

Transcript for Let's Talk About Faculty Well-Being

BCcampus FLO Panel session hosted on October 22, 2024

Panelists: Dr. Maryam Nabavi, Dr. Jessica Riddell, Dr. Peter Arthur, and Annabree Fairweather

Host: Helena Prins

HELENA PRINS:

Hey, so it is 11:00, so I'm going to get started. Good morning, everyone, and thank you so much for joining us for this very important conversation today. My name is Helena Prins, and I'm an advisor of the learning and teaching team here at BCcampus. I'm zooming in today from the unceded traditional territories of the Lekwungen People, who include the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations. I've lived here for 16 years now, and I'm so thankful for their hospitality. I'm also really thankful to my team at BCcampus, who support me in my continual learning around decolonizing practices and what is my role and responsibility towards reconciliation. I would like to take a moment just to invite all of you to just share if you want to where you are located. Today's session is being recorded. If you do not wish to appear on the recording that will be shared publicly afterwards, you can change your name to "FLO Participant" and keep your camera off. You can turn on captioning from the menu options at the bottom of your screen and toolbar. We will share the recording as well as a transcript with all registrants within the next two weeks. At the end of our time together today, we will also share with you a survey link. It's really short, but we value your input on today's session, but also future sessions. I really hope that you'll participate in this survey. Then finally, just since faculty well-being and fatigue can be such a personal and perhaps also difficult topic, I'd like to just share a friendly reminder that all registrants sign the code of conduct ahead of time.

Why this topic today? Well, in my current role, I mainly focus on coordinating the Facilitating and Learning Online program. For almost five years now, I've spent a lot of time in Zoom rooms and with many educators from all around B.C. and beyond. And I see the amazing work that they do and this topic, therefore, of faculty well-being has just become such a near and dear topic to my heart. It also comes out in the literature, the recent Canadian Digital Learning Research Association Report, once again, found that faculty fatigue is one of the top three learning and teaching challenges. Also in a recent podcast that Maryam actually shared with me on the Academic Issue podcast. They shared that almost two-thirds of Canadian academics experience mental health issues during their career. Really, what's behind all this? I'm hoping that we can shed some light on what the roots are of faculty fatigue and also potentially get some strategies and suggestions for moving forward together. To help me do that, I've got a fantastic panel together, and I'm really excited to introduce them to you. So first, I have Dr. Maryam Nabavi. She's the director of the Academic Leadership Development Program at the University of BC. Thank you, Maryam, for saying yes. We also have Jessica Riddell. She's the founder of Hope Circuits Institute, that's a think tank dedicated to systems rewiring and renewal in the post-secondary sector. She's also a full professor of early modern literature in the English Department at Bishop's University. Welcome all the way from Quebec. We also have doctor Dr. Peter Arthur. He's a beloved professor of teaching at the University of British Columbia, Okanagan, School of Education, and a recipient of the Killam Award Teaching Prize,

recognizing his significant contributions to education and compassionate leadership. Peter, really glad that you joined us for this panel today. Thank you. Finally, we have Annabree Fairweather. She has been the executive director of CUFA BC since 2019. She's a very busy woman, so Annabree, I'm so thankful you could fit us in today. Thank you. Also behind the scenes. We have Kelsey Kilby. She's here to support us on the tech side of things, and we're very thankful to you, Kelsey. As your moderator today, I'll keep an eye on the chat for any questions that come up. And we do hope to have a Q & A at the end of the session. But I want you to know that while I did share questions ahead of time with the panelists, we are all hoping that this will be a conversation between all of us. I want to invite you to use the chat as many times as you want with questions or comments, and if required, you can also unmute and speak up. We welcome that. Let's get to it. I've asked the panelists that they would each introduce themselves the way they want to be introduced, and also just share their perspective on this topic. And we'll start with Annabree.

ANNABREE FAIRWEATHER:

Thank you so much for having us, Helena and everybody, welcome. Thanks for joining us. I'm honoured to be on a panel with these three other esteemed colleagues. As Helena said, my name is Annabree Fairweather. I'm the executive director of the Confederation of University Faculty Associations of BC, and I'm joining you from the unceded, ancestral territories of Musqueam, Squamish, Tsleil-Waututh, and Stó:lō First Nations here where I live in Port Moody. So I've worked in post-secondary academic labour relations union side for over a decade in Alberta and also more recently in B.C. I'm originally from B.C. I was a contract faculty member for many years, post-graduation at the university and college levels, and it's a really challenging work to do. I work with CUFA BC, which is itself a provincial organization. We represent five faculty associations at B.C.'s research universities, where we represent a combined total of 5,500 faculty. We advocate really for faculty interests. We talk to government, we work with allied organizations, and we talk to faculty and unions. I'm here to talk to you about faculty fatigue from a systems level perspective. Really, what makes post-secondary institutions opportune to fatigue and burnout, and what we can do as a collective to support faculty in an attempt to mitigate fatigue itself, but also really prevent burnout on campus. That's the perspective I bring and I'll stop here. Thank you. Thank you, Jessica.

JESSICA RIDDELL:

Thanks so much. And thanks, everybody. My name is Jessica Riddell, and I'm joining you from the unceded territory of the Abenaki and Wabanaki Confederacy in the Eastern Townships of Quebec. And I am so delighted. How did I get to relational wellness and collective sense-making is a messy journey. I'm a Shakespearean, both by training and disposition. My PhD is focused on how we use theatre and spectacle in order to make sense of the world and to persuade other people to think differently. And so right before COVID hit, I had just finished a book with my two colleagues and co-authors and fellow three M national teaching fellows, Dr. Lisa Dickson from UNBC and Dr. Shannon Murray from U PEI. We theorized that the classroom, the theatre, and a creative democracy, were all founded on the same values, which means we have to come into this world and co-create it together. We can't imagine that meaning will be monolithic or

separate from every single encounter and relationship. Structure and system that we're immersed within. When COVID happened, the theatres closed down and the classrooms closed down or at least changed dramatically. I had to write my way into a new form of hope. The only anchor of hope that I knew that was around me at that moment in the early days of the pandemic was the university. What I realized was that universities are very good at studying everything but themselves. And so I reached out to over 300 thought partners and started asking them questions. What would it look like if we took a systems-level approach to centre human flourishing? What would happen if we could eradicate conversations about resilience, which are asking people to manage under deteriorating conditions, which is unfair unless we're willing to look at those structural and systemic causes that are making those conditions deteriorate. That was a thought prompt. It started as an imaginative exercise, and it came into and became a book called *Hope Circuits*, which is now a series of three books. But what I really love is going into local ecosystems, putting that book in the middle of the table and rumbling it together. That is, as a research chair, my mandate. I'm not a consultant. I'm not an administrator. I am a faculty member who wants to sit in community with staff and students and faculty, senior leadership teams, boards, and senates to live into the question. What does it look like to centre human and ecological flourishing? That's where I am and I'm so excited to learn from the panelists and from you today.

HELENA: Thank you, Jessica. Maryam.

