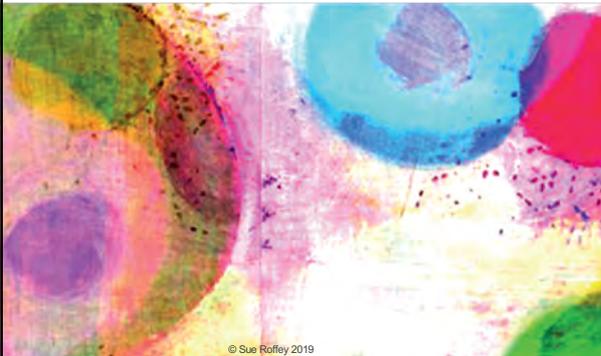


 **DOUBLE WHAMMY KIDS AND THE MICRO-MOMENTS OF CHANGE**



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 **WHAT THIS KEYNOTE WILL COVER**

- Reminders of what you already know.
- What happens to children at home and at school? Facts and stats.
- A quick look at epigenetics and neuropsychology
- Behaviourist policies are limited so what do you do instead?
- What we know about resilience and positive education
 - Relationships
 - Belonging
 - Expectations
- Universal and eco-systemic wellbeing in schools
- It is not just policies that matter, it is the micro-moments of interaction

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 **AFFIRMATION**

- You will already know much of this
- Although this presentation is all based in evidence, people don't do things on the basis of evidence but on belief and ideology.
- No such thing as a quick fix
- But multiple, consistent positive interventions lead to significant changes over time

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 **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT
TEACHERS TURN LIVES AROUND**

- Teachers are often judged by academic outcomes
- Few acknowledge just how much difference teachers can make in the lives of their students
- Whatever a young person brings with them is either modified or exacerbated by what happens at school
- We need to acknowledge – and honour - this at every level.

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 **SOME CURRENT FACTS AND FIGURES**

- 2017 1 in 8 children have a diagnosed mental health difficulty –
- In 2017-18, there were 198,090 investigations into possible harm to children, up 56% since 2012-13
- In 2018 4.5 million children were living in poverty in the UK (Social Metrics Commission)
- The UK has one of the highest rates of family instability in the developed world, in particular among cohabiting couples with children under twelve (DeRose et al, 2017).
- About 1 in 5 children are exposed to domestic abuse
- Figures from ONS suggest 244,000 people under 19 are carers - about 23,000 are under nine.

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 **PUNISHED, DISCONNECTED FROM A SYSTEM THAT CAN'T COPE**

- Fixed period exclusions increased, from 4.29 per cent of pupil enrolments in 2015/16 to 4.76 per cent in 2016/17.
- The number of permanent exclusions has also increased, from 339,360 to 381,865.
- The highest numbers are those with special educational needs.

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 **DOUBLE WHAMMY KIDS**

- Things happen to children that they have little control over:
 - Loss
 - Family conflict
 - Abuse and/or neglect
 - Unhelpful parenting styles
- **THEIR MENTAL HEALTH, BEHAVIOUR AND RELATIONSHIPS ALL TAKE A HIT**
- These students often find it harder than others to concentrate, focus, learn, make friends or be compliant
- This can make them disruptive and hard to manage.
- They often get into trouble at school and end up being punished, sometimes excluded.
- **MISERABLE /HURT AT HOME DISLIKED / UNWANTED AT SCHOOL**
- We have to think differently and do things differently

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 **NO CHILD IS BORN BAD
THE SCIENCE OF EPIGENETICS**

- Babies are born with different sensitivities, innate strengths and challenges but none are born bad.
- We all have different genetic pre-dispositions
- Epigenetics is the impact of environment on genetic expression
- It is far greater than we ever imagined.
- Not only rats but human beings
- The most important factor in the environment is the quality of relationships the child experiences. Everywhere.

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 **ALTERNATIVE MICRO-MOMENTS**

- From: Roffey, S. (2012) *Changing Behaviour: Promoting positive relationships and wellbeing*. Sage Publications
- Every Opportunity Video showing two identical scenarios with different interactions between adults and pupils

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VxyxywShewI>

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 **IMAGINE...**

- School A:
 - Hierarchical structure.
 - High levels of control / conformity
 - Limited opportunities for participation/consultation
 - Emphasis on academic success / winning
 - Low tolerance of difficult behaviours.
 - Focus on getting rid of problems
 - Promotes itself as a 'good school' with excellent results
- School B:
 - Focus on the quality of relationships throughout
 - Emphasis on the value of the 'whole child'
 - Has high expectations for all
 - Values diversity and inclusion – and creativity
 - Structures opportunities for participation
 - Focuses on strengths not deficits
 - Promotes itself as a 'caring school.'

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 **ASK YOURSELF?**

- Which school would you rather work in?
- Which school would you prefer your own children to attend?
- Which is more likely to have better behaviour?
- Which is more likely to promote mental health and wellbeing?
- Which school is likely to have more engaged students
- Which is therefore more likely to achieve better academic outcomes for everyone?

