

## INTRODUCING MEGAN GALLAGHER



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Megan is a storyteller, a performer, a researcher and teacher. She shares what she has learned with enthusiasm and kindness to inspire those around her. Megan's aim in life is to help others stretch, grow and flourish: she is all about people thriving, not merely surviving.

Megan completed her Masters of Education with research on teacher wellbeing, a topic close to her heart. She has 30 years teaching experience across a range of settings and roles including classroom teaching, leadership and organisational development. Megan also manages the Happy Healthy Teachers Matter Facebook group, leads the Teachers Matter Bookclub and co-hosts the Teachers Matter Podcast with Karen Tui Boyes. She is a regular presenter at online summits and conferences.

Megan is based in Otago, New Zealand, where she works, teaches, writes, enjoys the local beaches and spending time with her family and pets. She enjoys reading, growing plants, theatre, music and crochet.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING WITH THE HEART AND BRAIN IN MIND

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“Happy, healthy teachers tend to have happy healthy classrooms where learners tend to do better socially, emotionally and academically. To raise student achievement it makes sense to address teacher wellbeing.”

*Megan Gallagher 2017*

When we begin to understand how the human brain learns and develops it enables us to create learning environments and practices that enhance student engagement and growth. When we understand the influence of relationships and impact of our own wellbeing on others then we can create environments where everyone can thrive. This is about teaching and learning for the WHOLE person- teaching and learning is more than just curriculum.

Aspects of this can be delivered as a workshop, a whole day course or a larger piece of work depending on the needs of your learning community.

### Key learning outcomes for participants:

- ✦ Learn about strategies and tools to create safe learning environments that are brain-friendly, and enhance emotional literacy and relationships
- ✦ Learn simple metaphors, tools and models to talk about the brain and learning with students
- ✦ Learn about wellbeing strategies for staff and students in the classroom and school- starting with belonging, emotional literacy and focusing on positive and protective relationships
- ✦ Identify personal and professional protective factors for your wellbeing
- ✦ Explore the influence of self, others and the environment on individual and team wellbeing
- ✦ Develop a plan going forward to improve teacher wellbeing in your setting
- ✦ Work-Life Satisfaction

## BUILDING STRONG TEAMS TOGETHER WE CAN ACHIEVE MORE

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One of the key insights into teacher wellbeing that came from my research was the power and influence of the professional relationships and leadership practices on individual teacher wellbeing. A positive learning and working environment rests on the quality of the relationships within the team inside it.

In this session we work with values of your organisation/school/team, and focus on how individuals and groups contribute to living these values. One of the challenges many people face is being able to talk about ‘hard’ stuff with colleagues and so we explore why this might be and develop strategies to give and receive feedback for growth.

### Key learning outcomes for participants:

- ✦ Unpack your values and the stories that are important to you and your school- focusing on how individuals relate and contribute to this
- ✦ Complete a personal personality profile, exploring your strengths and appreciating the unique qualities individuals can offer to the team
- ✦ Learn about having ‘hard’ conversations, giving and receiving feedback for growth
- ✦ Understand what belonging may look like, sound like and feel like to different people

## COACHING CONVERSATIONS GROWING YOURSELF AND YOUR TEAM

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In order to grow we need to know where we are and where we are going, and then what we need to get there. This is where coaching can be a powerful way to support people on their growth journeys. Professional Growth is about everyone on the team developing their skill sets and increasing opportunities to reach their potential as they support ākonga/learners to do the same.

In this session we unpack some fundamentals for coaching and feedback for growth. Goal setting is an important part of this as we learn to set goals that are achievable, realistic and inspire us to reach higher. This can be useful for leaders, teams or individuals.

### Key learning outcomes for participants:

- ✿ Fundamentals of coaching conversations
- ✿ Listening for understanding and empathy
- ✿ Giving and receiving feedback for growth
- ✿ Goal setting for success

## CREATING A CONNECTED CURRICULUM

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Let's move from a crowded curriculum to a connected curriculum! This is ultimately about achieving clarity of purpose and practice- what is it that we really need to teach, how will we do so in the best way for our learners, and how will we know if it is working.

