighter. Upon the suggestion of her therapist, she uses the gym to, as Dr. Ahmad suggested, “blow off steam.” Since becoming a principal nine years ago, Stephanie finds she has to blow off steam more than most people.

Stephanie gets into her car and immediately turns on her favourite radio station. She had recently attended an in-service workshop where the facilitators suggested that listening to music could help education workers cope with emotionally draining situations.

“Or an emotionally draining life,” she snorts to herself.

It is 8:25 a.m. when Stephanie arrives at the school. While walking to her office, Stephanie encounters a parent who wants to discuss why her child’s teacher is asking him to resubmit an assignment due to concerns about plagiarism.

“So it begins,” Stephanie mutters, taking three deep breaths—another technique she uses to deal with her regular flare-ups of frustration and anger.

The meeting is long and complicated. One of the student’s older siblings serves as an interpreter because the parent does not speak conversational English. After speaking with the student and his family, Stephanie decides that the student did not understand the assignment and can resubmit the paper without suffering additional consequences.

As the student and his family leave her office shortly after 9:30 a.m., she feels uneasy. Stephanie is concerned that the student’s tutor completed the plagiarized assignment, and that it may happen again. Further, she starts to feel worried that she is giving the student a pass unnecessarily, and that this would establish an unintended precedent.

“I should go talk to Karen,” she thinks. Stephanie immediately walks into her vice-principal’s office. In the last year or so, Stephanie began discussing emotionally challenging situations with members of her administrative team. She finds that these discussions are an effective strategy for managing her emotions as they can often offer fresh perspectives on situations or reaffirm her initial impressions.

Stephanie leaves Karen’s office around 10:00 a.m. and walks to a science classroom on the other side of the school. It is time to conduct teacher performance appraisals, and she is preparing to observe a Grade 11 science lesson on invasive species. Thankfully, the lesson goes extremely well; Stephanie feels happy and affirmed because the teacher effectively used the resources she had suggested during an earlier meeting. After scheduling a time with the teacher to discuss his thoughts on the lesson, Stephanie walks back to her office. Along the way, she starts to ruminate on the outcome of her meeting earlier in the morning. Not wanting to let anxiety derail the positive in-class experience she had just had, she distracts herself by picking up garbage in the hallway for ten minutes.

By 11:45 a.m., Stephanie is back in her office and answering more emails. She keeps her eye on the clock, as she has to be in the cafeteria at noon to supervise students eating lunch. She stays in her office until 11:58 a.m. and hurries down to the cafeteria. Recently, there has been a spate of fights over the lunch hour, so Stephanie consciously strolls between tables and jokes with several students; she finds that this strategy promotes positive student behaviour throughout the lunch period. After lunch, Stephanie heads back to her office for a meeting with her math department head. Stephanie’s supervisory officer is concerned about the school’s provincial test scores in mathematics—something that is considerably adding to her daily stress. Stephanie wants to discuss the logistics of scheduling a professional learning session to provide the math department with an opportunity to engage in collaborative planning and refine their

instructional approaches for the following school year and is eager to get this process started.

After a successful meeting with the receptive department head, other members of the school's administrative team—the head secretary, vice-principals, among others—arrive at 1:15 p.m. for their weekly meeting. Stephanie usually avoids scheduling back-to-back meetings as a proactive strategy for managing her emotions because it gives her time to prepare and reflect. Today, she discusses several operational issues and concerns regarding some of the students at the school with her staff. It is a difficult meeting with no easy answers. After the meeting ends at 2:15 p.m., she calls her spouse to get a sense of how her day is going. Stephanie often checks in with friends and family during this point in the day, as she finds that distancing herself from school-based activities, for fifteen minutes or so, helps her manage her emotions on busy and challenging days.

On the phone, her spouse comments that Stephanie sounds exhausted, and then begins walking her through various breathing exercises. She tells Stephanie that, as it has already been an emotionally draining day, she probably does not have enough emotional energy to deal with her supervisory officer's questions about provincial test scores and other accountability measures. At the behest of her wife, Stephanie calls her supervisory officer at 2:30 p.m. to reschedule their 4:00 p.m. meeting at the district's central office.