MARYAM NABAVI:

Thank you. Thank you, Annabree and Jessica. I think we're all in very good company. My name is Maryam Nabavi. I used to pronounce she/her/hers, and I'm joining you today from my home on the traditional ancestral and unceded territory of the Coast Salish peoples, specifically on the lands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh. I'm north of the Tsleil-Waututh, which means calm waters in the Halq'eméylem language of what is colonially known as Burrard Inlet. I am the director of the Academic Leadership Development Program, which is a cohort-based program at UBC, that supports academic leaders, specifically heads of units, heads of departments, and associate deans in developing leadership capacity and skills in their first year in their leadership roles. I'm also an academic leadership coach, where I support academics in meeting their objectives, goals, overcoming challenges, and really developing skills and strategies towards meeting their professional and also personal success. I think this topic is so important and there's so many challenges to well-being that faculty encounter around their positionalities, the culture of the specific area of work, the department or the centre that they may be in, and really the structures and systems which are ingrained as part of faculty work, making conversations about well-being quite complex and nuanced. I think it often becomes really easy to orbit the issues as quick fixes or answers are really not possible when we're embedded in these complex structures. I was asked to briefly highlight what I bring to the conversation. Really, my offering today is to share my observations and experiences of what I have seen to be as useful interventions and approaches, both proactive and reactive for academics and specifically academic leaders in supporting their well-being across diverse and intersecting positionalities, the cultures and systems that don't always lend themselves to well-

being. I hope that this can serve really as a seed, and with some soil and watering can yield a harvest of considering well-being from different angles in a very complex system that we all work in. I know that I have some colleagues from UBC who are on the call today who are really deeply entrenched in moving systems well-being forward. I'd love to invite their voices in at various junctures as well. Thank you. Thank you, Maryam and Peter, over to you.

PETER ARUTHUR:

Thank you. Thank you, Helena. It's wonderful to be here. Just a very important discussion. I'm really looking forward to it. My name is Peter Arthur, and I join you from the unceded territory of the Sylix people in the Okanagan. Now, where my perspective and my background comes in is for 10 years, I worked as the director for the Centre for Teaching and Learning, where I worked very closely with faculty supporting them with teaching and other things. I was able to have that support. Now, I also engage with faculty and work closely with them in my new role as UBC Faculty Association. I'm elected for this campus in the Okanagan. I have the opportunity to really talk with faculty around some of the challenges they're facing and looking at solutions. Additionally, I'm a professor of teaching, who I work on for my own life balance, which is a huge challenge for all of us. I'll talk about later some of those strategies. But also I work with my students on this type of thing as well. I try to implement what I call the pedagogy of care. This is where I create that learning community of care where students feel that their co-learners as well as myself, feel very cared for. And I think that's a very important piece of wellness is that feeling of care. My perspective is, and I'm hearing, there's a lot of challenges going on for faculty, and I'll talk about those in a little bit. But I think it's really important for us as a community to provide strategies and support for our faculty because wellness is so essential. If we're going to expect our faculty to really engage and thrive, we need to have that supportive learning community for them. Thank you.

HELENA:

Wow, thank you. I'm giving you a hand. I'm so thankful that all of you in this room with us. We want to start by asking questions to the audience, actually, because it was important to the panelists to bring your voice in as some of them have restated here. If you don't mind, in the chat, you can share with us if you want to. What do you think are the factors contributing to faculty fatigue? I'll give you a minute to think about that and we'll watch and keep an eye on the chat. See the first one came in there: "workload." "Lack of mentorship, teaching workload and time, invisible labour, student struggles, increased emotional labour of students, working in isolation, post-pandemic. Emotional labour for those from equity group. The increased complexity of the work we do." Yes, keep populating the chat there. We will investigate the structural roots of faculty fatigue and we're going to start with you Annabree. From your perspective in labour relations, what do you think are some of the structural factors in higher education that contribute to faculty fatigue?

ANNABREE:

Thank you. That's no easy task to break this down into some of these big structural issues, which a lot of you are talking about here in the chat. From a provincial perspective, faculty have

a huge responsibility in delivering what is the academic mission of the province. We teach 140,000 undergraduate and graduate students across the province. Also, many faculty are conducting research programs and service, contributions to their communities, which are on a local and a national and international scale. Just a little caveat that I'm using the word faculty, but I mean that is the umbrella term which comprises professors, sessionals, lecturers, instructors, and academic librarians, and other academic staff on our campuses. Really, one of the things that I see here is that we have the confluence of three factors with other pieces, of course, but three main factors that I can see that institutions are conducive to fatigue in part because of the nature of the work and also the people who do it. There is an individual element in that faculty members are often themselves, high achievers and perfectionists, and they're strongly independent in their careers. They embody the work that has these deeply held convictions that public higher education itself has a societal value that's greater than the individual, and they're committed to the civic engagement in their academic communities, again, that span boundaries. Two, we also have less financial certainty in the institution and a greater volatility in the revenue, as we're increasingly relying on private sources of funding, including tuition, but not exclusively that. We're seeing the result of that though in massive institutional budgets. It leads to worsening anxiety for faculty, program changes, uncertainty, shifting goal posts. I saw someone mentioned in the chat here. But really, it also leads to what is the insufficient human infrastructure to support the work that we have to do. Together, these have resulted in the redistribution of an already substantial workload among a smaller workforce. So for the faculty and the lived experience of this, we're seeing administrations implement hiring freezes, not back-filling positions when faculty go on research leave or retire or go on medical leaves. We're seeing the cuts to wrap-around services, those kind of essential ones, especially in the areas for student accommodations, which is hugely dramatic lately. And cuts to TA supports in the classrooms as class sizes also grow, and also cuts to for research faculty, the administrative research support that's vital to managing research projects and grants. And we can debate about merits of deficits and cuts and have political discussions about that, but really taking stock, we can see there's a global reduction of that human infrastructure that's necessary to the functioning of our institution, and all these savings aren't really savings as they're downloading the work onto the remaining faculty to perform. As individuals we're immersed in the system, and we simply keep going and taking on more, but sometimes we're not very good at recognizing when we're in a crisis state. We're too busy coping with that day-to-day behemoth workload, as I call it, and a changing workload. When we look up for a moment and I see at a provincial level, we see that everybody else is also overwhelmed and stressed and on the verge of collapse or experiencing prolonged fatigue, and we must change that narrative from one of self-blame, and individual or personal failure to one of the structural failure and collective change it takes to help us through. I might stop here and invite others to jump in on this subject because I know that I'm only a piece of the puzzle and there's a big complex puzzle in this conversation.

