

**Rekindling Creativity and Preventing Burnout:**

A Heuristic Inquiry into the Impact of Poetry and Photography  
on Art Teachers' Well-Being

Daniela Fundaro

A Thesis in the Department of Art Education

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts (Art Education)

at Concordia University  
Montreal, Quebec, Canada

August 2024

© Daniela Fundaro, 2024

**CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY**  
**School of Graduate Studies**

This is to certify that the thesis prepared

By: Daniela Fundaro  
Entitled: Rekindling Creativity and Preventing Burnout: A Heuristic Inquiry into  
the Impact of Poetry and Photography on Art Teachers' Well-Being

and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

**Masters of Arts (Art Education)**

Complies with the regulations of the University and meets the expected standards with respect to  
originality and quality.

Signed by the final Examining Committee:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Lorrie Blair Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Vivek Venkatesh Examiner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Lorrie Blair Supervisor

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Juan Carlos Castro Graduate Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Annie Gerin Dean of Faculty

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Defense August 20, 2024

## **Abstract**

### **Rekindling Creativity and Preventing Burnout:**

A Heuristic Inquiry into the Impact of Poetry and Photography on Art Teachers' Well-Being

Daniela Fundaro

Burnout among art teachers has become a significant concern, marked by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and diminished personal accomplishment. This thesis explores innovative strategies to prevent burnout and rekindle passion for art among educators by integrating heuristics, poetry, photography, and mindfulness into their daily practices. Utilizing a heuristic methodology, the study emphasizes self-inquiry and discovery, offering art educators a structured yet flexible approach to navigate professional challenges. The research draws on Julia Cameron's principles from *The Artist's Way* and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's concept of "flow" to foster creative resilience and optimal engagement. Additionally, it incorporates insights from Jon Kabat-Zinn's Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction and Ellen Langer's mindful learning framework to enhance emotional regulation and well-being. Through a studio-based approach, this study documents the experiences of the researcher-participant, highlighting effective methods for integrating small artistic habits and mindfulness practices into daily routines. The findings aim to provide actionable strategies for sustaining artistic engagement and well-being, ultimately contributing to the discourse on teacher retention and the development of supportive educational environments.

*Keywords:* Burnout; Art teachers; Mindfulness; Creative resilience; Teacher retention

## Acknowledgements

I am expressing my deepest gratitude to all those who have supported and inspired me.

*To my loving husband*, whose unwavering support and love have been my constant source of strength. Your belief in me has carried me through the most challenging times, and I am forever grateful for your presence in my life.

*To my family* for their love, encouragement, and understanding. Your unwavering faith in my abilities has been a beacon of hope.

*To my friends*, who have been my cheerleaders, confidants, and sources of joy. Your support and laughter have lightened my path and kept me going.

*To my esteemed supervisor*, Lorrie Blair, whose guidance, wisdom, and patience have been invaluable. Your mentorship has shaped this work and my growth as a scholar. Thank you for believing in my potential and your unwavering support throughout this journey.

*To my students*, who have inspired me with their curiosity, determination, and passion for learning, I say thank you. You remind me daily of the power of education and the importance of perseverance.

Lastly, this journey has been particularly challenging as I have faced and overcome cancer. Because of the love, support, and encouragement, I found the strength and resilience to persevere. This thesis is a testament to our collective journey, and I am deeply grateful to each of you for being there for me.

*I dedicate this thesis to all the teachers.*

*You are the light that shines so bright.*

## Table Of Contents

<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b>	
1.1 Introduction.....	1
1.2 Positionality.....	3
1.3 Theoretical Framework.....	4
1.4 Why mindfulness for art teachers?.....	6
<b>Chapter 2: Literature Review</b>	
2.1 Introduction.....	7
2.2 The Here and Now.....	8
2.3 The Art of Letting Go.....	8
2.4 The Mind and the Heart.....	10
2.5 The Space in Between.....	11
<b>Chapter 3: Methodology &amp; Methods</b>	
3.1 Moustakas Heuristics.....	15
3.2 Initial Engagement.....	16
3.3 Immersion.....	17
3.4 Incubation.....	17
3.5 Illumination.....	18
3.6 Explication.....	19
3.7 Creative Synthesis.....	20
3.8 Poetry.....	20
3.9 Photography.....	22
<b>Chapter 4: Selected Artwork &amp; Poetry.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Chapter 5: Decoding</b>	
5.1 Introduction.....	36
5.2 Embodiment in Teaching.....	37
5.3 Teaching as a Form of Art.....	38
5.4 Transformation and Growth.....	39

5.5 Physical, Emotional and Mental Struggles of Teaching.....	41
5.6 Impact and Responsibility of Teaching.....	43
5.7 Seeking Balance and Self-Care.....	45
5.8 Reflections.....	47
<b>Chapter 6: Renewal</b>	
6.1 Lack vs. Abundance.....	49
6.2 Prevention for Burnout.....	50
6.3 Future Implications for Art Educators.....	51
6.4 Further questions.....	54
6.5 Conclusion.....	55
<b>References.....</b>	<b>57</b>

## List of Figures

<b>Figure 1:</b> Defeated.....	24
<b>Figure 2:</b> Depleted.....	25
<b>Figure 3:</b> Contemplation.....	26
<b>Figure 4:</b> Pause.....	27
<b>Figure 5:</b> Create.....	28
<b>Figure 6:</b> Reflection.....	29
<b>Figure 7:</b> Introspection.....	30
<b>Figure 8:</b> Changing Seasons.....	31
<b>Figure 9:</b> Finding Heart.....	32
<b>Figure 10:</b> Celebrate.....	33
<b>Figure 11:</b> Reshifting.....	34
<b>Figure 12:</b> Renewed.....	35
<b>Figure 13:</b> Coding process.....	36



## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction**

In today's educational landscape, burnout has emerged as a pervasive issue, casting a shadow over the well-being and effectiveness of educators. Defined by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment, burnout is at the core of an individual's professional identity, depleting enthusiasm and vitality. While educators across all disciplines grapple with this phenomenon, art teachers navigate a unique set of challenges that intensify the risk of burnout. Art teachers are agents of creativity and expression and face a profession characterized by emotional intensity and demands that extend beyond traditional pedagogy. Their role extends beyond instruction; they serve as mentors, facilitators, and advocates for the transformative power of art. Yet, amidst their dedication to nurturing the artistic talents of their students, art teachers often find themselves grappling with a profound sense of disillusionment and detachment from their craft. The perpetual juggling act of meeting curriculum demands, managing diverse student needs, and navigating administrative pressures can erode their passion for art, leaving them directionless in a sea of emotional exhaustion and creative stagnation.

Recognizing the urgency of addressing burnout among art teachers and reigniting their passion for artistic expression, this thesis explores preventive strategies. Rather than succumbing to the prevailing narrative of burnout as an inevitable consequence of teaching, this research seeks to chart a new course that empowers art teachers to reclaim their well-being and artistic vitality. Drawing upon the principles of heuristics, poetry and photography, this study attempts to uncover effective methods for promoting well-being and sustaining artistic engagement amidst the rigours of teaching. Heuristics, as a methodology is rooted in self-inquiry and discovery,

offers a structured yet flexible approach to navigating the complexities of burnout. With its evocative language and symbolic expression, poetry and photography serve as a vehicle for emotional exploration and creative renewal. It is infused with symbolic significance and embodied experience and fosters mindfulness and sensory engagement, offering a break from the relentless demands of the classroom.

Through this interdisciplinary lens, this research seeks to illuminate the transformative potential of integrating heuristics, poetry, walking and photography into the daily practice of art teachers. Exploring this through a studio thesis that addresses the following research question: *Can integrating heuristics, poetry and photography into daily practice help prevent burnout and rediscover a passion for art among art teachers?* A sub-question for this research is: *How can small mindfulness actions be integrated into a teacher's daily routine?* As I explore these questions, the study aims to investigate the effectiveness of incorporating small artistic habits, including poetry photography, to prevent burnout among art teachers. Following Moustakas' methodology, it explores the heuristic process to rediscover a passion for art and promote well-being. To document and analyze the experiences of the researcher-participant throughout the heuristic journey, focusing on emerging themes and insights. To generate a body of work reflecting the findings and insights gained from the research, contributing to the discourse on teacher well-being and artistic practice. Art teachers can cultivate resilience, rekindle their passion for art, and reclaim agency over their well-being by embarking on this journey of self-discovery and creative exploration.

In the following sections of this thesis, I will delve deeper into the theoretical base of this research, outline the research objectives, outline the methodology, and articulate the expected contributions to the field of art education. Through inquiry and reflective practice, this study

aspires to offer meaningful insights and actionable strategies for preventing burnout and revitalizing passion for art among art teachers.

## **1.2 Positionality**

It is necessary to understand why mindfulness can benefit teachers and burnout. With about 50% of teachers leaving the profession within the first five years, I wondered why less than 6% of articles focus on teachers and educators (Maloney et al., 2016). In simple terms, mindfulness refers to paying attention to the present moment without judgment. It involves cultivating a state of awareness and focusing one's attention on the present experience, including thoughts, feelings, and sensations. When applied in an educational context, mindfulness can positively affect educators' and students' learning processes.

This research is essential because, as a teacher in public schools within the last five years, I've seen how stressful this profession is. After my first year of teaching, I was unprepared to cope with the stress and how to manage it and ended up burned out. During that time, I knew that teaching under the same conditions was not sustainable, and thus, I began my journey with mindfulness. Over the next several years, I began to train myself in Mindfulness techniques that I've incorporated into my classroom and have shared with close colleagues. Over time, I saw a shift in how they coped with the stress we experience in the schools we teach. In Montreal, in particular, we often have one-day professional training for Mindfulness. However, this is not a practical way to approach this ideology. This practice must be sustained over a period of time for new neural pathways to be formed and ultimately integrated within the classroom. A few programs are offered currently, such as CARE, MindUp, BREATHE and Calm Classroom. However, they are not accessible to teachers without paying for this service, and often, these are

not paid for within the Montreal education system. Quebec has the lowest-paid teachers in the country and has turned to many unqualified educators to be in the classroom, so there is a crisis within the profession. There is a need for more emphasis on teacher retention and increased health and well-being to help with greater satisfaction and lower rates of absenteeism, burnout and stress. Through my research, I want to take an art education approach to study the self and find valuable techniques that art educators can implement in the future to prevent burnout and find a reignited passion for the arts that art teachers often tend to neglect. I believe this can help further the development within the art education field and hopefully help pre-service teachers as well as a preventative measure before they enter the workforce. I hope to create insight on the subject through heuristics that will benefit educators in the future and explore what methods could help them cope through mindfulness-based interventions.

### **1.3 Theoretical Framework**

This studio thesis is grounded in an interdisciplinary theoretical framework that draws upon principles from art education, psychology, and mindfulness research. By synthesizing insights from these diverse fields, this study explores the transformative potential of integrating heuristics, poetry and photography into art teachers' daily practice.

In adopting the theoretical framework for this thesis, Julia Cameron's work, *The Artist's Way*, emerges as a guiding force in fostering creative resilience and rejuvenation for art teachers grappling with burnout. Cameron's transformative approach aligns with the principles of this research. By incorporating Cameron's framework into the heuristic inquiry process, the study aims to infuse daily artistic practices, such as morning pages and artist dates, into the lives of art teachers. Drawing from Cameron's emphasis on regular, intentional engagement with one's

creative self, this research explores how these practices, when integrated into the heuristic phases, can contribute to preventing burnout and rekindling a passion for art. Cameron's framework, emphasizing the importance of creating a nurturing and supportive artistic environment, catalyzes the development of a unique methodology that incorporates self-discovery, mindfulness, and creative expression. Through the lens of *The Artist's Way* (1992), this thesis aims to implement Cameron's insights, offering a holistic approach to navigating the challenges of burnout and rediscovering the joy and vitality inherent in artistic practice.