After calling her supervisory officer, Stephanie looks at her phone and sees a message from her spouse: "Stephanie, I'm the one who has to listen to you talk in your sleep about test scores. Go do something that feels good—go watch the students rehearse the one-act plays!"

Acquiescing, Stephanie walks to the drama class and watches some of her students rehearse a play. Her ability to select the situations she participates in—having that kind of autonomy over her work—makes Stephanie feel that she is able to manage her emotions effectively. After the rehearsal finishes, Stephanie tells the drama teacher that she will attend at least one of the performances because there are only a few staff members willing to supervise events at the school that occur outside regular operating hours. As she is legally accountable for anything and everything that happens at the school, Stephanie feels that it is her responsibility to be present whenever the school is open.

Stephanie walks back to her office to find five teachers waiting to speak with her. This occurrence is a familiar 3:00 p.m. ritual at Bayside, as teachers usually like to speak with Stephanie about various issues prior to leaving for the day. She usually enjoys this activity, as she gets to coach, mentor, and help members of her teaching staff work through operational issues, or give them advice about dealing with situational concerns. Stephanie finishes speaking with all of the teachers by 3:45 p.m. and begins answering emails at her desk. After about fifteen minutes, she stops to participate in a scheduled meeting with representatives from an after-school program that uses break-dancing, beat-boxing, and other elements of hip-hop to increase student engagement. Although engaging in school-community partnerships intensifies Stephanie's work, this initiative seems well suited to her student population, so she agrees to try out the program. After the meeting, she walks to her other vice-principal's office to help him prepare for an upcoming interview to join the school district's principal pool. As with teachers, Stephanie finds that mentoring her vice-principals and helping them develop leadership skills feels meaningful—that she is making an impact—which helps her effectively manage her emotions, even if it results in more work.

At 5:30 p.m., Stephanie gets in her car and starts driving home. Feeling completely emotionally drained, she suppresses any thoughts or feelings about the day in an attempt to maintain the little emotional energy she has left for her family. After arriving at home, Stephanie kisses her partner and children, immediately changes into her gardening clothes and heads outside. She usually gardens between work and family time to gain some mental and emotional distance from her work at the school, to reappraise her emotions, and to reflect on the various situations experienced throughout the workday. After eating dinner, she sits on the couch with her family and watches her favourite television show. At 10:00 p.m., Stephanie checks her email one last time before going to sleep, knowing she will wake up to many more in a few hours. Even though the long days and emotional labour tied to the principalship can be challenging, Stephanie has never regretted becoming a principal and cannot imagine doing anything else.

Teaching Notes

The case narrative is designed to highlight the challenging emotional aspects of contemporary principals' work in a context of work intensification, as well as the difficulties school leaders may encounter when attempting to manage their emotions effectively and positively.

Given the practical nature of this case, it can be used to support professional learning opportunities for current school leaders, professional qualification programming for prospective school leaders, and graduate-level courses in educational leadership and administration. Below, I describe three activities that can ensure participants engage with the research on emotions and work intensification and connect this research to their own practice. In doing so, the activities encourage current and prospective school leaders to make evidence-informed decisions and apply job-based knowledge in a realistic setting. Furthermore, the details of the case narrative can assist aspiring principals and prospective school leaders to develop a better understanding of the emotional nature of administrative work in contemporary times. Finally, instructors in graduate-level classes can use these activities to encourage participants to make connections to practice and engage with the research on emotions and work intensification.

The first activity asks participants to identify and evaluate the effectiveness of the various strategies for managing emotions that Stephanie utilizes throughout the case narrative. The second activity involves participants engaging in scripted and/or improvisational role play. These activities encourage participants to engage in active learning as they can experience the emotional aspects of contemporary school leadership in a supportive environment (Cranston & Kusanovich, 2013; Meyer, 2001). Finally, engaging in a reflective process is another way that participants can learn about strategies that they then can use to manage their emotions effectively and cope in a context of work intensification. Prior to beginning the case teaching activities, students are encouraged to explore the following suggested readings and resources to complement and deepen their understanding of work intensification.