HELENA:

Maryam, would you like to add anything that relates to the type of challenges faced by the academic leaders and how they support their teams and faculty? Thank you. Thank you,

Annabree. I feel like we just have to look in the chat and it answers the question of the types of challenges that academic leaders are facing. And I think there's a unique set of challenges that academic leaders are particularly navigating in this moment I think the first is that being a leader in academia at the moment is quite difficult across institutions in higher ed in Canada and more broadly, where we've felt the impacts of global politics from international student enrollment and budgetary claw backs, as well as the ongoing, what I would call the politics of representation and belonging is stemming from international conflicts, and we see this very alive on our campuses. And leaders are increasingly tasked with managing many unprecedented issues, not to mention COVID. And the circumstances that they're navigating, requiring them to make more than ever principle decisions that impact many people and often that skill set is missing. They're coming into these roles, making really big decisions without the training ground. I think academic leadership positions, unlike other leadership positions that we might see in other sectors or for staff roles in higher ed, are complicated by the tenure of the leadership, and I know that someone noted that in the chat in that they're there for three to five or even 10 years and then they're returning back to their research and teaching duties. They're working on maintaining their scholarly activity during that leadership period, so compounding pressures, and as I mentioned, often little preparedness for formal leadership. We're asking leaders to step in and both manage and lead in very complicated times. I think that that's one of the greatest challenges. We have 50 academic leaders coming through the program that we started at UBC annually and we see this trend across the board. But we're also seeing an upward trend and a positive trend, where in the past few years, leaders are starting more than ever to take very much a relational role in terms of how they're supporting faculty staff and students in their units, and a willingness to engage with their own positionalities, their own biases, their own power that may be coming into their leadership. I attribute this to the broader conversations that are happening across at least our university, around equity and inclusion, around well-being. Again, a shout out to my colleagues who are leading a mid-level strategic plan on institutional well-being. Often there's opportunities for training and engagement in these areas where we see historically leaders have been very reluctant to step into that. There's more of a willingness to do this. Perhaps some pressure to do this because of what is coming from the ground up from their students, and the other faculty and staff. I also think that departments are shifting and the culture is shifting. They're being populated by younger faculty who came into academia and grew up in a millennial context, where the culture of well-being, voicing descent, exercising choice is all part of the broader conversation. I think the way we engage needs to shift and calibrate to who we're engaging with. I think there is a bit of a culture shift that's happening. It's slow, but we're starting to see it little by little. I think that culture shift really is supporting these micro steps towards well-being. Maybe I'll pause there.

HELENA:

Thank you, Maryam. I really appreciate that. And I wonder, Peter, as a faculty member and your previous leadership roles, does this resonate with you? Do you see this among yourself, your colleagues? What needs to change, if anything?

PETER:

Sure, Thank you. Two things about that. Yes, I'll talk about what I see, but also just as importantly, what I would like to change. Now, a lot in the chat room is really good and really resonates with myself as well because we're talking about workload. We've talked about budgets, budgets being a real challenge across Canada and here in B.C. I'm seeing it where our workload is changing. Our faculty are teaching more sections, and they also have more students. And less support from TAs, which has a formula for adding a big time crunch and a lot of additional stress. It's interesting because one of my classes that I'm teaching, the students are researching an inquiry project around how students learn. They're asking the big questions around Well, why is it that we're packing 400 students into a lecture theatre still if that isn't the best way to learn? They're asking those good questions, but it is the economic model that drives a lot of our decisions and has a huge impact on us. This economic impact, we're also seeing that contract faculty are the only ones being hired right now. That's really hard because that insecurity of contract faculty is really hard. They have a tough time asking for anything or speaking up for themselves because they don't have that protection that other faculty in the tenure stream have. It seems that we're relying higher and higher on our contract faculty, which is hard. Additionally, some of the systems that are in place that are also causing some stress. I know here at UBC, we're implementing a new workday IT solution, which just adds a huge amount of complexity for faculty, and because we can't hire a lot of staff, it means faculty need to figure out a lot of things for themselves, which adds another layer of challenge as well. On top of that, a lot of people are talking to me about some of the other policies and systems. I haven't seen it in the feedback chat is the whole student feedback system. I'm hearing from a lot of faculty. Some really appreciate the feedback they're getting, but it can also be a source of stress. I hear words like devastating and things like that that really find it hard and we're looking for new systems to provide faculty feedback as well as some of the systems that we have around tenure and promotion. It's something that needs to be transparent, simplified. It's a very stressful time for our faculty to go through the process of the tenure system. It's something that I feel needs to be looked at. Now, some of the things that we could, other things that we could really work on, things that need to change. We really need to support our faculty. There are systems in place, like Maryam's got a fabulous leadership program, and we have some really good centres for teaching and learning that help build community and have that teaching support, which are really imperative. But we need to ensure and source things like the mentoring programs and proper professional development and making sure they have the funds. Something that we just implemented here at UBC is 100% coverage for sabbaticals. Because in the past, you had to wait eight years, but in the past, faculty were unable to take that sabbatical and or study leave because you had to take quite a hit on your salary. That's really hard for a lot of faculties. I'm glad they recognize that accessibility is really important and to provide that opportunity to faculty to renew to study and develop themselves, which I think we need to do more of. And I'll talk a little bit more about specific strategies in a little bit and about community building. I think I'll stop there to let other people have a chance to talk as well. Thank you.

HELENA:

Thank you, Peter. When you started talking systems, I saw Jessica nodding her head because, really, she's an advocate for systems-level changes to address the root causes of faculty fatigue. Jessica, with that in mind, what do you think are the biggest systemic contributors to faculty burnout and what steps can institutions take to address these issues at the root rather than just the symptoms?

JESSICA:

Thank you so much to my panelists for that. We've just been given a laundry list of all of the things that are wrong with our systems. Our systems are broken, and our systems are working exactly the way they're designed. I hear from panelists and from the chat, this difficulty of coming up against systems and structures that are built on mystification and exclusion on precarity and contingency, on scarcity, lack, loss, and crisis. Sara Ahmed says that "Your exhaustion is a sign that the systems are working." When I encountered that, I almost got knocked on the floor. I thought, Oh my goodness, I thought it was just me. I thought I wasn't resilient enough or sturdy enough when I was hiding under the covers or howling into the abyss, which I do regularly and often and sometimes now just schedule for it. But when I started to play around with this concept of resilience, the etymology of resilience is to recoil or to spring back. Which you can see in Jennifer's comment, when they say on the top of the rest, we've had to go above and beyond during COVID and are expected to just go back to the status quo with no chance to catch our breath. I think that recoiling of those systems back to the dominant paradigm that we've inherited from the 1960s or before, these colonial supremacist structures that aren't serving us anymore and never served many, that we recoil back to the status quo is full of structural and lateral violence that we are feeling in our day-to-day lives, in our workload, but we're also feeling in our bodies, our spirits, our relationships, and finding it really difficult, I am, to manage that. As Peter said, that work-life balance. It's really hard for us to ask individuals to go and change broken systems when those broken systems are, in fact, harming the individuals. It becomes this chicken and the egg scenario where you can't get well until you take care of yourself, but you can't take care of yourself because the systems themselves are flawed and broken. Where does one begin? We've seen a number of universities at least start to acknowledge this, at least start to say the quiet things out loud. We've got a number of institutional plans on well-being, starting to come out and be launched. But I don't know if it's enough for an institutional plan; it has to happen at the convergences between structural, cultural, and relational, that we need to almost do it everywhere all the time, at the same moment in all of these different spaces. That we need to engage in collective sense-making to talk about what relational well-being looks like. I'm writing *Hope Circuits 2.0*, which is called *Blueprints for, Building Blueprints for Human and Ecological Flourishing*. What I noticed only, almost halfway done the second of three books, is that looking around researching this chapter called "How to Heal," and how to heal at community and institutional and societal levels. I found a huge number of self-help books. In fact, it's a billion-dollar industry, this wellness and self-care, it's become commercialized and commodified. There are very few collective wellness books. We've got self-help, but where is our collective-help book? I

realize that my Hope Circuit series is a small intervention. What do we do together? bel hooks said that "healing is never done in isolation. Healing has to be done in communion." And I think that we need to do that together. We need to sit in the difficulty and stay with the discomfort and be able to collectively sense make our way into new ways of being in the world together. I've hit my 4 minutes and 20 seconds, so I'm going to get boxed into other humans, but I think we could spend days talking about this, and I actually think that we should in our local ecosystems, in our communities, in our relationships, and start saying the quiet things out loud and then figuring out how to name them, claim them, and aim them.