Another theoretical framework for this thesis is Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's influential work *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (2008), which provides a profound lens through which to understand and harness art teachers' intrinsic motivation and creative engagement. Csikszentmihalyi's concept of "flow" describes a state of heightened focus, complete immersion, and profound enjoyment in an activity, presenting a compelling perspective for preventing burnout and cultivating passion within the teaching profession. By integrating Csikszentmihalyi's principles into my research, this study aims to explore how fostering flow experiences can be a transformative strategy for art teachers facing the challenges of burnout. Applying flow principles within the heuristic inquiry process allows for a tailored exploration of conditions that facilitate optimal experiences in teaching art. His emphasis on aligning skills and challenges, clear goals, and immediate feedback resonates with the core objectives of this research, seeking to uncover how cultivating flow can contribute to sustained well-being and artistic engagement among art educators.

Including insights from these scholars and practitioners provides a theoretical foundation for understanding the role of art education, poetry and photography in promoting creativity, well-being, and personal growth.

#### **1.4 Why mindfulness for art teachers?**

Like many educators, art teachers face significant stress and emotional demands that can lead to burnout. Adopting mindfulness practices offers a powerful solution to this pervasive issue, providing numerous benefits that enhance both personal well-being and professional effectiveness. Mindfulness helps reduce stress, boost creativity, and improve emotional resilience, creating a more positive classroom environment. Additionally, it promotes health benefits, sustains passion for teaching, and models healthy behaviour for students. By integrating mindfulness into their daily routines, art teachers can foster stronger relationships with students, maintain their enthusiasm for teaching, and ensure long-term career sustainability, ultimately enriching the educational experience for everyone involved. If addressed early in an educator's career, systemic changes can help prevent teachers from rapidly leaving the profession. Art teachers usually have students who have the space to become more open in the classroom by exploring their ideas. A strong sense of resilience is needed to help guide students and foster more significant change within the school. However, one cannot provide that to students if it is not facilitated by the educator first. Therefore, burnout being addressed early on is necessary for educators to consider how to balance and find the right tools to better engage in art education within their personal and professional development.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### 2.1 Introduction

This literature review explores the essential concepts and research that ground my investigation into mindfulness and its impact on education. The discussion will be divided into three key sections, each informed by psychology, neuroscience, and education.

Section 2.2, "The Here and Now," begins by exploring the origins and definitions of mindfulness, tracing its roots from ancient Eastern and Buddhist philosophy to its integration into Western culture and academic research. In this context, the increasing body of literature on mindfulness over the past decade will be examined to establish the foundational relevance of this practice.

Section 2.3, "The Art of Letting Go," focuses on the pioneering work of Jon Kabat-Zinn, whose development of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) has significantly influenced both psychological and neuroscientific studies on mindfulness. This section will delve into Kabat-Zinn's seven key principles of mindfulness and their applications in promoting mental well-being and stress reduction.

Section 2.4, "The Mind and the Heart," highlights the contributions of Ellen Langer, who emphasizes the importance of mindful awareness in everyday life and its transformative potential in educational settings. Her concept of "mindful learning" and its implications for fostering creativity, critical thinking, and teacher well-being will be discussed in depth.

Section 2.5, "The Space in Between," examines Patricia Jennings' work on mindfulness for educators. It focuses on the significance of emotional regulation and self-care in preventing teacher burnout. This section will explore how mindfulness practices can help educators maintain a healthy work-life balance and create positive learning environments.

By grounding my research in these three fields and the influential works of Kabat-Zinn, Langer, and Jennings, this chapter aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the current literature on mindfulness and its relevance to educational practice.

## **2.2 The Here and Now**

First and foremost, what is Mindfulness? Mindfulness comes from the Pali word *sati*, meaning awareness, attention, and remembering (Sharf, 2014). Mindfulness began in Ancient Eastern and Buddhist philosophy and has existed for over 2500 years, although it has now entered Western culture primarily through scholars. Within the past ten years, there has been a rise in studies about Mindfulness and its benefits for those who practice it. The number of publications increased by an average of 23.5% per year from 2010 to 2020. Two-thirds of all publications, 67%, were from 2016 to 2021. The top fields researching mindfulness are psychology, neuroscience, and education fields. (Baminiwatta & Solangaarachchi, 2021). These three fields will be essential to ground my research as most educational mindfulness is grounded in research in both psychology and neuroscience to help understand how this may benefit the academic field.

## **2.3 The Art of Letting Go**

One of the first publications on mindfulness was by Jon Kabat-Zinn in 1982. Jon Kabat-Zinn is known for developing the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program. Kabat-Zinn is a pioneer in bringing mindfulness into mainstream healthcare and stress management. His work emphasizes cultivating mindfulness through meditation to promote well-being and reduce stress. He often defines mindfulness as “becoming aware of what is on our



minds from moment to moment and of how our experience is transformed when we do so” (2013). Kabatt-Zinn has identified seven vital mindful principles that he associated with mindfulness, which are *non-judgement*, where one witness their own inner and outer experiences—*patience* as a form of wisdom and being able to accept how things will unfold in their own time—having a *beginner’s mind* remaining open and curious about new possibilities to avoid limiting ourselves by being stuck in our expertise. *Trust* yourself and your feelings, and be okay with making mistakes. To be *non-striving*, show up for yourself as you are, and pay attention to what is unfolding without needing to change an outcome or situation. *Acceptance* means seeing things for what they are and letting go of paying attention to the inner experience of our thoughts, emotions, and situations and what our minds want to hold onto. Still, it also means letting experience be what it is right now. (Zinn, 2013).

These concepts are the basis for mindfulness practice, which helps situate work within the mindfulness realm of work, whether in psychology, education or neuroscience. Zinn teaches various meditation techniques that allow the readers to become more mindful and present within themselves to be aware of what they must incorporate within these seven fundamental principles. These fundamental principles are a foundation for mindfulness research. Mindful practices change a person’s relationship with the self, and as they engage with these practices, they will become more empathetic as mindfulness changes how they see themselves in the world. Mindfulness is not about dissolving the notion of the self but instead about having a liberating experience from the constraints of the rigid self (Siegel, 2009). This is the basis for navigating the emotional and physical state one develops using his principles. These seven principles provide a framework for how the mind and body respond to each other over time. In a study conducted by Davidson et al. (2003), using Kabat-Zinn’s MBSR training, they saw a correlation

through a short program examining meditation through brain scans that there is a positive effect on the brain and immune function. Numerous studies are still being conducted within the field of neuroscience to measure the correlation of these techniques and their impact on the brain and the body.

## **2.4 The Mind and the Heart**

Ellen Langer, a renowned psychologist and researcher, has made significant contributions to the field of mindfulness and its application in various domains, including education. Langer's work challenges traditional notions of mindfulness by emphasizing the importance of mindful awareness in everyday life and its potential to transform teaching practices. She introduced the concept of "mindful learning," which encourages individuals to approach learning with openness, curiosity, and a willingness to question assumptions. She argues that by adopting a mindful mindset, educators can create dynamic learning environments that foster creativity, critical thinking, and student engagement. Langer's research on mindfulness in education extends beyond the classroom, exploring its impact on teacher well-being and instructional practices.

Langer examines how mindfulness practices, such as mindfulness meditation and mindful movement, can enhance self-regulation skills among educators. The findings suggest that integrating mindfulness into daily routines can improve attention, emotional regulation, and stress management, ultimately enhancing teacher effectiveness and job satisfaction. Furthermore, Langer's work highlights the importance of cultivating a mindful approach to decision-making and problem-solving in educational settings. She discusses the illusion of control and demonstrates how mindfulness can help educators overcome cognitive biases and make more informed, adaptive choices in uncertainty. By encouraging educators to approach challenges with

an open mind and a willingness to experiment, Langer's work offers practical strategies for promoting innovation and resilience in teaching practice.

Langer also refers to mindfulness and creativity in her book *On Becoming an Artist: Reinventing Yourself Through Mindful Creativity* (2006). She expands on a perspective of self-discovery and creative exploration. Langer encourages them to embrace uncertainty, challenge conventional thinking, and trust in their intuitive abilities to unlock their creative potential. By adopting a mindful approach to artistic expression, she claims that one can reinvent oneself as an artist and unlock new dimensions of personal growth, fulfillment, and self-expression.

Overall, Ellen Langer's research provides valuable insights into the application of mindfulness in education and art, offering an understanding of its potential benefits for art educators. By emphasizing the importance of mindful awareness in teaching and learning, Langer's work challenges educators to reconsider their approach to instruction and create learning environments that prioritize curiosity, creativity, and authentic engagement.

## **2.5 The Space in Between**

A critical author who works with my subject is Patricia Jennings. She's written *Mindfulness for Teachers: Simple Skills for Peace and Productivity in the Classroom* (2015). Implementing self-care practices and maintaining a healthy work-life balance can significantly contribute to an educator's emotional well-being. Mindfulness is imperative for educators in their classrooms and in dealing with outside stressors. As educators prioritize their emotional well-being, they can better handle challenging situations in the classroom. Being emotionally balanced and in a rational state of mind, they can respond to students' needs and classroom

dynamics with clarity, empathy and understanding. Having emotional regulation extends well beyond the classroom. When a teacher creates a positive and safe environment, students feel supported and can perform better in that environment. Students can interpret through the teacher how to use emotional regulation skills, foster a sense of community, and provide opportunities for open communication. Consequently, this can help reduce tension and promote a more harmonious learning environment.

When teachers experience emotional discomfort or challenging emotions within the classroom, they need to have strategies to manage and navigate these feelings effectively. Mindfulness involves acknowledging and understanding their emotions and recognizing when they must step back and create space for themselves. Jennings (2015) explains, "Practicing mindfulness awareness can help you notice uncomfortable emotions so that you can understand and regulate them more consciously rather than automatically reacting when your emotions are triggered." Teachers must care for themselves before they can care for others. If the teacher is under a consistent stressor and cannot remove themselves from the situation, it can create more chaos within the classroom. Teachers who can emotionally regulate themselves have a better understanding of their emotions, how to view the problem from a different perspective and be able to create a more conducive place of learning for students and, in return, have fewer behaviour issues to deal with, which may trigger them.

If this is not addressed, emotional exhaustion can lead to teacher burnout. Therefore, it is imperative to distinguish and take space between moments when we feel uncomfortable emotions arise within the classroom. First, the educator must be able to sustain a practice of their own to be able to bring this into their classroom where educators and students have no way of escaping the environment and their emotions if left unchecked, can create more chaos within a

school, and situations that a rational state of mind can handle can no longer be plausible because of the high tension that stirs within the educators mind and body. Some statistics that reinforce this narrative are that 25-30% of teachers rate their jobs as either very or extremely stressful, the rate of leaving the profession is 46% within the first five years, and 52% retire early because of psychiatric or psychosomatic disorders (Roeser et al. 2012). As there are high levels of stress within the job, educators often need to be provided with the tools to regulate their emotions. During their training as pre-service teachers, more discussion or management tools must be provided for them. When they enter the workforce, they need more support to succeed, which must be provided but is not and often leads to many teachers leaving the profession due to the lack of support and resources.