- **Pollock (2016)** documents how changes in the educational climate and broader societal shifts influence the work school leaders engage in on a daily basis. Specifically, this article focuses on how changing student demographics, student mental health concerns, and the influx of e-mail and other forms of information and communications technology have accelerated the pace of work intensification for school leaders in Ontario. This article is also useful as it highlights the individual and systemic consequences associated with work intensification, such as burnout and difficulty recruiting and retaining quality school leaders.
- **Gross (2013)** identifies five families of strategies that individuals use to manage their emotions. These five categories include: (1) *situation selection*, (2) *situation modification*, (3) *attentional deployment*, (4) *cognitive change*, and (5) *response modulation*. In practice, the different emotional regulation strategies can produce different outcomes in the individuals that employ them. For example, many of the strategies associated with the situation selection, situation modification, and cognitive change families of emotional regulation are *adaptive*, which means they are associated with positive outcomes. These adaptive strategies are more effective at managing emotions than *maladaptive* strategies nested within attentional deployment, which are associated with negative outcomes and are maladaptive in nature. Finally, the response modulation family of emotional regulation contains strategies that can either be adaptive (e.g., exercise, getting enough sleep, spending time with friends and family) or maladaptive (e.g., expressive suppression) depending on the context in which they are utilized.
- **Miller (2016)** problematizes the notion of work intensification for contemporary school leaders. The most compelling aspect of this resource is how work intensification has led school leaders to view their roles in the following three ways: (1) judge (leader, interpreter of policies and procedures, decision-maker); (2) jury (scrutinize evidence, hand down judgments); and (3) executioner (disciplinarian, monitoring, quality assurance). This understanding of roles is important as societal expectations for what principals and other school leaders should be doing may not align with the role(s) they see themselves currently in.
- **Ontario Principals' Council (2017)** uses data gathered from 70 delegates from Canada and across the world to describe several approaches that school leaders and their professional associations can engage in to mitigate the impact of work intensification. These approaches include sharing advice and information about well-being, engaging in continued professional learning on topics related to well-being and work-life balance, mentoring/coaching, and using evidence to inform policies that influence principals and their work. This resource also contains several recommendations that jurisdictions and professional associations can implement to better support their current crop of school leaders. For example, some of the recommendations involve advocating for school and system-level supports, the development and delivery of meaningful professional

learning opportunities, and redefining the roles played by school leaders in contemporary times.

Activity 1: Strategy Identification and Evaluation

Work intensification has heightened the emotional aspects of contemporary school leaders' work. The case narrative describes Stephanie using several strategies to manage her emotions that are associated with all five families of Gross' (2013) process model for emotional regulation (e.g., situation selection, asking the perspectives of others, exercise, distancing, rumination, distraction, etc.). *Table 1* displays Gross' (2013) five families of emotional regulation and identifies whether each emotional regulation strategy is positive (adaptive) or associated with negative outcomes (maladaptive). The strategies that Stephanie uses to manage her emotions in the case narrative are in italics.

Table 1
Gross' (2013) five families of emotional regulation

Adaptive	Maladaptive
<p>Response modulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Exercise</i> • <i>Getting enough sleep</i> • <i>Spending time with friends and family</i> • <i>Participating in hobbies</i> 	<p>Response Modulation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Expressive suppression (suppressing one's true feelings to portray a desired emotional state)</i>
<p>Situation selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Choosing the activity one participates in (e.g., Stephanie choosing to visit students and mentoring staff)</i> • <i>Engaging with, or avoiding people or situations to generate an intended emotional state</i> 	<p>Attentional deployment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Rumination</i> • <i>Distraction</i> • <i>Worrying</i> • <i>Thought suppression</i>
<p>Situation modification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Asking others for their perspective on an emotionally challenging situation</i> • <i>Using humour</i> 	
<p>Cognitive change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Reappraisal (changing how one thinks about a situation to alter their emotional state)</i> 	