HELENA: Wow, thank you, Jessica. We're going to build on that answer, but I do want to take a pause. Just to welcome back our audience. If there's anything and I see there is a comment. Thank you for mentioning the number of self-help books, part of the violence we experience. If there are any comments or maybe a question at this stage from the panel, we really want to welcome you into the conversation. You can raise your hand and go unmute. Okay. So if there's no question, Jessica, we're going to go back to you and build a little bit on what you just shared. I really love the idea of collective help. Maybe you can help us with some concrete steps that institutions can take to shift away from this over-emphasis of individual resilience. This is my responsibility and towards a more holistic view of faculty well-being.

JESSICA:

Thanks, Helena. One of the things that I found when I reached out to over 300 thought partners for the first *Hope Circuits* book is I asked everybody— Senior leaders, board members, senators, junior faculty, senior staff, first year undergraduate students. What is the one thing that we could change to make your lives better every single day? I have to tell you that unanimously and it came out in different forms. The answer was time. And we have a scarcity of time. We are addicted to crises. We're addicted to narratives of scarcity. We're addicted to the busyness of business. We don't have enough time. We are racing from one crisis to another, so much so that in 2022, the word of the year was "permacrisis." We cannot live in a state of permacrisis because it leads to individual and corporate brokenness. We have to figure out how to move our mindsets from scarcity to abundance, from time lack to time affluence. There are a number of ways we can do that at the systemic and structural level. There are a number of universities playing with those things from the top down and from the bottom up and through the convergences between those at the meso level. It comes from. I really like Maryam's point about these micro steps to change ecosystems because I also recognize that all of the laundry list, the damning indictment of higher education, the fast list of all of the things that are broken can lead to disengagement, can lead to exhaustion, can lead to being overwhelmed, how can I even begin to start in my own context to make a difference? I think when despair gets monolithic, hope has to get proximate and granular. It has to be in our everyday encounters. It has to be at every moment that we are encountering people and systems and institutional culture from an agile agenda to the ways in which we talk about ourselves and our time. There was a university president who I really like, who has a sign off. Their sign off at the end of every email is, "I know everything feels urgent, but most of it is not. So please answer this email in your own time." That is an elegant and automatic intervention. That just uses a little bit of a line

to shift the narrative from busyness, to slow down, pause, surface the systems and understand where and how you have your sphere of influence and of control. There are some universities experimenting with the four-day workweek for staff. We talk about faculty well-being, we talk about student well-being. Our staff are undervalued and under-compensated and openly exhausted. What can we do in order to give them the vision path and agency to build beautiful portfolios that are filled with purpose? A four-day work week is an option in the summer. Some of the universities do it. They haven't been studied a lot. It needs to be studied more about an intervention. There are other universities who schedule emails so that the system itself, the IT system, is when you write an email late at night, it does automatically end up in somebody's inbox. It waits until the start of day, the start of work day, the next day, and that's the same for the weekends. You can override that because, of course, sometimes things are urgent. But that pace, that onslaught that we feel, just the emails all the time that bombard us that we can never get a handle over. At least you're not drinking from the fire hose 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I've started to schedule my own emails so that I do not. I work at all hours. I travel a lot. I'm in different time zones, but I'm really attentive, especially to my team, my colleagues, and the people directly around me that I don't send them at 11:00 at night because they think that they need to respond at 11:05. I think the attentiveness and care daily. I love Peter's pedagogy of care, that we can take some of the principles of beautifully designed classrooms and take them into other spaces like senates and boards and other kinds of meanings. Meetings, what would it look like if we designed for consent and compassion and collaboration and curiosity? Not just in our classrooms. What do we ask our students to do that we're not willing to do ourselves? What does it look like to come up with a kind of syllabus for the kind of work that we're doing in leadership, in governance, in funding, in mentorship. And so I think we need to live better-aligned values and not compartmentalize the work that we're doing in different spheres. And then, I do think Peter, you're absolutely spot on that we need to change the ways in which we value in our academy, and that is directly related to the two major documents: "Promotion, Evaluation, and Review in Our Collective Agreements," and then our second document, which is "Strategic Planning." We're not living in integrity right now, what we say and what we do. There's a gap. We have to mind that gap and we have to altogether understand our responsibilities at every part of our campus community to mind that gap and intentionally close it. Otherwise, we are going to risk financial exigency, obsolescence, dilution of purpose, and increased dilution of trust in our publicly funded social mission institutions. We're at an inflection point, and we need concrete actionables, but we also need to be having these conversations at every single table.

ANNABREE:

I'm just going to jump in. Jessica, you covered some fantastic topics here. And I agree with much of it. Sometimes I think that we could probably flesh and have nuance on some of these issues that are really hard to practically apply, but I think that we also have some existing real levers within the institution that are perhaps undervalued or under-serving their purpose. And that's one, I really think that within research universities, at least that senates is such an important body. That is one of the greatest levers for structural change that we have because it comes through faculty participating in the self-governance of the institution And also there's

limited participation in say boards of governors as well, which has some access to levers here. But really, it's under senates, which are enshrined in provincial legislation, and they're granted the purview over the domain of academic matters. It's no surprise that we see faculty members as they struggle with workload. They often are less involved in things like senate. But it's a valuable pillar for decision-making, where we have the opportunity with administration and with faculty to participate in the decision-making that ultimately affects the workload. Including this is an area, I think that should see the value of release time for members of equity-deserving communities to participate in the committees that we need in an input and structural changes to the institution, but we need senates to take on that responsibility. Really, for the sustainability, the health, vitality of the academy. Then we can do workplace audits on accessibility, health, and safety, including psychological safety, but really to work together to solve some of these problems, and from here, administrations are able to take the information to their levers, which include board of governors, also include government stakeholders to raise the issues about necessary supports for the academy, including faculty. But as you were saying as well, Jessica, staff are such an important part. I'm going to touch on just the silent other pillar of unions. Forgive me if I commit a little bit of sociology here and talk about collective action and work. But really, it's the unions that support faculty, and they deal with workplace accommodations, navigating sick leave, addressing grievances over workload, and other challenges as they might arise. Sometimes all we need is advice, and the union can be there for that as well. But it's the union as they're dealing with these systems or individual cases that come forward that we can see the systemic patterns and issues boil to the surface, and it's here that they can address it through collective bargaining or policy grievances or setting up committees and subcommittees to work on that. But the union can't really represent the members and their issues if they don't know what's happening. Sometimes people are afraid to talk to the union or to reach out because they think that that escalates things through formal process. It doesn't. Often it's a source of valuable support and information. Then at provincial levels, we have bodies like the Degree Quality Assurance Boards, which look at KPIs and indicators of program success, but I think that these are levers that we also really need to impress upon them that beyond KPIs the human infrastructure has to be able to support programs and sometimes they're overseen. In I guess, a less human-focused way of looking at how those programs are designed and delivered by faculty. At the personal level, we have to shift our usual habit of taking on more than we can practically do. We have to say instead that if a new committee comes up or project or honour students that we're supervising, that we have to remove another equivalent work assignment so that we can add more to it because so far it's been a system of "yes, and" pile on, and we have to flex some agency in our right to have a work-life balance, our right not to work 24 hours a day, and to do better by saying either no as a complete sentence, or a qualified yes that something else has to give. Then advocacy bodies like BCcampus and CUFA BC, I always like a plug for the work that we do in working together in allied relationships at a very top levels because we're also working with government and with allied groups together to share what are some of the issues that boil up to the surfaces in our respective work environments. I think I've spoken a long time as well, so I'll stop here. Thank you.