Teacher burnout has been discussed thoroughly in educational and psychological research. However, this research focuses more on art teachers, how they have lost their creative practice over time, and how to reengage with their practice. Roy (2021) states that the roles of artist and teacher become intertwined. Thus, professional and personal identities often are lost throughout their careers. She states the ideologies of being an artist and a teacher have a unique role throughout their career. As undergraduate students in the art education program at Concordia University, we felt this sentiment as a whole. They are often having to compromise our identities. If we shared that we were art education students, studio professors and students would usually disregard our identity as artists. Likewise, students from the education department may be condescending to us as educators in standard education classes. Art educators have a particular set of challenges that other educators do not have—struggling with two identities and the combination of the two emerging within a classroom. Thus, the loss of identity further complicates the issues that art educators face with burnout—losing a part of their identity, which

was their reason for having a passion for teaching. Roy explores some of these concepts within her thesis and shares stories of educators in similar situations, making this a shared phenomenon amongst art educators.

Although this thesis references multiple psychologists and educators, this research is not grounded in mindfulness as therapy. It aims to find practices to help art teachers rediscover their passion for art and prevent burnout.

## Chapter 3: Methodology & Methods

### 3.1 Moustakas Heuristics

As part of my studio thesis, I adopted a qualitative approach, employing a self-study design. I served as the participant and engaged in Clark Moustakas' heuristic inquiry over two months. Moustakas' heuristics involved an internal search to discover the nature and meaning of experience, fostering self-awareness and self-knowledge. This methodology incorporated a creative process for self-discovery and exploration. It was particularly well-suited for investigating my research question: *Can integrating heuristics, poetry, and photography into daily practice help prevent burnout and rediscover a passion for art among art teachers?*

Moustakas emphasized the importance of inner teaching to transform self-doubt into self-confidence, aligning with the foundational principles of mindfulness. By engaging in the heuristic process, I aimed to reclaim agency over my well-being, find inspiration in everyday life, feel connected to nature, and create artwork from the process of self-discovery. I followed Moustakas' six phases of heuristic inquiry: initial engagement, immersion, incubation, illumination, explication, and creative synthesis.

I collected data through audio recordings, written journal reflections, and photographs to document experiences and gather insights. This process spanned over two months, allowing each phase sufficient time for exploration and reflection. Through this comprehensive methodology, I aimed to uncover effective methods for preventing burnout and rediscovering a passion for art among art teachers.

### **3.2 Initial Engagement**

This phase involves developing an intense interest in the research topic with personal meaning. I was in constant self-dialogues with myself to question and fully engage with my inquiry. This phase became the culmination of many years of pondering these questions and effectively embarking on a journey of self-discovery to reach this point in my research. As I stated earlier, I experienced burnout early in my teaching career. A long career would be unsustainable if I were constantly burnt out. Therefore, I embarked on a long journey with mindfulness and its concepts. The initial engagement began in 2019 as an art educator in my first year of teaching. I started to read books on Eastern meditation practices, take courses on reiki yoga, ask questions from others who practiced and then engage in dialogues through journals.

This led me to understand how I can use this to inform myself on why we experience burnout and understand why burnout happens for educators, particularly art educators. This question was the basis for the initial engagement culminating in those years, particularly during the pandemic. This question kept ruminating as the world had to slow down, ponder what served us, and reevaluate how we lived. Once I began my master's, I once again had to reevaluate how I was experiencing burnout. I had to reposition myself after being diagnosed with cancer and having to understand my emotional, physical and mental state to engage with this question. Was I noticing the signs? Why did it take me so long to address and avoid these issues? Considering my experiences before embarking on this process, the initial engagement was years of trying to reposition and be mindful. The inquiry and intense self-dialogue were essential for the basis of this research. As time passed, my research during the master's courses was often centred around mindfulness and its practices, engaging in conversations with myself, my supervisor, and my colleagues, furthering the question, and trying to simplify the process to the essentials. In



particular, educators express that there isn't enough time for their responsibilities, so how can they integrate another task into their daily lives? How can this be integrated sustainably?

### **3.3 Immersion**

During this phase, I fully immersed myself in the research question, experiencing it in all states: waking, sleeping, and even dream-like moments. I wrote a poem three times a day, capturing my lived experiences. Additionally, I took photographs of my surroundings, focusing on elements related to the research question. The immersion phase was particularly challenging, as I was overwhelmed with work and responsibilities. Each poem became a spontaneous self-dialogue, helping me explore the topic deeply. I constantly wrote and journaled my thoughts and actions, contemplating what it means to be both an educator and an artist, especially while teetering on the brink of burnout.

I took every opportunity to write, whether inside or outside the classroom, after my morning commute, during lunch breaks, or following significant daily experiences. At times, the pressure to create and the high standards I set for myself felt overwhelming, and I documented these emotions within my poems. Despite my concerns about not having enough time to gather all the data I wanted, I accumulated over 20 poems and countless pages of notes and photographs. This phase, though daunting, provided a rich collection of data for my research.

### **3.4 Incubation**

During the incubation stage, I needed to retreat from any questions or data gathering, which was more challenging than anticipated. I decided to focus on my daily tasks and completely step away from the research process. This was particularly difficult because the

immersion phase had reignited my passion for creating. However, I knew this phase was crucial; stepping back from the question would lead to clarity and uncover solutions that might have eluded me before.

Although this phase lasted only ten days, I had to actively refrain from creating during the first few days and trust the heuristics process. This period required me to rely on the notion that taking a step back would eventually bring fresh perspectives and deeper insights. I focused on mundane activities, allowing my mind to rest and process everything subconsciously. Despite my initial struggle to detach, I gradually found that this period of inactivity helped distill my thoughts and brought a sense of calm. By the end of the ten days, I noticed a renewed sense of clarity and direction, reaffirming the importance of this stage in my research journey.

### **3.5 Illumination**

The illumination phase involved a breakthrough into conscious awareness. This phase helped remove distorted understandings and disclosed hidden meanings by letting me notice things that hadn't been apparent before. Although I was unsure whether it would yield quick results after the incubation stage, the breakthrough happened sooner than expected. I started to have revelations about the daily habits that could be changed.

I realized mindful actions were key, such as paying attention to my brain and how the narrative was being told. Whether dealing with colleagues, students, parents, or personal situations, shifting my perspective and being aware of the script were small yet significant daily changes. The data I collected showed that I could make meaningful changes by paying attention and not keeping the script inside my mind but actively creating the environment around me. This

phase brought clarity and a deeper understanding of how minor adjustments in daily habits could prevent burnout and reignite my passion for art.

### **3.6 Explication**

During the explication phase, I thoroughly examined the insights that had emerged during the illumination stage. This phase involved delving deeply into the thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and judgments that had surfaced. I reviewed my notes, poems, and photographs, carefully analyzing each data piece to uncover its meaning.

I spent time reflecting on my conversations and dialogues with colleagues, students, parents, and my internal dialogues. This helped me understand the underlying patterns and themes that had awakened my consciousness. By breaking down these elements, I better understood how they interrelated and contributed to the broader narrative of preventing burnout and rekindling passion for art.

During this phase, I also closely examined my emotional responses and how they influenced my perceptions. I noticed recurring themes in my interactions and self-reflections, which provided valuable insights into my beliefs and judgments. By understanding these deeper layers, I could identify the root causes of my challenges and the potential solutions that had emerged.

This thorough examination allowed me to comprehensively understand my experiences and the broader implications for art educators. The explication phase was crucial in transforming raw data into meaningful insights, enabling me to see the complete picture and prepare for the final phase of my research journey.

### **3.7 Creative Synthesis**

In the final stage, the creative synthesis, I synthesized all the data and themes gathered throughout the heuristic inquiry process. I became deeply familiar with the insights I had gained and used the information and knowledge gathered to create artwork.

In response to the collected data, I created more photography, digital artwork, and poems. I used the poems written during the immersion phase and new ones to inform the creative process. I edited past data and created new content to juxtapose the mediums, allowing poetry and photography to respond to each other. This interplay between mediums helped me articulate the newfound insights I had gained through the process.

By engaging in this creative synthesis, I gained a more precise picture for myself and, hopefully, for future art educators. This final phase allowed me to transform my research into tangible expressions of art, making the insights more accessible and impactful. Creating and juxtaposing different mediums helped solidify my understanding and provided a meaningful way to convey the outcomes of my research.

### **3.8 Poetry**

Incorporating poetry into my qualitative research was crucial, especially in understanding and conveying my emotions and experiences. Its unique form and expressive capacity allowed me to delve deeper into the human experience, capturing nuances of feelings and personal reflections that other methods might overlook. Cahnmann-Taylor (2003) noted that qualitative researchers use poetic images and metaphors to draw attention to the rhythms of everyday speech and explore seemingly ordinary images. This approach helped me focus on the complexity of mundane tasks, feelings, and new perspectives through poetry. Poetry's condensed and

metaphorical nature allowed me to express complex emotions and experiences in ways prose could not, evoking feelings and insights that resonated on a deeper, more intuitive level. As Faulkner (2009) and Richardson (1998) stated, poetry demonstrates and discloses the human mystery, allowing us to “find ourselves in poems.” I mirrored my inner thoughts and feelings through carefully chosen words and phrases, providing a more intimate understanding of my experiences and emotional landscape.

Writing poetry encouraged me to engage in reflective practice, requiring me to connect with my emotions and perspectives more deeply. This reflective process led to new insights and a more empathetic understanding of myself as an educator and an artist. Poetry allowed me to refine my experiences to their essence, highlighting my data's most significant emotional aspects. This was particularly valuable in my qualitative research, where I aimed to understand my lived experiences and emotional realities. Additionally, poetry's evocative nature enhanced the communication of my research findings, making them more accessible and engaging to a broader audience, thus bridging the gap between academic research and personal experiences. Writing and reading poetry fostered empathy by inviting me and my readers into my emotional world, leading to a more compassionate and comprehensive understanding. As Cahnmann-Taylor (2003) emphasized, the literary and visual arts stretch our capacities for creativity and knowing, offering a healthy synthesis of approaches to writing in ways that paint a complete picture. Through poetry, I gained deeper insights into my experiences, enriching the research process and offering a powerful means of exploring and expressing emotions.

### 3.9 Photography

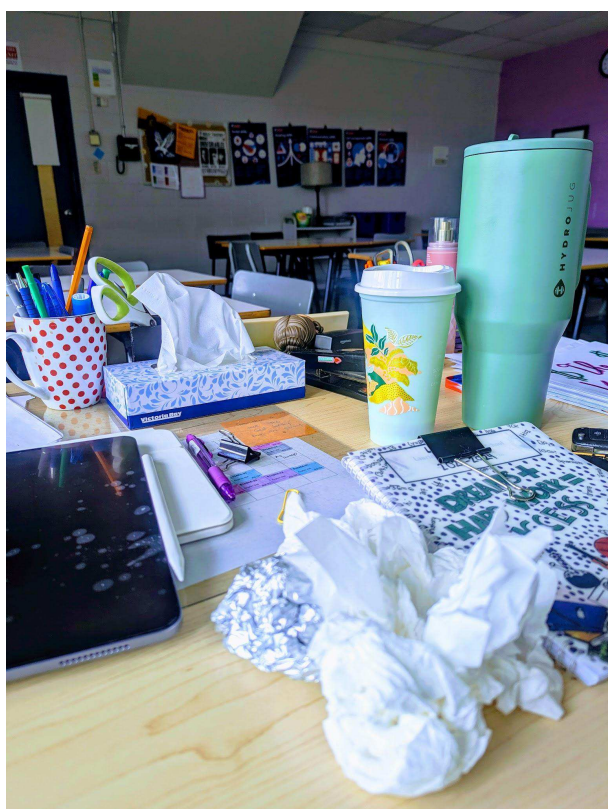
Photography in my qualitative research was invaluable in capturing and conveying my teaching beliefs and emotions. Photography provided a visual dimension that enhanced understanding and communication, offering insights into my worldview. As Taylor (2002) noted, “the reasons behind the choice – why the photographer chose to capture a particular subject in a still picture – may be just as illuminating as the photograph itself.” This method helped situate what I valued as an educator and provided deep insight into my focus and philosophy. Where words did not fully encompass all emotions, photography was a second experience for viewers to gain insight into my mind and perspective. Images revealed different perspectives for understanding my knowledge, beliefs, and values inside and outside the classroom. Each photograph, taken intentionally, illuminated my subconscious beliefs and highlighted what I valued and why. This visual representation offered a direct, impactful understanding of the research setting and participants' experiences, complementing other qualitative methods like journaling and writing poetry.