The strategy identification and evaluation activity involves the following five parts:

1. In small groups, students can discuss the cycle of emotions Stephanie experiences throughout her work day and how those experiences can heighten the impact of work intensification. For example, was Stephanie effective at managing her own emotions and those of others in the situations described in the case narrative? Describe what you would do differently (or the same) if you were one of the following characters: (a) Stephanie, (b) Stephanie's spouse, or (c) Karen (the vice-principal).
2. After reading the Gross (2013) and the Ontario Principals' Council (2017) articles, participants should be able to identify at least eight strategies Stephanie uses to cope with work intensification and manage her emotions throughout the case narrative.

3. Then participants can determine if the strategies Stephanie engages in would help them cope and manage their emotions when faced with similar situations in their daily work.
4. After identifying and evaluating the various strategies, the instructor can revisit the Gross (2013) and Ontario Principals' Council (2017) readings to help participants determine whether the strategies they use to cope with the impact of work intensification and manage their emotions are associated with positive or negative outcomes. Instructors may want to share *Table 1* with participants at this stage of the activity.
5. To consolidate learning gained from this activity, participants can document how they would replace any maladaptive strategies they use to cope with work intensification and manage their emotions with some of the adaptive and more effective strategies discussed by Gross (2013) and used by Stephanie in the case narrative. Why do they think the adaptive strategies would be more effective (or not)?

Activity 2: Role Play

Dramatizing, exploring, and cognitively engaging with a scripted work can provide participants with an opportunity to collaboratively bridge the gap between theory and practice. For example, role play can provide participants with an opportunity to practice utilizing evidence-based strategies to solve administrative problems that result from work intensification, as well as strategies for managing their emotions in a safe and supportive setting (Cranston & Kusanovich, 2013; Meyer, 2001). Instructors can lead students through both scripted and improvisational role play activities based on the case narrative presented in this article. Prior to engaging in these role play activities, participants should read the Miller (2016) and Pollock (2016) readings to develop a sense of the impact work intensification has on contemporary principals. Furthermore, students should also engage with the Gross (2013) and the Ontario Principals' Council (2017) readings to become familiar with the effectiveness of various evidence-based strategies individuals use to manage their emotions. Below, I have provided an example of a scripted role play scenario based on Stephanie's workday. As with all of the activities included in these teaching notes, instructors who use this case narrative are encouraged to develop their own scenarios, or even provide alternate endings for the scenario included below.

Characters:

- Principal Stephanie
- Vice-Principal Karen

Stephanie enters her vice-principal's office shortly after finishing a meeting with a student, his sister, and a parent. His teacher accused the student of plagiarism. Stephanie initially thinks the student did not understand the expectations of this assignment and decides to allow him to resubmit the assignment. However, based on comments from the student and his family, Stephanie is concerned that the student's tutor completed the plagiarized assignment, and is worried that it may happen again. Stephanie speaks with the student's vice-principal in an effort to confirm her initial impressions or to gain a new perspective on the situation.

Stephanie: Hey, do you have a minute?

Vice-Principal: Sure. What's going on?

S: Just had an interesting meeting with Rami and his family.

VP: About what?

S: Ms. Martinez thought he plagiarized one of assignment for 11U English.

VP: Did he?

S: Well, he talked about how he worked on the assignment with his tutor and the paper he submitted is

quite different than some of the work he has done in class.

VP: Did you let him have it?

S: Not exactly. It was a tough meeting! He was crying, and then he started getting frustrated because he was having trouble expressing himself. If his older sister was not there to translate, we still might be in my office trying to get to the bottom of this. Anyway, I decided to give him a second chance to complete the assignment, but something feels off.

VP: Bad idea! I spoke with a few of his teachers, and they mentioned his work has improved dramatically since he started going to a tutor.

S: So...you think the tutor is doing the work for him?

VP: 100%.