HELENA:

So much in there, Annabree. Thank you so much. I think this is a great opportunity for you, Maryam. Maybe to follow up on that workload conversation specifically service workload. This is where you have quite a bit of experience and what are the impacts of inequity in how service is distributed and recognized? What are some strategies for supporting equity-deserving faculty?

MARYAM:

Thank you, Annabree. So on point. Everything you're saying, and I know that workload and service workload is a particularly significant challenge. Not long ago, I co-led a research project with some colleagues to look at how service is allocated, understood, distributed, taken up at the institutional level. And what was very clear and came to the surface at my institution was that women, racialized faculty, Indigenous faculty, and faculty with disabilities, were taking on a disproportionate amount of service work. I don't think that that's a surprise to anyone on this call. And both out of a sense of duty to support requests that were coming to them directly, and these would take on, informal mentorship and supports, as well as formal committee work at the departmental or university level, in light of the many identities that they were holding. And there's a culture of equitable service work, both invisible and visible, that's very well documented. Debra Harley calls these folks, the maids of the academy, those who are picking up and cleaning up the work, and that's the invisible labour that's very prevalent. As we know, the impacts are burnout. There's a lot of resentment that bubbles up and creating very strong relational issues and culture issues in departments and faculties. In extreme cases, which we're seeing quite a bit of at UBC, is attrition. All of these are becoming very prevalent, and I don't think our institution is unique in that way. I think from a structural perspective, being transparent at the department level as to what counts as service work and how it's accounted for in the tenure and promotion process, in particular, helps to shift the culture of service. Particularly the informal service work, that we know that equity-deserving faculty are taking up. Recognizing that what we refer to at UBC as historically, persistently, and systemically marginalized individuals or faculty are carrying other forms of service, such as membership, community engagement efforts or work that's part of the research that doesn't traditionally count as service, where the outputs are not as cleanly measurable. They should be accounted for and we need different mechanisms for that. This comes, I think, to a bigger conversation around fairness, that fairness is not the same as sameness. This is also a very intentional conversation that a number of our colleagues at UBC are trying to push where we consider how to account for fairness in our decision-making, in the interpretation of policies and the application of procedures and processes, where there is room to take a very equitable look and lens at how we interpret and engage with those. There is, for example, what we've developed as an equitable decision-making tool to help those, particularly leaders, in considering how to distribute service work in a fair way in both the service of the individual needs and their context, as well as the needs of the department. I think these sorts of tools can be applied across the institution, and it's useful to share this as a starting point so we have a similar language. Another effort, which I think is really important to amplify in the context of equitable

service work is creating a service charter, and we've seen this being taken up and it's very informal, where we see heads developing a document where everybody knows who's doing what service and how much. The superstars who are conducting research and who are chairs who often are saying no to service work, that becomes transparent. I think these more structural ways to support equity-deserving faculty really helped to shift the culture. I think we need to have tools to assert our position so we can say no, and I think that we don't have the language or framework or know how to say no. Giving folks tools. What does it mean to have difficult conversations where there's power differences? How do we give polite yet critical feedback and to know what our limits are. We have this tool that we often work with, which is BIFF: brief, informative, firm, and friendly, and that's how you give feedback. It makes it so airtight that there's nowhere to go with that. We have a colleague who gives the sage advice. She's an associate dean and has shared with us. Always when you're starting a new role, a new position, a new appointment, a new committee appointment, know what your limits are and write that down, and know when you're going to say no. I think it's okay to walk away and don't compromise that because I think sometimes we get so worked up and into it that it becomes rather impossible to back away, particularly for those who are sitting who identify as equity-deserving. Feeling like they have to work double as hard within this very colonial construct that we're all embedded in. I'll pause there.

HELENA:

Well, thank you. I really appreciate that call for transparency and fairness. There's quite a few practical resources you share. There are equitable decision-making tools, to create a service charter, tools to assert our position. I'm curious how they resonate with our audience today. I want to take another moment just to give you an opportunity to respond in the chat. Maybe there's strategies that we haven't mentioned yet that you know of that you want to share. You can share in the chat, but you're also invited to unmute and maybe just raise your hand first in case we have 10 hands at the same time. I will say there is a comment in the chat already about saying no. You know, even if you do say no, maybe that's not the end of the conversation. If I paraphrased that correctly. Anyone want to respond to that quote or that comment in the chat?

ANNABREE:

I'm in solidarity with that as an experience in trying to flex your rights, but also trying to establish your boundaries so that you can continue to do the work that you need to do and say no to others. But in the end, if nobody's able to commit to it, then that work maybe doesn't get done, and I don't think that you as an individual necessarily have to always take that on to say, well, then I'll do it, even if I can't do a good job on it, then maybe that work doesn't get done for the time being. And that's okay.

HELENA: I see Rhonda has her hand up. Rhonda.

RHONDA:

Hello. Hi, everyone. I'm Rhonda. I work in teaching and learning at Yukon University. I just want to thank you all for being here. I know that there's members of our teams that have had connections with some of you in the past, and so it's really nice to see you here in person. I just wanted to say that I really am responding and feeling almost emotional at this concept of transparency. Our institution is in the middle of a lot of change. We're a new university. We're actually creating all of these processes. As I learn more about the systems and try to think about things from a systems approach. I think there's so many useful things that we can do so that we're not reproducing harm. But it is a huge challenge. And it takes the voices of few to continue to disrupt the sort of status quo systems and sit in discomfort and continue to do the work. And that service piece to me, Maryam, is the piece that's really sitting with me right now because I think that the amount of work to reimagine and to continue prompting discomfort is actually the piece that's sitting on, I feel like it's sitting on my shoulders right now. So I just solidarity and thankfulness and gratitude for your work and your time.

MARYAM:

Thank you for sharing that, Rhonda. You know, we live in this very volatile context at the moment, and I think it does feel like we're pushing something uphill in a very challenging way without weight behind us supporting us. I just want to comment as a piece of hope. This research project that I referenced earlier on documenting service work, we did a bit of a road show with that and took it to some senior leaders and shared it. And what ended up unfolding from that was that the recommendations that we put in there made it to the bargaining table and the ways in which service was articulated in the most recent collective agreement shifted as a result of that research. I think that that's systemic and that's the structural piece that it's going to take a while for it to filter down to at a cultural level. I think as you say, it is just the heavy lifting of a few that really can propel some of those changes. Both from the top and from the bottom up where we see department heads coming together saying, we need to rearticulate this, we need to create more equity. I think it is as Jessica, you were saying, it needs to happen with the culture, the system, the relational all at the same time. I think that that's the orbit that I think we're often navigating and we're not sure what to do with it. So I feel like with every effort that I try to push forward, it's always bringing those pieces together, knowing that I can only do so much. So I think these are the conversations that need to happen, right? I think, yes, maybe I'll just pause there.

