Personal Sustainability for Leaders

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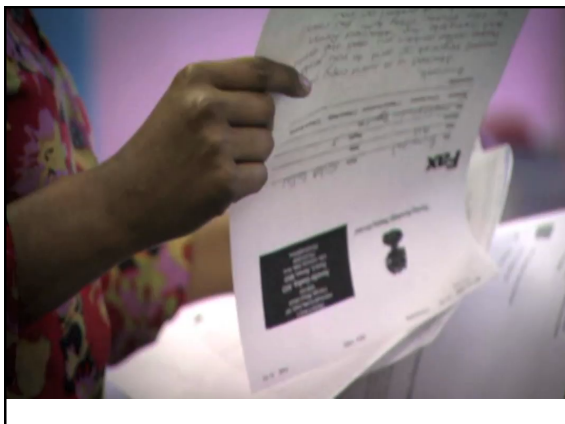
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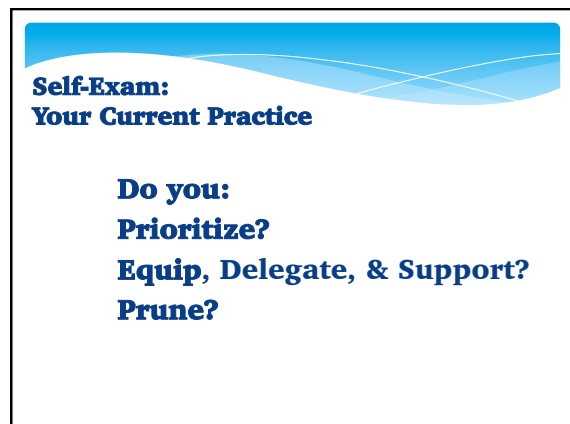

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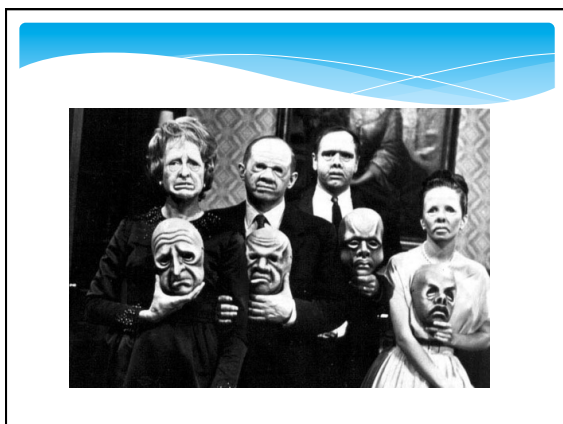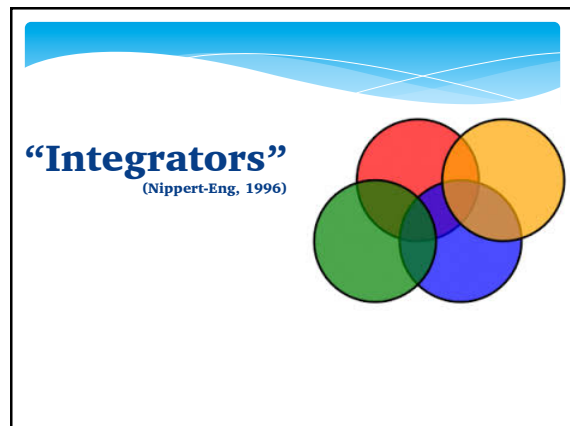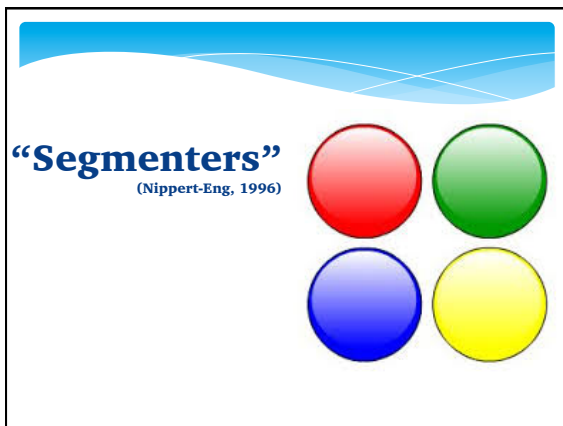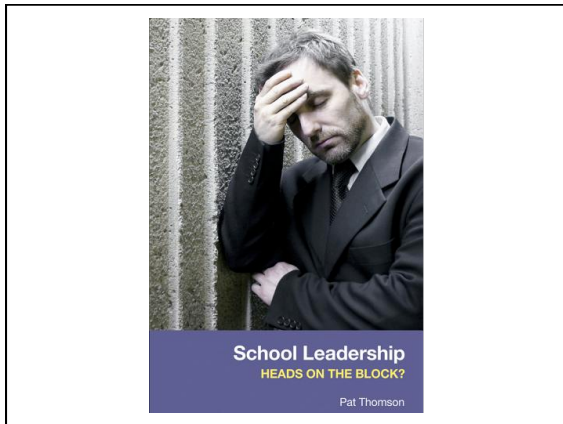

MYTH OF THE
SUPER-PRINCIPAL

* Impossible job description
* Expanding conceptions of the job
* Fictional "Ms. Washington"
* Killer Exemplars: "If some, why can't all?"
* Aspiration vs. Expectation
* Excellence & Integrity vs. "Success"

School Leadership
HEADS ON THE BLOCK?