S: Hmm. I am worried that the tutor did most of the work on the assignment that Ms. Martinez thought was plagiarized.

VP: I think you should have set an example with that kid. Students in this school need to know that plagiarism and cheating is not okay, and I worry you just sent the wrong message. What does Ms. Martinez want done about the situation?

S: [Laughing] She wants me to throw down the hammer. Well, after speaking with Rami and his family, I got the impression that he is struggling to keep his head above water. His English language skills are improving, but like I just said, his older sister still had to translate a lot of what I was saying for him and his mother.

VP: So, the kid still has a language barrier... I didn't think you would be such a softy for the ELL (English Language Learner) kids! If they don't learn the language, they won't be able to go very far, you know. You have to give those kids some tough love, or they'll never know what it is like in Canada.

S: But that is the issue. He just didn't have a solid understanding of the assignment or the expectations tied to it. It seemed like a massive miscommunication to me. At the end of the day, we should be supporting our ELL population, not punishing them because something is lost in translation.

VP: How do we do that? How do we make sure these miscommunications don't happen in the future? Once Rami tells his friends he got off the hook, they'll start cheating too!

S: Relax! If we support all of our students and help them develop skills, they'll be able to do the work on their own. The ELL students are no different, but you're right if you're saying this one miscommunication is not an isolated incident.

VP: How do we move forward with Rami?

S: To your point, this may be part of a larger issue as our ELL population may not feel fully supported by the school, especially when students are being punished and they don't understand the reason why. [Long pause.] What are your thoughts on heading up a committee to find partnerships with community agencies that can help students and their families learn English and transition to a Canadian context?

VP: [Laughing] Am I really the best person for that job?

S: Totally. All of our students need to feel supported, and you do a great job of motivating the staff and getting buy-in. Can I count on you?

VP: Sure.

S: Awesome! Let me know how it goes. Looking forward to hearing about your progress at our next admin team meeting.

END

I have provided some suggested questions for reflection or discussion after participants have dramatized the scenario. Instructors can ask participants to complete some, or all, of these questions individually, or use them to initiate class discussion.

1. What was your initial impression of the scenario? For example, was the scenario realistic or similar to a situation you have encountered in your work? How was it the same/different? (The instructor can also probe for participants' perceptions of the characters' values, actions and reactions).
2. Did your initial impression change after engaging in the dramatized scenario?
3. What were you fighting for in the scenario? Did you achieve your goals?
4. Could you have used any other tactics to achieve your goals in the scenario? What are they?
5. Did any of the choices that other participants made surprise you? Why was this the case?
6. How would you react if faced with a similar situation in your daily work? Would your choices and tactics differ from those used by Stephanie or Karen in the scripted role play scenario?
7. Are there any other possible alternate endings to the scenario? Do the alternate endings result in additional scenarios where Stephanie (or others) will have to manage her emotions? If so, participants can consult Gross (2013) to identify the emotional regulation strategy(ies) and describe why they would be appropriate.
8. Would engaging in any other strategies found in the Gross (2013) or Ontario Principals' Council (2017) readings be a more effective approach for Stephanie to manage her emotions after the parent meeting that precipitates the scripted role play scenario?

This scripted role play activity is important because it gives participants a taste of the daily realities of being a school leader—including work intensification and the emotional aspects of their work—by having them act out scripted scenarios that are based on real encounters. Portraying a role can provide participants with insight into how work intensification influences school leadership, help them develop a sense of empathy, and develop a better understanding for the difficulties of managing competing and overlapping demands from different stakeholder groups (Cranston & Kusanovich, 2013; Meyer, 2001).

As mentioned before, instructors can also use improvisational role play as an alternative to the scripted scenario described above. Improvisational role play can help participants better understand how work intensification influences the work of contemporary school leaders by simulating the spontaneous nature of contemporary schools (Baile & Blatner, 2014). The instructor can propose that participants improvise some, or all, of the situations Stephanie experiences in the case description (e.g., overwhelmed by e-mail or text messages, meetings with the school's administrative team, interactions with students and parents, etc.). Then, participants can depict or describe the strategies they would use to manage their emotions and cope with work intensification if faced with a similar situation in their daily work. The same questions provided for the scripted role play activity can be used to stimulate discussion and encourage reflection after engaging in an improvised role play. Instructors can also refer to Gross' (2013) five families of emotional regulation after completing an improvised role play activity to promote positive and adaptive strategies principals.