JESSICA:

Can I just chime in, Rhonda, first of all and say, thank you for sitting with the feelings because we dismember ourselves in the academy and we need to start talking about our feelings and the overwhelming feelings of inheriting systems that are broken and also working the way they're designed. I was in Labrador in April, and we gathered a number of post-secondary leaders from Northern post-secondaries, So Labrador Campus of MUN, Nunavut Arctic College, Dechinta, a number of universities and colleges and educational institutions who have a moment, as you said, Rhonda, not to rewire, but to actually wire, to create as relatively new institutions, new ways of being that do not have to reproduce the systems that we seek to upend. You don't have to reproduce the systems of the South. In fact, the South needs to look

to the North with its wider horizons and big landscapes and imaginative capabilities to invent electricity by candle light. A funny little story is at the end of my book, I say, What would it look like borrowing from the green economy where we could invent electricity by candlelight, where we could create new frameworks for understanding post-secondary? They're not trapped in the brokenness and the rot. And one of the post-secondary leaders said, Can we not talk about electricity because this is the extractive late stage capitalist metaphor? Could we talk about the Hulu, [...] which is the Inuit lantern, that is a semicircle with a wick and a basin with whale oil. What happens if we think about that wick is the human, as the individual, and that semicircle of oil as the community, and you tend to that individual, but you require that community to be immersed in it. What happens when we understand that quality of light differently, that we can invent new ways of being together? I think that Yukon University and a number of the post-secondaries, you're north of 60. You've got a different terrain and a horizon and I know it feels overwhelming, but it is also just one of the most extraordinary moments that you get to build in real time without reproducing the conditions that we've inherited. I'm so proud of you and I know that it takes emotional labour and it takes all the work of the relational structural and cultural, but I am looking to the north for illumination and light and different ways of radical possibility.

HELENA:

That was well said and beautiful and I echo your sentiments. Thank you, Rhonda for sharing. We're going to shift gears a little bit to Peter now. You've heard him mention his pedagogy of care, and Jessica picked up on that. Peter, I'm wondering if this focus on fostering positive mindset and self-recognition for student academic success. Do you think these concepts could perhaps be extended to help faculty not only manage their workload, but also thrive in this increasingly competitive and demanding academic environment?

PETER:

Yes. Actually, I do. I'll pick up on what some of the others have said and build on that. First, I'd like to say, I agree with Jessica, our systems in higher ed are broken. We run on an economic model, and the key though, the solution, as Jessica was mentioning is that collective help. We need to come together. It can't be. We're so isolated a lot. But I also agree with Annabree that senates and unions bring people together collectively to try to make things better, which is really good. I'm currently part of an open forum that we've been running in the last few weeks that is bringing faculty together, listening to their needs. That's been really powerful to sit and listen to others expressing. The key is bringing people together because we are so often isolated. What we need to do, I feel, is build those networks of care for faculty. I challenge you for just a moment. Think about your own context for a moment. Are there possibilities to bring faculty together for support? What systems do you already have in place? What are those systems? Where can we build those networks of care to support each other and, as what was challenged to us, change the systems so that we can thrive. Some of you have systems in place. Some of you are. I recognize centre for teaching and learning directors who bring people together for professional development, to bring learning communities together, which is very powerful. Maryam brings people together around mentorship and professional growth and

leadership, which is really crucial. My challenge to you is to think, what are the systems currently in your own institution, but what are the possibilities? Where else can we bring people together to support one another and have that network of care to support one another, but also change some of these systems that need change?

HELENA:

Thank you, Peter. When you mention networks of care, it makes me think a little bit, Jessica, about your collective spaces for healing. We'll come back to another question, but I wonder if this is a good jumping-off point for you then to provide some examples of how institutions can create this collective space, this sense-making to support faculty well-being.

JESSICA:

Thanks, Helena. Just to go back to Annabree's comment about nuancing the ways in which we're engaging with different kinds of groups for bicameral governance. I spend a lot of time with senates because senates are often getting into the weeds, focusing a lot on operations, and are struggling to have the time necessary to elevate their thinking to understand their critical role in governance. And so I'm spending time with boards, helping them engage in understanding how universities operate, which are very different from corporate sectors, that the model is different, values circulate differently, that especially external governors have a different relationship to timeline, have a different shared vocabulary. Don't have an appreciation of the nuance and complexity of how universities work and where and how those levers of change can be. But also that senates are a key partner in the ways in which we're doing structural and systems change and to give them the professional development to help them elevate their thinking, to understand their fiduciary responsibilities, to be absolutely essential as part of the co-creation process is fundamental. I take boards and senates on their own programming and education and engagement. And then I'm starting to bring boards and senates together to put them into a room together to give a common and shared humanity. But this is happening at so many different levels. We need to do collective sense-making with groups who are committed to sitting in conversation with one another. I just spent three days in an institution that is a very small institution. I hosted these small focus groups, these small collective sense-making spaces where these folks were sitting across the table from people they had never met, or they had only email exchange. We're talking about a small university. It really underlined the importance of, as Peter said, gathering, gathering with intention, gathering with care. Gathering not being proscriptive or prescriptive, but gathering with a set of questions that we're willing to live into, building shared vocabulary, and then designing the blueprints for the particular ecosystem that each institution is so distinctive. Universities look the same. We only have 96 of them in Canada, the publicly funded social institutions, but each one of them is distinct in the way they're governed, the way they're funded, the way that they operate their deep institutional cultures. Going into those spaces, going into those ecosystems, willing to be broken open to listen with intention, and then to help people co-create ways of vision pathway, and agency is, I feel like it's my life's work. It is the biggest privilege to go and sit and to hold all of the hopes and dreams and fears and ideas and then to be able to build something that is actionable. That collective sense-making around relational well-being, We need to have

conversations at a sector-wide level, but we also need to go into those ecosystems with an appreciation of their distinctiveness, with an appreciation of listening, and then helping people get the agency and empowerment necessary to build within their spaces, and it comes down to governance sometimes as Annabree says, partnering with unions who are really, really important. Partnering with senates, partnering with boards, and then going to grassroots community, students, faculty, and staff, and then providing love that, Maryam, you're providing lots of support to senior leadership teams. They're also feeling all of the unprocessed grief, often shot right at them, so they're drinking from a fire hose. We need to just sit with care. I love that Peter said that, sit with governance, as Annabree said. Sit with all of the big feelings, and be willing to support these folks because we need to take a page out of collective action of community organizing. We need to build social movement. The only way we can do that is to gather and to create shared vocabulary fundamental principles and live into some questions together.