Pat Thomson

Remember:
The first marathon runner DIED

"Segmenters"
(Nippert-Eng, 1996)

"Integrators"
(Nippert-Eng, 1996)

Self-Exam:
Your Current Practice

> **Do you:**
> **Prioritize?**
> **Equip, Delegate, & Support?**
> **Prune?**

Self-Exam:

Engaged?   *Workaholic?*

Energy
Dedication
Absorption
Pleasure

Excessive
No real joy
Perfectionistic
Compulsive
Constant mental engagement
Neglects rest of life
Prefers work
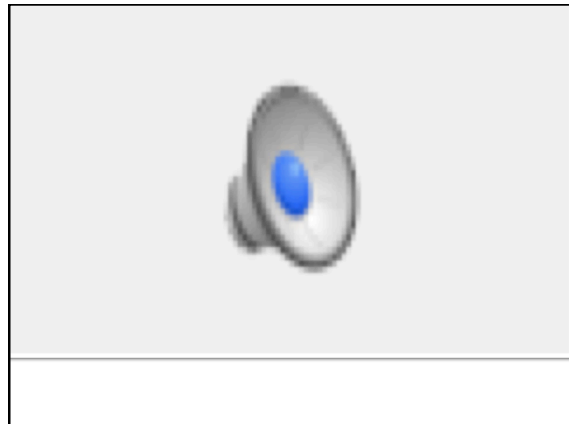
Principal Tensions
(Boris-Schacter & Langer, 2006)

✳ **Instruction & management**
✳ **Work & personal lives**
✳ **Societal/community expectations & individual priorities**

Hard Realities of Leadership

✳ **Wounds**
✳ **"The best interest of children"**
✳ **Micropolitics**
✳ **Lack of trust/broken trust**
✳ **You become one of "them"**
✳ **Isolation**

Naïve and new…

"I always said that if I become an administrator, I would not have teachers overburdened with supervising the halls, cafeteria, and playground. So, I did all of that for them. I also wanted everybody to like me. I couldn't understand how I could do all of these things, and there was always a teacher who was never satisfied. I was really upset by that. I also took on the personal problems of the staff. At the beginning, I didn't see a problem because I wanted to be compassionate. I wanted teachers to bring their personal problems to me. I gave advice, went to their homes, took them dinner…and then the problems began. Word spread. Teachers were calling me at home. I no longer had time for my own family. I soon learned some important lessons: not everyone would like me or agree with my decisions, and not all of the problems belonged to me."

(Brock & Grady, 2002, p. 13)

Sustainability: Looking at Yourself

✱ Multiple life role demands
✱ Workaholic, perfectionist, pleasers
✱ Ability to prioritize & say "no"
✱ Image Management

Sustainability: Looking at Yourself

✱ "Ultimate concerns" & strivings
✱ Values, mission, purpose
✱ Strengths-based leadership
✱ Introverts in an extrovert's world
✱ Time management
✱ Ability to delegate & share power
✱ Handling conflict

Just askin'
Questions from study by Boris-Schacter & Langer

1. How many hours a week do you spend working?
2. How many hours a week do you spend thinking about work-related matters?
3. How do you set priorities when there are equally compelling obligations to work and to home?
4. What have been the major challenges to realizing your professional priorities?
5. What strategies have you used to meet these challenges?
6. If you could start from scratch and redesign your current role so that it is a more attractive career choice, what would it look like?

You and the "Dragon"

✓ Time pressure
✓ Work overload
✓ Work complexity
✓ Interruptions
✓ Situational constraints
✓ Role overload
✓ Role ambiguity
✓ Incivility from others
✓ High decision-making demands
✓ High emotional demands
✓ Routine areas of conflict

SUSTAINABILITY:
Banishing Burnout

Six Areas that Contribute:
Workload
Control
Reward
Community
Fairness
Values

(Maslach & Leiter)

Quick Burnout Assessment

To give an idea of how we assess burnout, here are a few items from our book, "Banishing Burnout: Six Strategies for Improving Your Relationship With Work." Please note, however, that this is not a complete survey.
     For each item, think about how your current work matches up with your personal preferences, work patterns, and aspirations.