Photography's evocative nature captured mundane, ordinary occurrences and offered insights into emotional states and interactions in my personal and professional life. This contextual understanding documented my environments and daily life, providing a broader social, cultural, and physical setting. By complementing textual data, photography enriched my analysis, leading to a more comprehensive understanding. Reflecting on the images I took allowed me to engage deeply with my emotions and perspectives, fostering new insights and empathetic understanding. Images can evoke emotions and tell stories in a way that resonates deeply with viewers. Cruickshank and Mason (2003) emphasized that “even where photography sets out simply to document subject matter that is part of ordinary everyday life, a photographer

may be more or less objective in their interpretation of phenomena in their line of sight.” Taking and analyzing photographs encouraged me to focus on visual details and consider what each image revealed about my subject. This reflective process helped generate new questions for exploration and empowered me to express my perspectives authentically. Through photography, I captured the complexities of my experiences, enriching the research process and conveying findings visually, engaging and emotionally. Photography is a powerful tool for documenting change over time. I could visually illustrate the progress, developments, and transformations by capturing images at different stages of this thesis, providing a compelling change narrative. Adding visual data can also make research more accessible and engaging, helping to bridge the gap between academic findings and public understanding.

## Chapter 4: Selected Artwork & Poems

As an educator and artist on the verge of burnout, I embarked on a journey to rekindle my creativity and reshape my perspective. My work integrates poetry and photography, capturing the raw and honest emotions I experienced during this transformative period. Writing poems three times a day during the immersion phase, I documented my struggles and reflections, which evolved during the creative synthesis process. The images I captured complement these poems, providing a visual narrative of my journey. This body of work tells the story of discovering small, mindful habits that refocused my intentions and reignited my passion for teaching and art. Through this process, I found a sustainable balance between my professional and personal life, reshaping my approach to creativity and education.



*Figure 1: Defeated, D. Fundaro (2024).*

Hey there friend  
 You are back from your bend  
 I rested, and my body said no  
 To push yourself another day

The body tells you when it's enough  
 Even though you think you're tough  
 There's only so much you can do  
 Until you fall through and through

It's a void that can't be filled anymore  
 It feels so sore  
 It makes me sad and want to cry  
 Wouldn't it be easier just to lie?

Sometimes, the exit seems like the only way  
 Further to the question I posed yesterday  
 Relaxation is relevant to the will  
 If not, you go through the motions with no  
 thrill.



Step,

Step,

Step,

Wait,

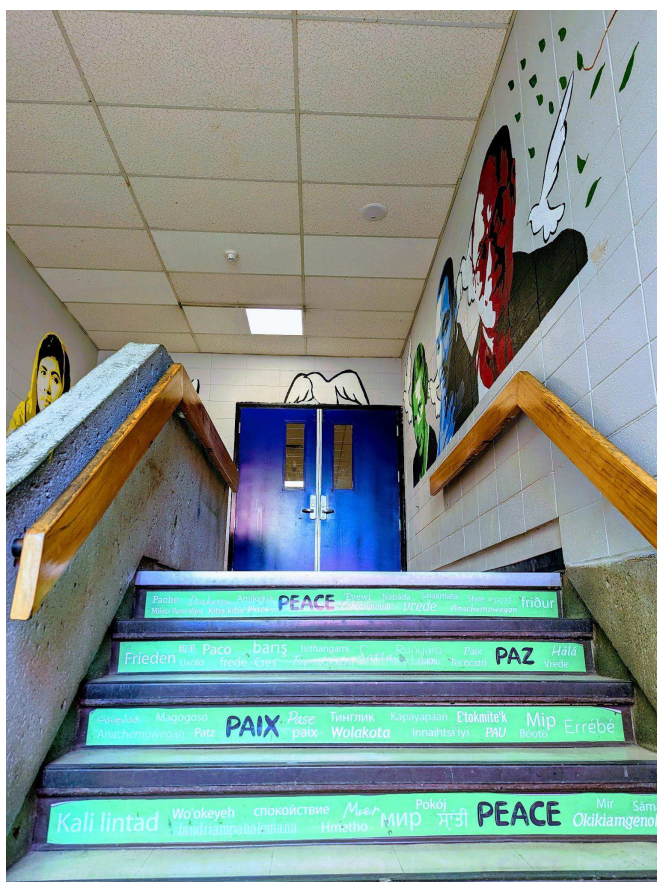
Ring,

Back

At

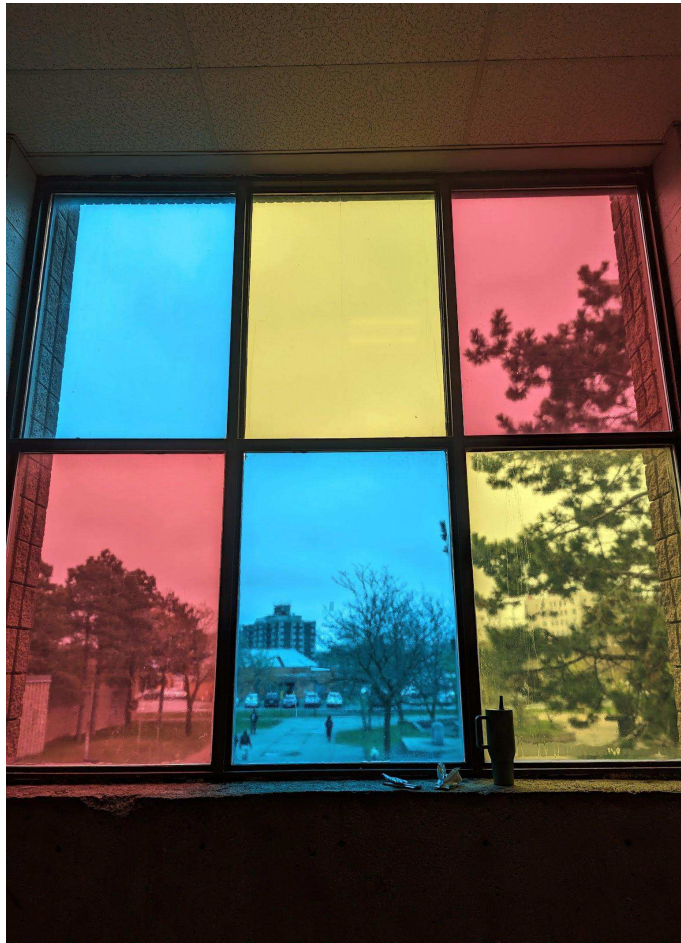
It

Again.



*Figure 2: Depleted, D. Fundaro (2024).*

Each step an educator takes holds meaning and creates a space in between for the students. I stood in the staircase hallway, waiting to supervise the students. It was a rare moment of peace during the day-to-day chaos. I stood there, awaiting the bell to ring, knowing that soon, the flood of students and the hustle of the second half of the day would begin again. In that brief pause, I found a tranquil space, a moment to breathe and collect my thoughts before diving back into the whirlwind of responsibilities. This picture captures the essence of those in-between moments, where searching for peace and purpose coexist, allowing us to recharge and continue our journey with renewed energy.



I've been longing, yearning, dreaming  
 For a life beyond this daily scheming  
 Sometimes it's hard to see the light  
 And I feel like giving up the fight

But then I recall the little strides I take  
 Maybe that's better than a total break  
 For one day, all this will be in the past  
 A distant memory that heals at last

So I'll keep longing, yearning, dreaming on  
 Until a brighter solution comes along

*Figure 3: Contemplation, D. Fundaro (2024).*

On my way back into the hallways filled with students, I paused at the staircase and looked outside. Carrying my lunch and water bottle, I tried to find a moment to eat amid my responsibilities. The vibrant colors from the stained glass windows contrasted with the bustling school environment, offering a brief respite. In this picture, I aimed to capture one of those small moments an educator has—pausing to appreciate the beauty around me while balancing the demands of the day. It's a reminder that even in the busiest times, there is always a bit of color and calm if we take a moment to look for it.

Exhausted, depleted, defeated,  
Contemplation exceeded.

State and stated,  
Overload,  
Deflated.

Like a balloon gasping for air,  
Feeling despair,  
In a box of my emotions,  
Feeling exhausted.  
Words are sporadic,  
Behavior erratic.

More than just frantic,  
Frozen like the Atlantic,  
Trying to find the words,  
But it just feels absurd.

Somehow, I continue to create,  
Even in this unparalleled state.



**Figure 4:** *Pause, D. Fundaro (2024).*

In the picture of the water window with green and red lights, I see a reflection of my emotional state as an educator. The green light represents moments of calm, while the red symbolizes the overwhelming stress I often feel. Teaching involves constant highs and lows, where brief moments of peace are overshadowed by exhaustion and erratic emotions. Despite this, I continue to create and find meaning in my work, much like the persistent light shining through the window. The image and the poem together capture my struggle to find balance and resilience amidst the daily demands of teaching.



In the rush of the day's embrace,  
Where chaos and demands collide,  
I carve out a small, quiet space,  
A moment where stillness can reside.

Amid the whirlwind, I seek to find,  
A breath, a pause, a gentle reprieve,  
To reshape the storm within my mind,  
And gather strength from what I believe.

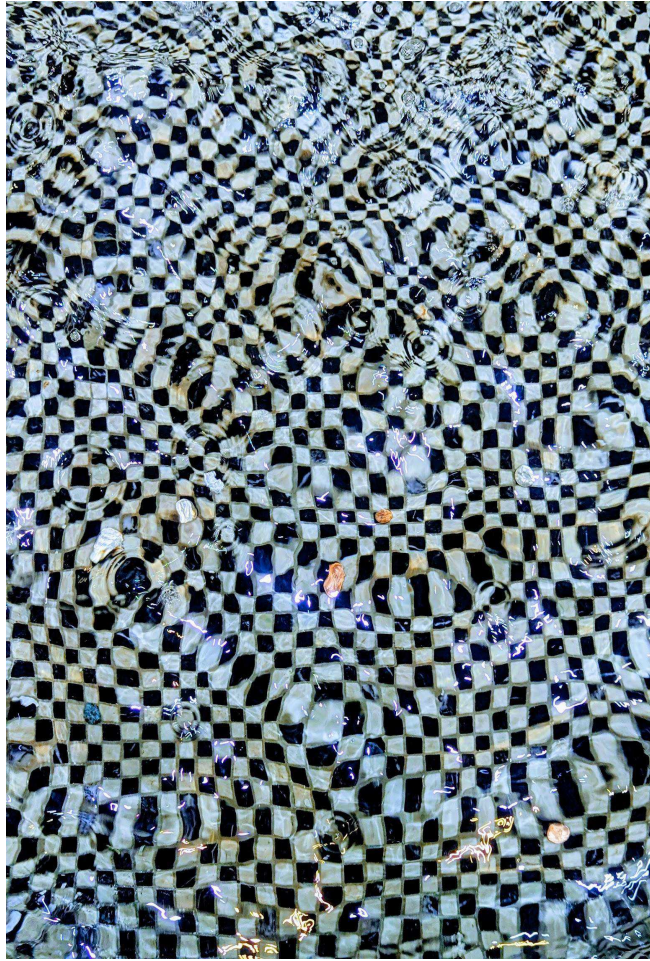
Colors blend and moments shift,  
In the briefest of calm, I renew,  
Finding peace in the space I lift,  
To realign and see things through.