HELENA:

Thank you, Jessica. I'm glad you pointed to Maryam here because I do want to jump in with Maryam as a coach. Maryam, I'm going to ask you two questions. The one is in the chat, but I think you can handle it from this coaching perspective. Can you speak to how coaching can support individual well-being as they navigate systematic challenges such as the service loads that you mentioned earlier? But also, we have a question from a leader in the chat. Emily's asking, how do we reach out to faculty who are too stressed and overstretched to come to us? So bringing people together sometimes means going out to them. I think Jessica and Peter are kind of addressing that in the gathering notion of creating networks of care. But I'm wondering from a coaching perspective, how you respond to this?

MARYAM:

Just before I start, Jessica, I so appreciate this call to action. And as you were speaking, I was feeling like Oh, that's so much work, like to even do that. You know, I felt like, how do we even go there when we're so exhausted? When there's so much work on us as we've been talking about for the last hour. So I'd love to get your thoughts on where we refuel. I guess one way that I think refueling helps, is possible through the space of having someone that's dedicated to you to engage with you without any strings attached. I don't know if folks know much about coaching, but I can share a bit about it. But I think being a faculty member is very hard, and it's very lonely work in so many different ways. Having a thought partner, a confidential thought partner where you can just put everything on is really valuable without any expectation for it to be reciprocated. You know that it's your time. And they help you to see issues that you may otherwise not see because you're so embroiled in an issue. So it helps you have a bit of a bird's eye view of any situation, be it well-being or a relationship that you're navigating or a system that you're trying to shift. I found that with my clients and also the academics that we coach in the program, every one of our academic leaders is matched with a coach for 6 hours of coaching. They use that coaching to navigate both that inner landscape such as, I'm feeling lonely and this is really hard, and I'm experiencing impostor syndrome, and I have nowhere to go with this. In some cases, identifying what are their needs and limits, their priorities, their

next steps beyond that leadership role. And to also identify and clarify for themselves what needs to shift for themselves and in the fields that they're working in because sometimes you get so caught up in the day to day of signing off on this, making sure this and that is done, but you have a harder time thinking about the bigger picture. I think that that bigger picture requires some spaciousness and energy to be able to really lean into it. I think coaching is a really good space to do that. I often like to share that, sometimes people ask me, what's the difference between coaching and therapy? There is a clear, there's sometimes an overlap, but I think unlike therapy where you're often exploring the past and how that's impacting the current context and moment, coaching is very forward thinking. It's very proactive and thinking about strategies and actions that can help yield your desired results or identifying what those results are. So I think, from what universities can do, our institution provides free coaching to faculty and staff for up to 6 hours. I think for faculty members, using your professional development funds, getting your dean to support you in your leadership or the committee work that you're doing that might require some additional support and a thought partner, there are funds available, even in this moment of draconian measures that institutions are taking. There are supports that are available. I think if we're seeking them to get a coach and work with someone in that way. I think when those aren't available, finding a group of people who are working on something similar as you or wanting to drive change and using a dedicated 1 hour to just have conversations about the process and not necessarily where you're going and how you're all showing up. I think that can go a long way. It's very coach-like in a way.

HELENA:

Yeah. Thank you, Maryam. I'm going to give Jessica an opportunity to respond to this question because we're going into a final round of questions. For each of the panelists, it's really about your own personal well-being, recognizing that we are within the system. By no means, do I want to put the onus on the individual alone, but I do want to invite you to share as much as you're comfortable with your own strategies for work-life balance. Then maybe it's fitting then to start off with Jessica. And where do you go to refuel because you're also very busy? How do you stay recharged?

JESSICA:

Thank you, Helena. I think that, and Maryam, thank you for saying, I love the idea of collective action, and I just want to lie down because that sounds exhausting. I think that that is such a human and such an important comment because this field is big. We feel like we're hearing crisis, crisis, crisis all the time, and yet the levels of urgency and the levels of agency are giving us a how do we even intervene and how do we start conversations and build coalitions where we are in our own context and across the university? So thank you for saying that out loud. It's actually the answer for where I get my energy is I get to go into other spaces and sit with folks and give them a little bit of an arm's length, so to facilitate those conversations, to do sense-making with them, to not ask people who are on campus to spend some of their political and social capital, but for me to be able to go and hold those spaces and to do that gathering intentionally. And the pre-reading necessary to start with the foundation has been really powerful, which is why I wrote the book. The book is about a conversation starter, not as an

authoritative or expert lens. So I think that's where I get my energy to have purposeful, meaningful, real conversations, where I feel depleted and despair is when I'm dismembered by the academy or I dismember myself, where I step out of the work that I'm doing and out of alignment. And pretend that I am impervious or have all the answers or have the knowledge and decentre myself and sit as a learner position is where I recharge. Sit in the messy, the vulnerable, and the open, recognizing that I've got real privilege here. This is my entire mandate as a research chair. My job is to facilitate these conversations in Canada and around the world, and it's an invitation for people to show up, recognizing that not everyone can in every table and system. So that's super important to be really thoughtful and really considerate and to mitigate risk about people coming in as full-embodied humans. I get a charge out of being in these conversations. I also am a mother of two small children. I have a dog and a cat, and my husband is home sick today, so you could probably hear him in the background. Instead of being embarrassed or yelling at them, I'm just be like, Okay, this is messy and imperfect. I think that's something I learned in COVID was that there was a lot of horror and heartbreak, both at personal level, but also at the societal level and if we weren't willing to sit being broken open, I would be broken apart. I really have to exercise that openness. In all of the things I do try to sit in alignment, try to sit in purposeful work, which allows me to flourish as an individual. But also, I still. I used to every week and I still do once in a while, schedule a hide-under-the-covers in my day, so I will actually put it in my calendar and I will hide under the covers for 2 hours, where sometimes it'll be a book, sometimes it'll be making art, sometimes it'll be literally hiding under the covers because the world is a scary and uncertain place. But giving myself the grace that I give others has been an important piece too in saying this is messy and hard to be human in the world. If we're willing to transform, we're going to have to sit in that discomfort, but also find our intentional community so that we can. Maryam, I'm with you on howling into the abyss. I do it all the time. I howl into the abyss via text, via Zoom, going for a run with a friend, and that understanding despair is not the antithesis of hope that it's part of the Hope Circuits has been really important for the ways in which I have flourished and replenished in systems that are built on structural violence and exclusion. Yeah. Thank you. Thanks for that question. I want to hear other people because I could always use more strategies and considerations.

HELENA:

Yes. That's invited to the panelists, but also to the audience to share with us on what are some of the strategies. Who wants to go next? Annabree, maybe you also want to touch on where faculty go for support. But first, maybe start with your own.