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 **A FOCUS ON SCHOOL AND STUDENT WELLBEING ENHANCES...**

- Academic engagement and achievement
- Mental health and resilience
- Pro-social behaviour and a socially responsible life-style
- A focus on relational quality in school also enhances teacher wellbeing
- Wellbeing and resilience is about the whole child, and the whole school

© Sue Roffey 2018 (Noble, T., McGrath, H., Roffey, S. & Rowling, L. (2008) Federal Scoping Study on Student Wellbeing)

WHAT PROMOTES RESILIENCE AND POSITIVE ADAPTATION?

- Having someone in your life believe that you are a worthwhile person and lets you know. The crux of a positive relationship
- High expectations – not giving up on anyone. Identifying their strengths and giving them something to live up to.
- Problem-solving skills - asking good questions, not giving answers.
- Primarily positive thoughts and emotions
- Value and enhance positive emotions - feeling valued, comfortable, able, supported, included.

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CONNECTION, CONNECTION...

- Feeling you belong, you are accepted and you matter is one of the strongest factors for resilience and wellbeing
 - Goes beyond wearing a uniform or cheering on the school team
 - Students who do not feel they belong have no investment in the system

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CONNECTEDNESS INCLUDES...

- Feeling good about yourself with others
- Feeling you matter to the group
- Feeling your contributions are valued
- Seeing yourself as successful
- Being able to re-connect when things go wrong

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SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS

- Journal of School Health
- September 2004
- Volume 74 Number 7

Aimed at High Schools and teenagers but much of it applies to all schools and students. Mostly US focused but findings are applicable universally in western education settings

- <http://www.ibsnh.edu/wingspread/Septemberissue.pdf>

Strategies for improving school connections
www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/adolescenthealth/pdf/connectedness.pdf

- Asian Journal of Counselling – Special Issue: 2011
- 'International perspectives on connectedness in children and adolescents,'
- Vol. 18 Nos. 1 & 2

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SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICIES

- Usually based in behaviourism ie. reward for compliance, sanctions for 'unacceptable' behaviour.
- Seems entirely reasonable but in fact only works for those where most things in their lives are going OK. And for many young people who are doing well simple disappointment is enough.
- Where children are experiencing strong negative emotions they don't much care about the rules. They are interested in self-protection, however they envisage this. Sometimes this means trying to get back into control.
- How about giving students control / agency whenever we can?

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IN CHARGE OR IN CONTROL?

Caring and in Charge	Controlling	Example of practical application in school
Supporting	Criticising	'How can I help?'
Encouraging	Blaming	'Tomorrow is another day, let's try again then.'
Listening	Complaining	'What happened? What did you want to happen?'
Accepting	Nagging	'That didn't go well. How can we move on and make this better?'
Trusting	Threatening	'I will come back later and see how you have got on.'
Respecting	Punishing	'The decision is yours - but you need to know the consequences.'
Negotiating difference	Bribing, rewarding to control	'Let's see if we can both get what we want here?'

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 THE MEDICAL, 'WITHIN CHILD' MODEL

- Conduct disorder
- Oppositional defiance disorder
- Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder

All of these are a description of behaviour, there is no medical, chemical, biological marker for illness

Labels are very sticky, determine perceptions for both the child and adults and are political as they influence policies.

The DSM 5 (the Diagnostic and Statistics Manual – also known as the psychiatrist's bible) is a highly controversial document.

If you can label something a 'disorder' you can develop a drug for it.

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 THE INTERACTIVE MODEL

Things have happened to the child
The child's behaviour is a response
The child is not 'disordered'

Things need to change in the child's environment so things can change for the child

The family / teacher need guidance and support in doing this.

Can be pro-active and preventative

The language of strengths and solutions

○

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 RELATIONSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS



- Roffey, S. 'Ordinary magic' needs ordinary magicians: The power and practice of positive relationships for building youth resilience and wellbeing
- Published in Kognition & Paedagogik (2017) No. 103.
- English version on Academia.com or www.growinggreatschoolsworldwide.com
-
- Story of trainee teacher.

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 POSITIVE /NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

- Fredrickson's research tells us that whereas negative emotions shut down cognitive pathways, positive emotions promote problem-solving and creativity.
- Oxytocin is the feel-good neurotransmitter that is engaged in human reproduction but also in the development of trust and collaboration. It is also released in moments of shared laughter.
- It makes sense to look at where in a school we can foster positive feelings.