Creating through the ebb and flow,  
In the quiet, I begin to mend,  
With every pause, I start to know,  
How to shift, how to transcend.

**Figure 5:** *Create*, D. Fundaro (2024).

During this process,, I thought about taking a moment to stop and create amidst the busyness of life. I emphasize the importance of pausing to allow space for ideas to resurface and be reshaped. In constant demands, this brief stillness offers a chance to realign thoughts and rejuvenate creativity. By stepping back and reflecting, we can transform our initial chaos into clarity, finding renewed inspiration and strength.

I write because I can,  
I write because I think, therefore I am.  
I write because I said I must,  
I write because I need to express my trust.  
  
I write to search for meaning,  
I write to honor feelings,  
I write to see myself in words,  
I write so that my voice is heard.  
  
I write to decompress and clear,  
I write to release what's held near.  
I write because change is within my range,  
I write to find balance and rearrange.



**Figure 6:** *Reflection*, D. Fundaro (2024).

Reflection serves as a window into the personal journey through images and writing. The act of writing becomes a tool for both expression and transformation. Finding meaning, honoring feelings, and releasing what's held close reveal the deeper process of reshaping and resurfacing ideas—a deliberate pause—a moment to reconsider and realign thoughts. Reflection helps me understand how writing can be a powerful means to shift perspectives and create balance, offering renewed clarity and purpose.



In the mirror of thought, I gaze,  
Where contemplation softly sways.  
Through the lens of quiet grace,  
I ponder life's intricate lace.

Deliberation weaves its thread,  
In the silence where ideas spread.  
Introspection lights the way,  
Guiding me through night and day.

Meditation in the still,  
Offers peace, a gentle thrill.  
Reviewing moments, dreams, and  
fears,  
Unveiling truths through shifting years.

In every pause, in every glance,  
Reflection offers a chance.  
To see beyond the surface's gleam,  
And touch the essence of a dream.

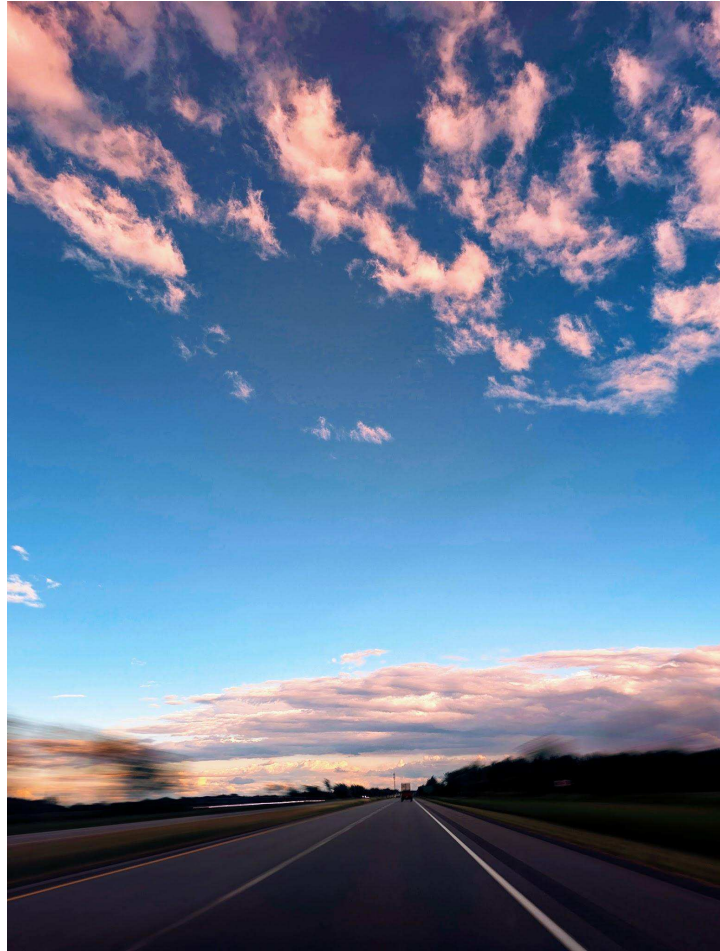
**Figure 7:** *Introspection*, D. Fundaro (2024).

Stopping and reevaluating my ideas and reconnecting with nature and myself helped shape me as an artist and educator. These moments of introspection helped me realign my creative goals and teaching practices. By sitting back, I can renew my passion, gain clarity, and enhance my ability to inspire and create meaningfully. This brief pause ensures a balanced approach to my art and my role as an educator.

As seasons change, so too do I,  
 A shifting form beneath the sky,  
 Through thoughts refined and lessons  
 learned,  
 A new creation, deeply earned.

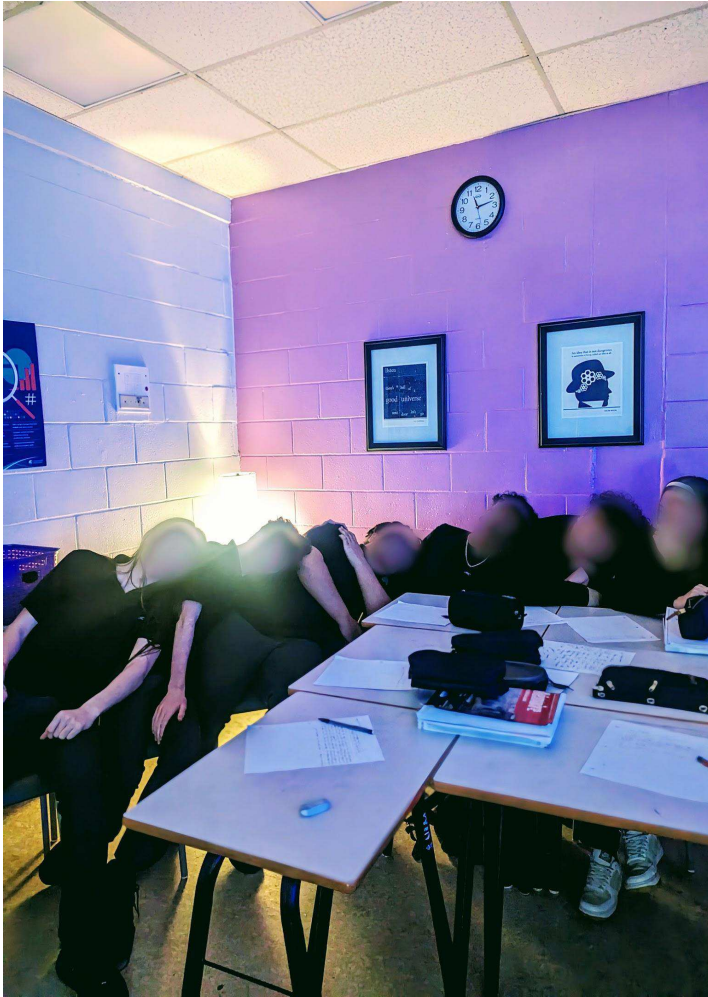
I change my mind, my body too,  
 Reflecting all I've seen and knew,  
 For in each student's eager face,  
 I find a piece of my own grace.

In teaching them, I too transform,  
 Through storms of thought and  
 passions warm,  
 A living art, forever growing,  
 With every seed of wisdom sowing.



**Figure 8:** *Changing Seasons, D. Fundaro (2024).*

Through this process, I saw myself embodying the changing seasons, each representing different phases of my journey. During dark periods and long nights, I faced challenges and moments of uncertainty. Yet, as the seasons shifted, so did my perspective, revealing new insights and sources of light. I discovered the power to transform my inner world and external circumstances over time. As nature evolves, I learn to embrace change, finding strength and renewal in each phase of my personal growth. This cyclical process allowed me to overcome difficulties and view life with renewed clarity and hope.



In the space where minds converge,  
 Ideas flow, and passions surge,  
 I stand as a guide, mentor, friend,  
 To help young dreams to find their end.

With every lesson, brush in hand,  
 I teach the art of where to stand,  
 To see the world through eyes anew,  
 And paint their paths with colors true.

For every soul, a canvas wide,  
 A place where dreams and hopes  
 reside,  
 Together, we explore the art,  
 Of shaping self and finding heart.

**Figure 9:** *Finding Heart*, D. Fundaro (2024).

As I embraced my transformation, I noticed a parallel shift in my students and the classroom dynamics. I realized that by engaging in inner work and personal growth, I was shaping the heart of my teaching. This transformation was reflected in my students' attitudes and interactions. The changes within me fostered a more empathetic and responsive teaching environment, where the focus on inner development began to resonate outward. Through this process, I saw how nurturing my growth could positively impact my students, shaping their learning experiences and their engagement and connection within the classroom.



In a circle where voices blend,  
Students and teacher joyfully extend,  
Sharing thoughts with cheerful grace,  
Celebrating views in this vibrant space.

Together, we weave a colorful thread,  
Where diverse ideas are brightly  
spread,  
Stories shared and dreams come alive,  
Shaping our world as we all strive.

With laughter and insight, hearts unite,  
Creating a bond that's pure and bright,  
In this moment of mutual cheer,  
We celebrate and hold each view dear.



**Figure 10:** *Celebrate, D. Fundaro (2024).*

Seeing the impact of my teaching on students is truly heartwarming. The small, kind words and thoughtful actions make a significant difference in their lives. By approaching education with a playful spirit and genuine care, I've witnessed how these interactions—whether it's a reassuring smile, a supportive comment, or a shared laugh—can transform the classroom into a nurturing space. These little gestures of love and affection build trust and create a deeper connection, making learning not just about the material but about growing together in a positive, supportive environment.



In the dawn's first light, a mind awakens,  
 Dreams and desires, softly unshaken,  
 Whispers of what could be and what's been,  
 A canvas blank, awaiting the unseen.  
 Each thought a brush, each feeling a hue,  
 Shaping a vision both old and new,  
 I paint myself with students' views,  
 Their voices and emotions, vibrant hues.

With every dawn, I rise anew,  
 Molding our world with every clue,  
 Through their insights and dreams so vast,  
 Sculpt our future, learning from the past.  
 Together, we craft a living art,  
 A community shaped by each heart.

**Figure 11:** *Reshifting*, D. Fundaro (2024).

Seeing how my students say goodbye at the end of their high school year is moving. Each farewell, filled with heartfelt hugs and sincere words, reflects the deep connections we've built throughout the year. Their expressions of gratitude and the personal notes they leave behind show how meaningful our interactions have been. These parting moments highlight the impact of the care and encouragement offered, demonstrating that the relationships we cultivate in the classroom extend far beyond academic lessons. In these final goodbyes, I appreciate the lasting influence of our shared experiences.