ANNABREE:

Yeah, thank you. I have some similar experiences with Jessica. I'm quite an extrovert and I find a lot of enthusiasm and energy I can draw from people, but sometimes that can have its double-edged sword when you exhaust yourself. As much as I can set boundaries and fix to, there are days when I'm off and I turn off all of my devices and I don't look at them because I can't help but check that email and then get sucked into some of the work that can come up. But there's no amount of time in the day to do all of the work that needs to be done, so I have to set those boundaries for myself. But really, there are just even in my personal life, I make sure that I'm

building into my day, unless I have to drive for some reason, I build in cycling or walking as my commute to work, and it gives me the space to get my head into or out of the workday in ways that I can go home to my family and my kids and be there for them as well and participate in the home life that's there. I'll say that. I mean, I don't really ever turn off my brain from the work we do, so I have to find different ways of living with it in the day. And I think many academics here are like that because it's always working in the back of your mind. Sometimes if I don't focus on it, the back of my mind's tinkering away and coming up with solutions that I wouldn't have been able to if I sat there and stared at a wall really focusing on it, for instance. For me, I find my two great escapes really are. I play piano, I have to build it into my everyday life. When I do a lot of travel, there's always some grand piano in a corner of a hotel somewhere and I find that late at night to play. But also, I do some stone sculpture and physically with my chisels and my hammer, I beat the crap out of a piece of rock and I feel better at the end of it, and also at the end, there's something that's fun and mine that I came out with. Those are I have to build those in so that I have space and time to then come back and do some of the hard work that we do. In terms of where faculty get to go, I think we build relationships with colleagues on campuses, but it's also really important to not have only your friends circle be your whole life as well and your work life. And that you, building relationships, getting involved in communities outside of our workplaces is really, really important to making sure you can have the mental break, even if it's ticking away in the background, but having that mental break. There's lots of opportunities to do that in our communities. Also, I always plug again, the unions that even hold social events or other community groups that have social events. Just take advantage of meeting other people when you can and checking out, going under the blanket, setting your 2-hour hide under the blanket experience is a very important. There's my all across the board, spaghetti on the wall approach to how I take that. Thanks.

HELENA:

I learned so many little nuggets about you in there, Annabree. Thank you for sharing that. How about you, Peter?

PETER:

Sure. I'll share. Balance has always been a challenge for me. I feel there's so many demands on time, and we've talked about this already a little bit. But I get this feeling that I could easily work 24/7 and still not feel above water. I just have that feeling and many people do. Consequently, I've come up with some time strategies. I've been an educator for over 35 years now. I'm going to pick up on the "saying no" piece because that took me a very long time to figure out for myself. I'll share a little bit about my strategy around saying no. Now, all of us have been in meetings and things and think to ourselves, Why am I here? It doesn't align with who I am, and what are we doing here? There's that feeling of regret. I decided to build a framework for myself saying yes or no to requests on my time. I used to say yes, all the time, and I used to say yes right away. Now when I receive a request, I give that time to really process and think about it. I've developed myself some criteria, and I'll give you some examples of my criteria. First of all, I think, is it a mandatory part of my job? Because if it is, well, then I need to do it. But does it align with who I am, my goals, or something that I value I think is important?

Does it have impact? That's something that I value? Does it have that potential to make a real impact? Do I enjoy it? Can I still keep my life in balance? Is it for a family or friend? Is it new or challenging in a way that will help me grow? Does it align with my expertise? When I'm 89, am I going to look back and think, This was an important thing? Those are some examples of criteria. I think myself, being proactive in saying yes and no, has really helped me regain some of my time. A perfect example just late last week, I was asked to chair a hiring committee. I said, Well, I would love to and I really would. But I knew it would throw my balance too far off because I've got so much right now. I just politely said that yes, I think this is a very important thing, and I do not have the time right now. If it was spring, I would. I regretfully said, no, but if something like this comes up again, please keep me in mind. If it was in May, I'd be able to do it. I reached out to a colleague who I felt would align very well, gave them the name, and kept on moving. I took the time, strategically dealt with it because I would have liked to do it, but knew my balance would be way off. That's my insight into my thinking process because we're all inundated with so many decisions all day about our time. That's just my quick little insights into saying yes or no and how I've survived. Thanks.

HELENA:

Thank you. I see this appreciation for that in the chat as well, and I love Angeline saying her goal is to aim for harmony instead of balance. That's lovely. Maryam, we have little time left, but I do want to invite you to share your strategies and then a final invite to the audience to put some comments or questions in the chat.

MARYAM:

I'll speak a little bit about psychological safety in the workplace because I think beyond the strategies, if we have our own personal strategies, if the context isn't lending itself to it, I think the strategies sometimes fall apart. I'll start with one of my favourite quotes by the incomparable Audrey Lord, who says "Caring for myself is not indulgence. It's self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare." What I take from this quote is that creating the conditions for care from the context and the culture, that sometimes feels like they're not very supportive or have wellness in mind, is so important. And that does not enable safety. But that safety, it doesn't allow us to engage in the work and to have that momentum and the willingness or the drive to continue going forward, which I think, you know, taking that time creates both a sense of meaning. It creates a sense of efficacy to know that the work that we're doing moving forward is going to make a difference. I think that's the antidote to the relentless pressure and the competition and the inadequacy that many academics are often feeling and experiencing. I think in a way, self-care is putting your own oxygen mask on first and knowing when you need to go on under the covers, and that's what enables us to support others. Because I think we're all here in a way because we're here to support ourselves, but also we take on roles and responsibilities that are in service of other people. I think for psychological safety and psychological safe work environments, You know, that requires for me, that's really creating the conditions for people to be able to raise concerns, ask those hard questions, share different opinions and to be able to make mistakes without fear of punishment or retaliation or exclusion or those feelings of inequity. At our institution, we talk about five overarching

domains of creating psychological safety, and I think this can apply both to ourselves and also how we create the conditions for others. I won't go into detail in all of them because I know we're almost at time, but I think it is and I think this really wraps up everything we've been chatting about, but it's creating conditions for communication and collaboration. Making sure that there's space for freedom of expression in a way that is collaborative and invites many voices in. I think the second is that creating the conditions for psychological safety is having social intelligence. The awareness of the impacts of any action on ourselves and how it shows up for other people, particularly those people who don't often have a voice. I think it's problem-solving and conflict engagement. We haven't talked much about conflict, but it is everywhere in our work. What are the tools that we need to engage with conflict? How do we use that to support those who may not otherwise be able to? I think it also asks us to measure safety and security, creating the conditions for people to be able to show up. This could be something as simple as putting our pronouns at the end of our email to the initiatives that we choose to amplify or the voices that we choose to amplify. I think most importantly that it's rooted in some fairness and integrity. I think that particularly applies to us relationally and also within the system that the decisions are principles that we're making, that we're looking at the host of factors that come into supporting that collective well-being, rather than the marketized individual self-help approach to well-being. I think very practically, I think creating space for other people, being welcoming and just being kind, being a good person, and I think sometimes we forget that when we're in this cycle of just performance and outputs in this culture that we're all working in.

HELENA:

Thank you so much. That's a great, as you say, wrap-up of the topics we've discussed today. With our last 2 minutes, the panel really wanted the audience to have the last say, so we're hoping that you will indulge us by putting in the chat just one key takeaway from this conversation today. We'll give a moment there for you to share. Thank you. I'm also going to share in the chat just that link to the podcast that Maryam has shared with me. When I listened to it, it really resonated. Okay. If you've enjoyed this conversation, I want to invite you just to take this into the hallways where you go. Often when we offer a FLO, I see it just as the starting point. It's not the end. We all probably could talk for another hour, if not more. But, we have this scarcity of time. I'm going to respect all your time by wrapping up on time. I do want to invite you to continue this conversation. I want to say a very big thank you to the panelists. Thanks for bringing your whole selves into this Zoom room today. I really appreciate your perspectives, and I appreciate our audience staying with us till now. In the chat, Kelsey will put a survey. We welcome some feedback to just do that on your way out and go have a wonderful lunchtime and some break from the screen. Thanks, everyone.