Activity 3: Reflection

Finally, participants in principal qualification programs and/or graduate studies can be encouraged to reflect on the examples of work intensification, coping, and managing emotions found in Stephanie's workday. This activity encourages participants to learn from prior situations by evaluating the effectiveness of the coping strategies and approach(es) utilized when they have experienced work intensification and difficulty effectively managing their emotions.

Structured reflection is a reflective practice that can help individuals identify unconscious inner influences on their leadership practices (Branson, 2007). Instructors can lead participants in a structured reflection activity using the following six-step method:

1. **Use the literature to structure the reflection.** Instructors can structure the reflection by having participants read literature that explores the nature of work intensification on contemporary school leaders' work, such as the Pollock (2016), Miller (2016) and the Ontario Principals' Council (2017) resources (see list above). Instructors can remind participants to focus on identifying evidence-based strategies for effectively managing emotions and mitigating the impact of work intensification.
2. **Guide the reflection.** Have participants identify a situation or event in their role as a current or aspiring school leader that relates to Stephanie's experiences managing her emotions in a context of work intensification. For example, they may have experienced difficulty managing their emotions when under work stress or trying to meet tight deadlines.
3. **Reflection on the situation.** Start by asking participants to describe any contextual factors related to the situation, such as the other individuals involved and their respective goals. Then have them consider the following prompts:
 - a. How the situation involved the various aspects of work intensification?
 - b. Would any of the strategies identified in the literature help them better navigate that situation?
 - c. What made it difficult to manage emotions in the situation?
 - d. Did other people involved in the situation do anything to make participants feel a given emotion?
 - e. Did the participants do anything to manipulate the emotions of others in the situation?
 - f. Which emotions (both positive and negative) did participants feel in that situation?
 - g. How participants managed the resulting emotions and whether or not the situation include any opportunities for learning?

These prompts provide a solid foundation for the reflection activity. Instructors can have participants respond to each of the seven prompts, or have participants explore the prompts that interest them in greater depth.

4. **Evaluate and revise.** After engaging in the reflection process, the instructor can ask participants to identify and evaluate how they used their own strengths to overcome the impact of work intensification, as well as how the situation revealed any of their weaknesses. Furthermore, participants can determine if any of the strategies identified in the suggested readings and resources would have helped them better navigate that situation.
5. **Behaviour change.** After participants evaluate the situation, the instructor can have participants describe how—or if—they would change their behaviour and strategies for managing emotions or coping with work intensification if they encountered the situation again.
6. **Areas for improvement.** Now participants can identify any potential areas of learning or improvement that can help manage their emotions more effectively in the future. For example, if Stephanie were to engage in reflective practice, she may discover that one of the reasons she has difficulty working with her Supervisory Officer is because she values independence and tries to create an environment where she delegates responsibility and, as a result, helps develop her staff and colleagues' skills.

After guiding participants to engage in self-reflection, instructors can use some of these questions in a *think-pair-share* activity (Fitzgerald, 2013). Participants initially answer one question by themselves, then pair up with another member of the class to discuss their responses. Once that is complete, students share their learning and reflections with the whole class. Instructors can extend this activity by asking groups of participants to answer the following questions:

- h. How did your ability to manage your emotions in the situation differ from your partner?
- i. How was it the same?
- j. Is there anything you can learn from your partner's situation, or how they managed their emotions in that situation?

The instructor can also encourage participants to engage in structured self-reflection on their own time (Branson, 2007). Taken together, the structured reflection and think-pair-share activities should

inspire participants to reflect on and articulate the various problems of practice found in the case details, and devise solutions for mitigating challenges associated with work intensification in the future.

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