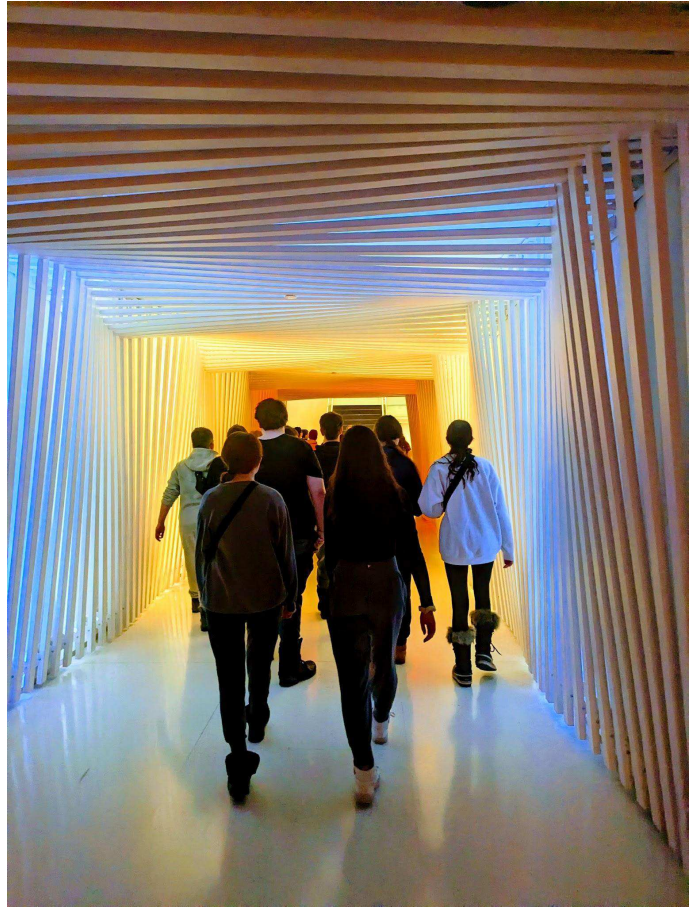
In quiet corners of my mind,  
Thoughts and desires intertwine,  
I sculpt my soul, a work of art,  
Each notion a brushstroke to start.

Through dreams, my heart becomes the  
canvas,  
Ideas bloom, brightening the darkness,  
An art teacher's touch, precise and kind,  
Shapes visions, sharpens the mind.

With every thought, a color blooms,  
Transforming shadows, brightening  
gloom,  
My body shifts, a living clay,  
Molded by whims both night and day.

I teach through vision, touch, and grace,  
Each lesson crafted with a heartfelt  
embrace,  
Art is my voice, my silent speech,  
A bridge to cross, a heart to reach.

In shaping dreams and desires' fire,  
I build, aspire, and reach higher,  
For life itself is art to me,  
A masterpiece of what can be.



**Figure 12:** *Renewed*, D. Fundaro (2024).

## Chapter 5: Decoding

### 5.1 Introduction

Throughout the data-collecting phase, numerous poems and journals were collected over time. Poems were both a creative outlet and a source of understanding. Saldana's coding method provided a structured yet flexible framework for analyzing my notes and poetry. This approach enabled me to identify and explore key themes, offering a comprehensive understanding of the research gathered and using his coding method as the primary tool for analyzing my notes and poetry. Saldana's method, known for its iterative and flexible nature, facilitated an in-depth exploration of the themes that emerge from the data. The diverse range of data sources, including field notes and poetry, delve into my lived experiences and perspective as the participant for this thesis. As a form of expressive and reflective data, the poetry provided rich, emotive insights that complement the notes' more observational and descriptive nature. Applying Saldana's coding method, this thesis aims to systematically dissect and interpret these varied data forms to uncover the underlying themes and patterns.

The First coding cycle initially breaks the raw data into manageable themes. During immersion, I implemented a color-coding system based on specific words in the poetry to enhance the analysis. Purple was used for anything related to art, yellow for action words, orange for references to the body, blue for mentions of the mind or thoughts, and green for anything associated with teaching.

In the quiet corners of my **mind**,  
 Where **thoughts** and desires intertwine,  
 I **sculpt** my **soul**, a work of art,  
 Each notion, a **brushstroke** to start.

Through **dreams** I travel, realms unknown,  
 My heart the **canvas**, **seeds are sown**,  
 An art **teacher's touch**, precise and kind,  
**Shapes** the **vision**, sharpens the mind.

With every **idea**, a **color** blooms,  
**Transforming** shadows, brightens gloom,  
 Desires **dance**, like sparks in night,  
**Igniting** paths with **creative** light.

My **body shifts**, a living **clay**,  
 Molded by whims, both night and day,  
 A **chisel** here, a **stroke** of **grace**,  
 Reveals the **form**, unveils the face.

I **teach** through **visions**, teach through **touch**,  
 Each **lesson** more, means so much,  
 For in my **hands**, the power lies,  
 To **shape** the world, to **see** it **rise**.

Figure 13: Coding Process

This color-coding facilitated a visual and intuitive understanding of the data, allowing for immediate recognition of recurring themes and patterns.

The second coding cycle synthesizes these initial codes into broader themes and patterns. Techniques like pattern coding help identify relationships and develop a coherent thematic structure. This stage was crucial in transforming the fragmented data into meaningful insights that address the research question *of how small daily habits can help prevent burnout*.

The nature of Saldana's method ensured that the coding process was dynamic and reflective, allowing for continuous refinement and deepening of the analysis. By systematically applying this method, this thesis will not only identify but also interpret the emerging themes in a way that synthesizes the complexity of the data.

Using Saldana's coding method and color-coding, the immersion phase provided a structured yet flexible framework for analyzing my notes and poetry. This approach enabled me to identify and explore key themes and comprehensively understand the research phenomena addressed.

## **5.2 Embodiment in Teaching**

Exploring teaching through the lens of poetry revealed five predominant themes: teaching as an art form, transformation and growth, physical, emotional and mental struggles, the impact and responsibility of teaching, and the necessity of seeking balance and self-care.

These themes, interwoven with the concept of embodiment, provide a multifaceted understanding of the teaching profession. The integration of artistic practices into teaching is described in a way that emphasizes the physicality of both creating art and education, suggesting that both are deeply embodied practices. Multiple scholars' insights help further illuminate these

themes, offering a deeper psychological and neuroscientific perspective on teaching and the pressures educators endure daily. Teaching involves not only intellectual but also physical and emotional investment.

### 5.3 Teaching as a Form of Art

The metaphor of art weaves the poetic narrative, illustrating teaching as a creative and dynamic act. Throughout the poems, a code depicts the teacher as an artist, shaping and molding students, much like a sculptor works with clay or a painter with a canvas. This metaphor underscores the intricate and delicate nature of teaching, where each interaction and lesson is a brushstroke contributing to the masterpiece of a student's development. The ideas evident throughout can be echoed by Tara Swart in her book *The Source*, which reinforces this idea by stating, “Creativity is the way we communicate with the world around us” (Swart, 2019). This aligns with the depiction of teaching as a form of artistic expression, where creativity is central to effective communication and learning. It was apparent in excerpts such as:

- **Examples:**
  - “Each notion, a brushstroke to start.”
  - “With sculptor’s hands, I mold my clay, shaping form from night to day, each touch a thought, each press a dream.”

Teaching is a continuous process where every moment shapes both the teacher and the student. As in art, where each brushstroke or piece of molded clay plays a role in the final product, teaching is more than the result. Through analyzing poems, it becomes clear that small moments foster creativity. Educators can see that teaching is a creative endeavour by explaining the process and breaking down concepts. This approach helps teachers understand how small

actions for themselves and their students contribute to conveying the larger picture they aim to share. Teaching becomes a form of artistic practice in its own right. The idea that educators are constantly shaping their environment, such as artwork, becomes the practice of being able to be an artist in their classroom. Throughout the analysis of the poems, it became evident that the artist's way is more than any physical object but a co-creation within the classroom setting.

## 5.4 Transformation and Growth

Teaching is portrayed as a continuous transformation and growth process for both the teacher and the students. This theme highlights education's dynamic and evolving nature, where learning is a mutual journey of discovery and development. The physical and emotional metamorphosis experienced by the teacher is a testament to the transformative power of education. Swart notes, "Change is inevitable, but growth is intentional" (Swart, 2019), which resonates with the theme of intentional transformation in teaching throughout the coding process within the poems. This shows that intentionality is crucial in fostering a learning environment where students and teachers thrive and evolve.

- **Examples:**

- "As seasons change, so too do I."
- "Through thoughts refined and lessons learned, a new creation, deeply earned."

Change in the environment is inevitable, whether the classes change or situations arise, among the countless environmental and professional changes that happen daily within the education system. This is out of the educator's control. The theme of transformation and growth arose from the codes as it was stated that the seasons change, which is, in fact, inevitable, much like the circumstances around us. Still, I began to see that intentionally growing through these

situations as a learning experience is the most important thing.

Ellen Langer notes in her book *The Mindful Body*, "When we mindfully engage with our environment, we open ourselves to new possibilities for growth and transformation." (Langer, 2023). Our environment is ever-changing in the field of education. At times, it can be challenging to let our environment teach us what we, as educators, need to help transform our teaching and personal practice. A study by Karsenti & Collins (2013) investigated why teachers leave the profession at such an alarming rate, especially within the first five years of teaching. One of the main reasons was that classroom management has become problematic, whether it may be student behaviour or motivation. As a teacher for the past six years, I have found that it takes time for both the students and the teacher to set the expectations in the classroom. By engaging mindfully with these scenarios, we can shift the dynamic. However, it takes time and resources to do this. Reflecting on my teaching practice took time and a lot of research to see what works in the classroom and what doesn't. Often, new teachers lack resources or training in classroom management and practical strategies to help engage students. Being an art teacher gave me a unique perspective as I viewed the classroom as a work of art and a space for co-creation with the students.

This past year, I began teaching students how to write persuasive essays during the immersion phase of this thesis. They were encouraged to write about something that they felt passionately about. Two students, in particular, wrote about how high school teachers should be assessed and raised valid points. I then decided to have them evaluate my teaching and provide feedback for the future. They were anonymous with their answers, and I thought of this as an opportunity for me to change and grow from the experiences my students had in the classroom. This created a sense of changing the classroom from within, having the students and teacher



collaborate within the school where there is a rigid structure to follow. This allowed them to engage mindfully with the environment and create transformation and growth. Although the students were not motivated at first, they saw that with persistence and constant conversations, not only did I expect them to grow through the experiences, but I would also give them a sense of autonomy and a way to contribute to the classroom and their education. Allowing space for transformation and growth alongside each other and celebrating our milestones together.

## **5.5 Physical, Emotional and Mental Struggles of Teaching**

The physical, emotional and mental struggles inherent in the teaching profession are poignantly expressed in the poems. The narratives delve into teachers' stress, exhaustion, and emotional turmoil. This embodiment of struggle reflects the significant demands placed on educators and the resilience required to navigate these challenges. Swart addresses this by emphasizing the importance of mental resilience: “Resilience is the ability to bounce back from stress, to adapt to changing circumstances, and to maintain a state of mental well-being” (Swart, 2019). Teachers must cultivate resilience to sustain their effectiveness and cope with the pressures of the profession. Although teachers often feel an exponential amount of pressure, they must constantly remember how to manage effectively. Often, teachers feel like there isn’t enough time or resources available, and the pressure can feel insurmountable. This was shown throughout the poems and thus was a significant theme during the coding.

- **Examples:**
  - “I’m overworked and overstressed. My life just feels like one big mess.”
  - “Exhausted, depleted, Defeated, contemplation exceeded.”

These poems were written during a time of high stress when the pressures of my professional and personal life felt like a mountain I couldn't climb. Mentally and emotionally, it became increasingly difficult to manage these overwhelming feelings as they began to manifest physically. My body became a vessel for these emotions, illustrating how deeply stress can impact a teacher's physical state and teaching practice. Fatigue, tension, and anxiety frequently took a tangible toll on me, often making everyday tasks feel insurmountable. This embodiment of stress within the poems reflects the intense demands placed on teachers, showing how their well-being can profoundly affect their effectiveness and passion in the classroom. The collection is a testament to the resilience required to persevere in such a challenging profession. The script in a teacher's mind can be relentless, especially when they feel like they have a narrative internally and from what society has of what teachers need to dedicate to students—usually at the cost of the educator's well-being. Studies repeatedly show that the teacher's energy and attitude in a classroom create a positive, conducive learning environment or a detrimental one for both the students and teachers (Jennings, 2015).