	Just Right	Mismatch	Major Mismatch
Workload			
The amount of work to complete in a day			
The frequency of surprising, unexpected events			
Control			
My participation in decisions that affect my work			
The quality of leadership from upper management			
Reward			
Recognition for achievements from my supervisor			
Opportunities for bonuses or raises			
Community			
The frequency of supportive interactions at work			
The closeness of personal friendships at work			
Fairness			
Management's dedication to giving everyone equal consideration			
Clear and open procedures for allocating rewards and promotions			
Values			
The potential of my work to contribute to the larger community			
My confidence that the organization's mission is meaningful			

Sustainability: Looking at Your Organization

* **Actual vs. official culture: values, mission, purpose**
* **Expectations and boundaries**
* **Leadership behaviors that are modeled**
* **Leadership behaviors that are rewarded**

Your School & District Culture

Workaholic culture
✓ First car in, last car to leave
✓ Unused vacation days
✓ "Workations"
✓ Constant early and late meetings
✓ 26/7/365 availability expectations
✓ Initiative and program "hoarders"

Your School & District Culture

Recovery culture
✓ Encouraged to take real vacations
✓ District-wide blackout times
✓ Promotion of segmenting
✓ Boundary crossing incidents addressed

Today's principals must be collaborative, team-building, instructionally focused negotiators *who work hard to hold on to their values, their families, and their jobs.*

(Boris-Schacter & Langer, 2006)

Your Sustainability "IEP"

✓Technical v. Adaptive change
✓Each leader is unique
✓Each setting is unique
✓Seek to model for others
✓Find a mentor
✓Be intentional

Sustainable Leadership
(*Hargreaves & Fink, 2006*)

Principle 6:
"Sustainable leadership develops and does not deplete material and human resources. It renews people's energy. Sustainable leadership is prudent and resourceful leadership that wastes neither its money nor its people."

NOT a MARATHON or a SPRINT
But a CYCLE of EXERTION & RENEWAL

SUSTAINABILITY:
Personal Strategies & Resources

Refill Reservoirs of Hope *(Flintham)*

* Renewal
* Refreshment
* Reinforcement

Sustainability: Renewing Energy
(*Hargreaves & Fink, 2006*)

Our energy is an issue when we:

* Have no time to sleep, relax, or exercise properly
* Feel constantly overwrought or emotionally disengaged from those around us in a world in which we have no time for proper relationships
* Are always having to think too quickly or superficially
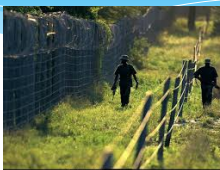* Are disconnected from and unable to pursue or fulfill our own morally compelling purposes

Recovery Strategies

✓ Switching Off Mentally
✓ Rumination
✓ Mastery Experiences
✓ Autonomy
✓ Relaxation
✓ Reflection & Quiet
✓ Meaning
✓ Affiliation
✓ SLEEP

Boundary Management

➤ Not a two-way street
➤ Use of "border keepers"
➤ Positive use of technology
➤ Triage responsibilities
➤ Allocation of time by blocks
➤ Daytime breaks scheduled
➤ Schedule time for family, fun, recharging
➤ Strategic use of transitions
➤ Home-Work physical no-no's
➤ Be clear about expectations
➤ Address boundary violations

Reflect on "fit"

* Do you fit the role?
* Do you fit the team?
* Do you fit the organization?
* Do you fit the community?

Sustainability: Your Organization

* Trust
  * Contractual
  * Competence
  * Communication
* Confidence
  * "Positive expectation for favorable outcomes"
  * Hope (*not* wishful thinking) vs. "doom loop"
  * Story editing

Sustainability: Your Organization

✴ Creating & claiming "discretion"
✴ Street-level bureaucrats in action
✴ Pruning, "sunsetting," and scaling
✴ Translation of mandates
✴ "Environmental Impact Studies"
✴ "Disruptive data" & "disquieting questions"

Loyal Rebels in Action

Constructive Deviance
(Vadera, Pratt, & Mishra, 2013)

Creative Insubordination
(Haynes & Licata, 1995)

Artistic Insubordination
(Buskey & Pitts, 2009)

Tempered Radicalism
(Meyerson, 2001)

You Should Not Climb Alone

✴ Who do you trust?
✴ Who knows you…REALLY?
✴ Who loves you enough to tell you the TRUTH?
✴ Who knows your world as an administrator?
✴ Who would help you move a piano?

Immunities to Change
(Kegan & Lahey, 2009)

Set Your Own Hook for Change

✴ What are you going to do?
✴ Who will you "rope up with?"
✴ Contact NOW and commit to something SPECIFIC

Little Hercules
Craig Carothers

So you cannot lift a spirit
that has turned to lead
Or shine a light in shadow
when the batteries are dead
Or fly like a bird
over all the works of man
Or always think of the perfect words
But you do the best you can

Nothing seems as easy
as it did when you were young
Myths may be invincible,
but we are only strong
Strong like a memory,
strong like a willow in the wind
Strong as you'll ever be,
you will always need to bend

And if you feel the weight of the world
Put your mind at ease, Little Hercules

There are times when being a grown-up
gets to be too much
And your sense of humor
seems to vanish in the crush
Of the daily 9 to 9
that keeps your family alive
You're just putting in your time
Does anyone really go home at 5?

You've made a life where no one
ever tells you what to do
Now the only tyrant
that you're working for is you
It's never easy to keep
all the promises you make
But no one's gonna get you fired
If you'd just give yourself a brake

And if you feel the weight of the world
Put your mind at ease Little Hercules
'cause there's so much on your
shoulders
But you know it's a breeze
Little Hercules Little Hercules