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 POSITIVE EMOTIONS BUILD SOCIAL CAPITAL

- A feeling of being valued enhances cooperation
- A feeling of being cared for enhances understanding and compassion
- A feeling of being respected promotes respect for others and willingness to listen to them
- A feeling of being included enhances commitment and motivation
- A feeling of fun relieves stress and fosters belonging
- A feeling of belonging enhances resilience
- Feeling good improves creative problem-solving abilities

All of this promotes well being and caring communities

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 8 HOURS AT THE START OF THE SCHOOL YEAR SAVES TIME LATER

- Find out a little about students lives outside school
- Especially what you have in common
- Show interest in them beyond the academic
- Ask regular brief questions or make brief comments
- Smile – be welcoming
- Talk up strengths and positives
- Be light-hearted where possible
- Use 'go with the flow' strategies
- Use 'take up time'.

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 EVERY CHILD NEEDS A CHAMPION

- Rita Pierson Ted Talk
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFnMTHhKdkw>

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 STUDENTS IN MELT DOWN

- The amygdala is a small almond shaped organ in the brain
- It is the seat of emotional memory and is there to send messages to the body in the event of perceived threat
- It acts many thousand of times faster than the neo-cortex (the thinking, rationale part of the brain)
- Children who have had negative, emotionally charged experiences will have an amygdala primed to respond
- Asking a student why they are having a melt-down while they are having it is a waste of time.

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 SO WHAT DO YOU DO?

○ IN THE MOMENT	○ LONGER TERM
○ Acknowledge emotions	○ Follow up with conversation when things have calmed down
○ Be aware of mirroring neurons	○ Ask but don't interrogate. What, not why questions
○ Keep your distance – face, fingers, body.	○ Use restorative approaches
○ Speak low and slow	○ Focus on the 'OVEN' !
○ Give a positive direction	○ Develop positive relationships
○ Non-threatening but confident body language	○ Teach social and emotional skills
○ Do NOT go on the defensive	○ Increase a sense of belonging
○ Self-respect does not lie with student compliance	○ Promote positive feelings

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 APA TASK FORCE REPORT (2006) SAYS ZERO TOLERANCE POLICIES

- ...are worse than useless
- ...impact negatively on behaviour and academic outcomes for all students
- Inhibit positive teacher-student relationships.
 - Authoritarian structures / rules can alienate
 - Them and us battles are exhausting and leave everyone scarred and cornered

People have been exploring what *does* work in both promoting positive behaviour and increasing academic outcomes

- Students need to be connected to school
- A whole of community approach

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 TEACHER WELLBEING AND WHY IT MATTERS

- High levels of cortisol impact on brain functioning – memory and the hippocampus, empathy, emotional regulation.
- Knee-jerk/defensive reactions
- Increased conflict
- Survival mode – control at all costs
- Conflict between meaning / values and practice

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 WHAT SUPPORTS TEACHER WELLBEING?

○ Emotionally literate leadership	○ See #teacher5aday – from The NEF Five Ways to Wellbeing:
○ Trusting teachers – not micro-managing	· Notice
○ Clarity of expectations – what is 'good enough'	· Stay Active
○ Acknowledgement of everyday good work	· Keep Learning
○ Support systems	· Connect
○ Conversations that promote a positive culture	· Give

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USE ENERGY ON WHAT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

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WHOLE CHILD: WHOLE SCHOOL WELLBEING

- Having a vision for every child to become the best they can be
- Sharing and communicating that vision – especially with parents. Although high marks in exams opens doors, happiness and wellbeing does not lie with academic success
- Valuing everyone – students, communities, teachers, support
- Creating a positive environment for learning
- Strengths based approaches
- Conversations build culture – what we say to and about each other matters.

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IDEALISM AND REALISM

- It is the idealists who have a positive vision for where they are going who end up more realistic than those who stay with the current picture and say 'what can you do?'
- Change is inevitable - you either let it happen to you or you can be active in determining the direction its going in.

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WHAT CAN ONE PERSON DO?

- We currently have an education system that is not congruent with healthy child development and is likely to be contributing to the mental health crisis.
- We can **all** demand an education that helps to make the lives of children more meaningful, connected, joyful, thoughtful, creative and responsible – and the work of teachers more meaningful and worthwhile.
- It takes courage but if we don't stand up for what our children need who will?

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- More information, research, strategies about how to respond to children, both universally and in difficulty in the books cited here.
- Journal articles are uploaded both onto www.growinggreatschoolsworldwide.co and www.academia.com

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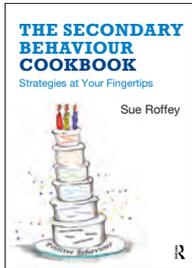
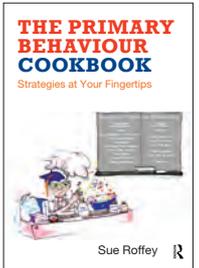
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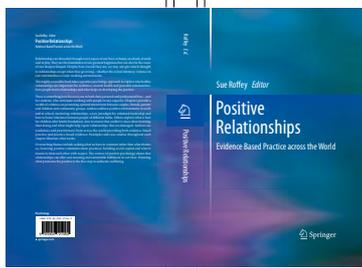
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