A teacher who is under constant stress has a diminished ability to have control. They have difficulty regulating their emotions, which becomes problematic for their health. It is shown that over time, stress can cause many illnesses within the body as cortisol is released, causing havoc on the immune system. When the brain is flooded with the stress hormone cortisol, it affects the white blood cells, resulting in a diminished immune system. (Swart, 2019). The ideals that have been precedent over time for teachers become problematic for their physical, emotional and mental health. When the brain is flooded with the stress hormone, it can severely impact the body. However, part of stress is the thoughts that keep flourishing within the mind "The way we think about our circumstances can influence our ability to adapt and thrive, turning

challenges into learning experiences." (Langer, 2023). Thoughts are essential in addressing teacher burnout. Throughout burnout, the mind becomes a significant factor. The narrative that is playing within the educators' minds is what contributes to the downfall. Therefore, the ideas of the circumstances must be shifted to help educators effectively overcome burnout. More importantly, this should be addressed before the educator enters the classroom. Pre-service teachers must be adequately prepared to understand the challenges this can take once they are often immersed in the school environment. It becomes backpeddling an issue once the teacher is burned out.

## 5.6 Impact and Responsibility of Teaching

The profound impact and responsibility that teachers hold in shaping their students' futures is another key theme. The poems emphasize the critical role of teachers as mentors and guides, entrusted with the significant task of nurturing and developing young minds. This theme highlights the weight of the educational endeavour and the far-reaching implications of a teacher's influence. Swart highlights the significance of leadership and influence: "True leadership is about creating and sustaining a sense of purpose and possibility" (Swart, 2019), which mirrors the teacher's role in inspiring and guiding students. Teachers act as classroom leaders, fostering a sense of purpose and potential in their students.

- **Examples:**

- "For in my hands, the power lies to shape the world, to see it rise."
- "I stand as a guide, mentor, and friend to help young dreams find their end."

As I delved into coding, I became curious about the effects of cortisol on those around us. I learned that cortisol, released by our bodies, can influence the people we interact with. This

discovery sparked a more profound interest in understanding educators' impact on their students. I noticed that when educators struggle with stress, it often leads to more problems within the classroom. Reflecting on my own experiences, I realized that the more mindful and present I became as a teacher, the less I needed to manage classroom behavior. This journey of research and self-awareness highlighted the profound connection between my well-being and my students' learning environment.

Li, Gow, and Zhou studied the role of positive emotions in education and its implications for students, stating, “ Only when students’ emotions are positive can their ability to self-regulate be effectively translated into factors promoting academic achievements” (2020). This affects students' decision-making, including social decisions, helping them become more conscious of the outcomes of their actions. This also affects students' memory processing, a key learning component. Positive emotional states help memory. Students can recall more if they associate it with a positive emotion as it is processed through the amygdala, which is the brain’s imaging of emotional stimuli. As opposed to chronically anxious and stressed, where their adrenal glands release cortisol, which, in turn, negative emotions are more likely to lead to false memories. When the teacher is under constant stress and cannot function, students may mirror their teachers' internal emotional state. The educator first creates the environment at the front of the class. In neuroscience, it has been proven that neurons mirror each other and effectively create an emotional and social contagion among a group of people. A study conducted by Oberle and Schonert-Reichl (2016) assessed the cortisol levels in teachers close to burnout and then evaluated the cortisol levels with the students. The correlation was that elementary school students were likelier to have higher morning cortisol levels, with educators on the verge of burnout. Effectively, the students had more issues with their mental health problems, were not

able to adjust to difficulties at school and had lower academic achievement.

In contrast, positive ones are key to fast and accurate recollection. (Li, Gow, and Zhou, 2020). The mind is powerful. The issue is that a student cannot self-regulate in an environment where the teacher also has issues self-regulating their emotions within the classroom. Teachers must be able to engage with first themselves mindfully, thus helping students by creating an opportunity to engage with the environment. Mindfully engaging with the environment allows us to see changes as an opportunity rather than a threat. It helps foster creativity and resilience. (Langer, 2023). Teacher burnout dramatically affects the students and the teacher's ability to help engage the students in their learning. As this is evident from the research from neuroscience, psychology, and education, educators must be able to assess their own needs to help students in the classroom. In the book *Mindfulness for Teachers* by Jennings (2015), she explains how educators can shift their perspective on a situation with students. It helps to often think about how the student interprets the situation and then situate themselves with the emotions and feelings they may be internalizing. The teacher's responsibility is to nurture and guide students, helping them discover their potential and achieve their goals. Thus, redirecting and mindfully engaging with the interaction is paramount to the situations that arise to help the students. Despite the challenges, the joy and fulfillment from teaching when they positively impact their students' lives.

## **5.7 Seeking Balance and Self-Care**

Amidst the challenges and responsibilities, the necessity for balance and self-care emerges as a crucial theme. The poems illustrate the importance of teachers maintaining their well-being to sustain their effectiveness and passion for teaching. This theme underscores the

need for educators to prioritize their mental and physical health to continue serving their students effectively. Swart advocates for self-care as essential for productivity and well-being: “Self-care is not a luxury but a necessity for maintaining productivity, creativity, and emotional balance” (Swart, 2019). Teachers must practice self-care to prevent burnout and ensure they can give their best to their students.

- **Examples:**

- “Trying to put boundaries for myself, but I keep being led astray.”
- “I write because I need to find balance and rearrange.”

It is about being able to change the concept of time. As teachers, we often feel like we need more time. We need to supervise, grade, respond to administrative emails, email parents, prepare lessons, correct, help with after-school activities, and organize proms, trips, and awards night, and that’s without your personal life. Are you tired yet? We look at the glorification of busyness and that we are martyrs for the students and our profession. Over time, we see ourselves as fewer artists and solely in our teacher identity. This has been in my mind since I was a first-year teacher and experienced burnout. However, I knew I needed to become more introspective and mindful of my actions, thoughts, and feelings over that period. Becoming more self-aware is critical for balance and self-care.

An important aspect is not to separate the art from the art teacher but to help inform my teaching and knowing. We often feel that it can become a chore, or we tend to guilt ourselves that we no longer have time to create art and that we think it is sustained by simply teaching it. However, switching perspectives and changing the narrative helps with balance and self-care.

As artists, we can use visualization to our advantage by focusing on our conscious mind to help analyze the script within our unconscious mind. By paying attention to the thoughts and

belief systems that are playing out in our minds, we can challenge them and slowly implement new behaviours in favour of our ideal outcome—being able to take a moment to visualize how we would like our lives to look in and outside the classroom.

Taking it from an art educator’s perspective, creating a vision board can help gain clarity, and using photography to stop to see the actions unfolding can help us understand what we want to pay attention to and what is essential for the educator to reflect on. These small habits can help situate the educator to become more self-aware of what is working for them in their environment and what needs to be addressed. Where are we placing our thoughts and ideas? How can this shift our perspective? Are we focusing our camera toward positive or negative attitudes in our lives or classroom? Stopping and addressing this takes a few moments; over time, it helps the educator situate where the emotions and energy are being directed.

Writing is another component that can help generate self-care. Writing as a form of self-expression can help the teacher process emotions, find clarity, and cope with the stresses of the profession. Although not every art educator writes poetry, simply journaling their ideas and thoughts can help the art educator visualize their ideas and see them on paper. Helping them overlook the ideas of how to try to shift their perspective toward one of gratitude instead of pessimism. Assessing the narrative that is on replay in

## **5.8 Reflections**

The themes identified in these poetic reflections provide a comprehensive and embodied understanding of the teaching profession. By viewing teaching through the metaphors of art and transformation, acknowledging the emotional and mental struggles, recognizing the profound impact and responsibility, and emphasizing the importance of balance and self-care, we gain a

deeper appreciation for the complexities and rewards of being an educator. The teacher's determination to overcome challenges, to continue to grow, and to remain committed to themselves and their students' well-being became evident throughout the coding process. It helps provide a deeper understanding of the multifaceted nature of teaching, emphasizing personal and professional growth, reflective practices, the profound impact teaching has on teachers and students, and the broader impact of education on humanity.



## Chapter 6: Renewal

### 6.1 Lack vs. Abundance

In most educators' minds, there is a battle between two perspectives: *lack and abundance*. The mindset we bring into education significantly influences teachers' and students' experiences and well-being. A lack of mindset, which focuses on scarcity, limitations, and insufficiencies, can contribute to feelings of burnout and stress. This perspective often manifests as a focus on what is missing—resources, time, or support—which can lead to a sense of overwhelm and inadequacy. In contrast, an abundance mindset emphasizes possibilities, growth, and the potential for improvement. Shifting to this mindset can be transformative, helping educators and students see challenges as opportunities for growth and learning.

For educators, adopting an abundance mindset means recognizing the strengths and potential within each student and themselves. This shift in perspective can help alleviate burnout by fostering a more positive and resilient outlook. Instead of fixating on constraints, educators can focus on the positive impact they can make, no matter how small, and on the continuous progress of their students. This mindset encourages celebrating small victories and progress, which can rejuvenate a teacher's passion and sense of purpose. Internal dialogue plays a crucial role in this shift. By changing the narrative from "I don't have enough time" to "I can prioritize what's most important" or from "My resources are limited" to "I can find creative ways to use what I have," educators can reframe their experiences in a more positive light. This practice improves mental well-being and models a growth-oriented attitude for students.

Incorporating small habits can support this transition. Simple practices such as daily reflection on positive moments, expressing gratitude, and setting achievable goals can reinforce an abundance mindset. These habits help redirect focus from what is lacking to what is available

and possible, gradually reshaping internal narratives and reducing the risk of burnout. The shift from a lack to an abundance mindset in education is about changing perspectives and internal dialogues. By embracing this change, educators can find renewed energy and inspiration, fostering a healthier and more productive educational environment for themselves and their students.

## **6.2 Prevention for Burnout**

Adopting an abundance mindset can help educators combat burnout. It's ideal to cultivate this mindset at the beginning of the year rather than waiting until you're overwhelmed. This involves incorporating small, intentional habits into your daily routines. Here are some practices inspired by Swart and Langer that can support this transition.

*Daily reflection on positive moments* is a powerful tool for educators to cultivate an abundance mindset and combat burnout. At the end of each day, taking a few minutes to reflect on positive interactions and achievements can shift your focus from what went wrong to what went right. This practice helps reinforce an abundance mindset and enhances your overall well-being. Gratitude journaling is another effective practice, as writing down things you are grateful for can significantly shift your perspective. Supported by both Swart (2019) and Langer (2023), this method encourages recognizing and appreciating the positives in both your professional and personal life. Regularly acknowledging the good can foster a more optimistic outlook, essential for maintaining a healthy mindset throughout the academic year.

In addition to reflection and gratitude, *setting achievable goals* is crucial. Breaking down larger tasks into smaller, manageable goals and celebrating these small achievements can boost motivation and create a sense of progress and abundance. Incorporating mindful moments throughout the day is another effective strategy.

*Taking short breaks for simple breathing exercises* or a few minutes of meditation can help center your thoughts and bring you back to the present moment, reducing stress and enhancing focus. Embracing a spirit of innovation and creativity when faced with challenges transforms obstacles into opportunities to explore new solutions and methods.

Finally, *positive affirmations* can reshape your internal dialogue, reinforcing an abundance mindset. Phrases such as "I have the tools I need to succeed" or "I am open to finding creative solutions" can help maintain a positive and proactive approach to personal and professional challenges.

Educators can gradually shift their mindset from lack to abundance by incorporating these practices. This transformation enhances their mental well-being and models a growth-oriented attitude for students. When educators embody an abundance mindset, they create a more positive and supportive learning environment, which can inspire students to adopt a similar perspective. Moreover, integrating mindfulness and an abundance mindset can lead to a deeper connection with oneself and one's work. Educators can find renewed energy and inspiration, allowing them to approach their responsibilities with purpose and joy. This, in turn, can positively influence students, fostering an educational environment where both teachers and learners thrive.

### **6.3 Future Implications for Art Educators**

Integrating an abundance mindset and mindfulness practices into education holds significant promise for transforming art education. By shifting from a lack to an abundance mindset, art educators can enhance their well-being, foster creativity, and create a more supportive and enriching environment for teachers and students. Introducing vision boards as a first assignment for students and starting one themselves offers art educators a simple yet

powerful method to focus and build their personal and professional growth ideas. This approach can be especially beneficial in helping educators and students clarify their goals, visualize their aspirations, and develop a more intentional perspective on their journey in the classroom and beyond. Vision boards serve as visual representations of one's goals and aspirations. Creating a vision board at the beginning of the academic year can help educators outline their personal and professional objectives. This process involves reflecting on what they hope to achieve, how they want to grow, and the impact they wish to have on their students. By engaging in this reflective practice, educators can gain clarity on their priorities, which helps them stay focused and motivated throughout the year. Vision boards provide students with a creative outlet to express their dreams and ambitions, fostering a sense of ownership over their learning journey.

It also encourages students to share their goals and aspirations with their peers and teachers. This collaborative activity can create a sense of community and mutual support within the classroom. As students present their vision boards, they learn about each other's interests and aspirations, fostering empathy and understanding. Teachers can use this insight to tailor their instruction better to meet the needs and interests of their students, creating a more inclusive and responsive learning environment. The process also helps build stronger relationships between teachers and students as they work together towards common goals.

Creating vision boards taps into the core of art education by encouraging creativity and visual thinking. This activity allows educators and students to use images, words, and colors to represent their goals and dreams, making abstract ideas more tangible and concrete. For art educators, this process can remind them that art is about creating tangible objects and using creativity to shape their environment and experiences. By viewing the classroom as a canvas, educators can design a space that reflects their vision for a nurturing and inspiring learning

atmosphere. This broader view of art reinforces the idea that the classroom is a dynamic and evolving work of art. This activity can help educators and students shift their perspectives and adopt a more positive and growth-oriented mindset. By focusing on their aspirations and the steps needed to achieve them, they can move away from a deficit-oriented view and embrace an abundance mindset. This shift can reduce overwhelming emotions and burnout as individuals become more attuned to their strengths and potential. For educators, this means seeing themselves as learning facilitators and artists shaping the educational experience. This broader view of their role can inspire them to approach their work with renewed passion and creativity. Educators and students should revisit their vision boards periodically throughout the year. This practice can help them reflect on their progress, adjust their goals, and stay motivated.

By incorporating vision boards into the educational process, art educators and students can develop a clearer sense of direction and purpose. This simple yet effective tool can help them focus on their aspirations, foster creativity, and build a more positive and supportive classroom environment. Ultimately, this approach can contribute to preventing burnout and enhancing the overall educational experience in Quebec schools.

Helping to address the pressing issue of teacher burnout and nurturing a culture of growth, resilience, and joy in learning. It can ensure enhanced creativity and engagement, which encourages teachers and students to explore new ideas, take risks and embrace creativity and opportunity without the fear of failure—leading to a more vibrant and dynamic art classroom where innovation and self-expression are at the forefront of their education. Thus improving teacher well-being as the focus will be on the educators' strengths and available resources, reducing stress and job satisfaction. These mindfulness practices and positive thinking can help art educators manage stress more effectively, leading to a healthier work-life balance. When

educators adopt an abundance mindset, they model positive behaviors and attitudes for their students. This can enhance trust, communication, and collaboration, creating a more inclusive and supportive learning environment.

## **6.4 Further Questions**

To further this research, although educators can have the ability to effect change, it is imperative that this information and its techniques are readily available to educators. Ideally, there should be a focus on this for preservice educators when they are in school to become teachers full-time, hopefully shifting the sentiment often felt during their careers and implementing this in the curriculum as soon as possible to help students become more effective and well-balanced educators for themselves and their students.

The education system can take several practical steps to help combat the burnout rate among teachers already in the field and those choosing to leave the profession. To support this approach, the education system in Quebec can take several practical steps to help prevent teacher burnout and enhance the overall experience for educators and students. Offering professional development through workshops and training offers ongoing professional development opportunities focused on mindfulness, positive psychology, and the principles of an abundant mindset. This could include workshops on stress management, self-care strategies, and fostering a growth-oriented classroom environment. Partnered with experts in mindfulness and positive psychology, such as those from local universities or wellness organizations, to provide tailored training for educators and art educators.

Flexible scheduling options should also be considered, allowing teachers adequate planning and reflection time. This can help reduce the feeling of being overwhelmed and enhance work-life balance. It also provides time for peer support groups for educators and

mentorship programs where teachers can share experiences, challenges, and strategies for maintaining well-being. To foster a sense of community and mutual support. Along with resources such as quiet spaces, stress-relief tools, and access to counselling services. Ensuring teachers have the resources to manage stress and maintain their well-being is crucial.

Encouraging teachers to incorporate short mindfulness exercises or breathing techniques into daily routines. This could be a quick mindfulness session at the beginning or end of class to help students and teachers center themselves. Helping to integrate well-being practices into the curriculum, such as creative breaks, group discussions on mental health, and projects encouraging self-expression and emotional exploration.

By adopting these recommendations, the Quebec education system can create a nurturing environment that supports art educators' well-being and enhances students' learning experience. Embracing an abundance mindset and integrating mindfulness practices can lead to a more vibrant, creative, and resilient educational community where teachers and students thrive.

## **6.5 Conclusion**

In this study, the research question *Can integrating heuristics, poetry and photography into daily practice help prevent burnout and rediscover a passion for art among art teachers? And how can small mindfulness actions be integrated into a teacher's daily routine?* Was explored through a heuristics lens. This study revealed that implementing mindfulness techniques for educators led to a significant decrease in shifting perspectives and dealing with stress and anxiety within the school setting, positively impacting the educator and the students. This also helped me as an artist and shifted my perspective from lack to abundance with small daily habits that aided this discovery.

These findings also suggest that integrating small daily mindfulness practices for educators could be a promising approach to promoting mental well-being among educators. This can help with the burnout rate and teachers leaving the profession within the first five years, which in turn help students improve academically and create a more supportive school climate and reignite a passion for art for art educators. However, it is essential to acknowledge that the study focused solely on one participant for a short period of time, limiting the results to other demographic groups and long-term findings. Future research could explore the long-term effects of mindfulness interventions for multiple art educators to examine how implementing these techniques and training can have lasting benefits for educators and if this may help alleviate burnout and reignite their passion for art formally and informally, helping to contribute to the field of art education and teachers services.

In conclusion, this study highlights the potential of small daily habits integrating mindfulness-based practices for educators and shows the need for further investigation to fully understand their impact. By addressing these gaps in research, educators and policymakers can better support the well-being of educators and students.



## References

- Baminiwatta, A., & Solangaarachchi, I. (2021). Trends and developments in mindfulness research over 55 years: A bibliometric analysis of publications indexed in web of science. *Mindfulness*, 12(9), 2099–2116. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-021-01681-x>
- Cahnmann, M. (2003). The Craft, Practice, and Possibility of Poetry in Educational Research. *Educational Researcher*, 32(3), 29–36.
- Cameron, J. (1992). *The Artist's way: A spiritual path to higher creativity*. TarcherPerigee.
- Cruikshank, I., & Mason, R. (2003). Using Photography in Art Education Research: A Reflexive Inquiry. *International Journal of Art & Design Education*, 22(1), 5–22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-5949.00335>
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2008). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. Harper and Row.
- Davenport, C., & Pagnini, F. (2016). Mindful learning: A case study of langerian mindfulness in schools. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 7. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01372>
- Davidson, R. J., Kabat-Zinn, J., Schumacher, J., Rosenkranz, M., Muller, D., Santorelli, S. F., & Sheridan, J. F. (2003). *Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation*. *Psychosomatic medicine*, 65(4), 564-570.
- Engert, V., Linz, R., & Grant, J. A. (2019). Embodied stress: The physiological resonance of psychosocial stress. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 105, 138–146. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psyneuen.2018.12.221>
- Faulkner, S.L. (2009). *Poetry as Method: Reporting Research Through Verse* (1st ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315422411>
- Fitzpatrick, Esther & Fitzpatrick, Katie. (2020). *What poetry does for us in education and research*. 10.4324/9780429202117-1.

- Jennings, P. A., & Siegel, D. J. (2015). *Mindfulness for teachers: Simple skills for peace and productivity in the classroom*. W.W. Norton et Company.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2013). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. Bantam Books Trade Paperbacks.
- Karsenti, T., & Collins, S. (2013). *Why are new teachers leaving the profession? Results of a Canadawide survey*. *Education*, 3(3), 141–149.
- Langer, E. J. (2023). *The Mindful Body: Thinking our way to chronic health*. Ballantine Books.
- Langer, E. J. (2006). *On becoming an artist: Reinventing yourself through mindful creativity*. Ballantine.
- Langer, E. J. (2000). Mindful learning. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9(6), 220–223. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8721.00099>
- Li, L., Gow, A.D.I. and Zhou, J. (2020), *The Role of Positive Emotions in Education: A Neuroscience Perspective*. *Mind, Brain, and Education*, 14: 220-234. <https://doi.org/10.1111/mbe.12244>
- Maloney, J. E., Lawlor, M. S., Schonert-Reichl, K. A., & Whitehead, J. (2016). A mindfulness-based social and emotional learning curriculum for school-aged children: The Mindup Program. *Mindfulness in Behavioral Health*, 313–334. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4939-3506-2\\_20](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4939-3506-2_20)
- Moustakas, C. E. (1990). *Heuristic research: Design, methodology, and applications*. Sage Publications.
- Oberle, E., & Schonert-Reichl, K. A. (2016). Stress contagion in the classroom? the link between classroom teacher burnout and morning cortisol in elementary school students. *Social Science & Medicine*, 159, 30–37. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2016.04.031>

- Richardson, M. (1998). Poetics in the Field and on the Page. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 4(4), 451-462.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/107780049800400401>
- Roeser, R. W., Skinner, E., Beers, J., & Jennings, P. A. (2012). Mindfulness training and Teachers' Professional Development: An emerging area of research and Practice. *Child Development Perspectives*, 6(2), 167–173.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1750-8606.2012.00238.x>
- Roy, S. (2021). *The Truth of What Matters: An Autoethnography and Visual Inquiry of Art Teacher Burnout* (thesis). *The Truth of What Matters An Autoethnography and Visual Inquiry of Art Teacher Burnout*.
- Saldaña, J. (2021). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers* (4E [Fourth edition]). SAGE.
- Sharf, R. H. (2014). Is mindfulness Buddhist? (and why it matters). *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 52(4), 470–484. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363461514557561>
- Siegel, D. J. (2009). Mindful Awareness, mindsight, and neural integration. *The Humanistic Psychologist*, 37(2), 137–158. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08873260902892220>.
- Swart, T. (2019). *The Source: The secrets of the universe, the science of the brain*. HarperOne.
- Taylor, E. W. (2002). Using still photography in making meaning of adult educators' teaching beliefs. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 34(2), 123–139.  
<https://doi-org.lib-ezproxy.concordia.ca/10.1080/02660830.2002.11661466>
- YouTube. (2013, November 5). *Ellen Langer: Mindfulness over matter*. YouTube.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4XQUJR4uIGM>