As we work together we start with the vision and values of your learning community- this is the heart of your school and the work you do together. From there we then map a curriculum, processes and practices that align to your vision and values and meets the diverse needs of your ākonga. I can support you to review your current curriculum, processes and practices or work alongside you to develop these.

### Key learning outcomes for participants:

- ✿ Identify how the values and vision of your learning community can drive the teaching and learning
- ✿ Engage with cross curricula planning that honours learner needs, and the intent of different disciplines and key competencies
- ✿ Embed authentic assessment practices into planning
- ✿ Review processes that guide curriculum and teacher development

## **A PLACE TO STRETCH AND GROW- STUDENT AGENCY**

This is what we called the classroom I've been teaching in for the last 6 years- it was the place to stretch and grow. We learned about the brain and how we learn. As a classroom practitioner, a bit of a nerd, a prolific reader and contributor to teaching forums I offer an opportunity for teachers to explore teaching practices that enhance learning.

No-one has all the answers but I have some great questions and suggestions to support you or your team to create places where ākonga/learners stretch and grow. If you need a dose of inspiration, if you want to shift gear in your practice, if you want tips, tools and strategies that you can implement easily then this might be just what you need.

Together we learn and talk, experience and plan, hopefully laugh a little too. This is a workshop (part or whole day, or over several sessions) where I will share tools and strategies, provide you with material to consider and facilitate opportunities to experience and practice strategies as well as facilitating discussions where we get to share our collective wisdom.

### **Key learning outcomes for participants:**

- ✿ Planning for learning- what is learning, how do we know it is happening and how can we provide an environment to encourage it
- ✿ The power of prioritising – rather than do more let's invest time and energy into what makes the biggest difference for you and your learners
- ✿ Learn about student agency and ways to grow self management skills
- ✿ Learn tools, tips and strategies that you can use in your classroom straight away

## WHAT OTHERS SAY...

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Megan Gallagher is an inspiration to all teachers and educators alike. Her knowledge and expertise in especially the area of health and well-being never cease to amaze me. When I heard Megan the first time I knew I had to change how I feel about myself. I used to be so hard on myself. Now I love myself because of Megan's wise words. Teacher well-being is a huge passion of Megan because of her caring nature. She listens well and knows how to respond positively in tricky situations. Every morning I wake up to Megan's positive affirmations on the Happy Healthy Teacher Matter website. One thing I implement daily in my life because of this site is showing gratitude. Thank you Megan for your aroha you spread all throughout NZ and the rest of the world. You inspire me to do better every day and know what I do is enough.

Aroha nui, Aroha mai

**Suraya Esau**

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I attended Megan's brain development seminar when I was a playcentre mother. The advice and strategies Megan gave me really helped me cope with my son and his high energy moods! I especially loved the 'glitter in a jar' reference, that really stuck in my mind and helps me to let go at the best times!! Thanks so much.

**Chrissy Leyser**

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I was fortunate enough to have Megan Gallagher as my Education Manager while I worked for the Life Education Trust. Her dedication to the role meant she always went above and beyond for all of us and I greatly admired her energy and achievements. She was creative and innovative, ensuring that our professional learning was cutting edge, thought-provoking and relevant.

Despite being exceptionally busy she always put people first. Megan is genuine, thoughtful and wise, and all these years later I very much value her friendship. She never fails to impress with projects that she creates and implements and I look forward to seeing her latest ideas take shape. You're an absolute star, Megan!!

Mā te huruhuru, ka rere te manu!

**Louise**

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Talofa lava Meg, I just wanted to thank you for all your sharing of thoughts and resources throughout the year. I've been lecturing at uni for two years now and still working hard on figuring out how to teach and lead well. My students are technically adults, but they are still at a point of their lives where there are so many changes, challenges, opportunities, and heartaches. The great resources you share are really applicable for this space as well. Fa'afetai tele lava I really appreciate your work!

**Facebook follower**

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The presentation length was great (went very quickly), the content was good in that there were 2-3 main important things that we could grab, focus and work on rather than a lot of smaller things that can become confusing and get lost along the way. The humour was appreciated, language was down to earth and relatable, easy to hear you, the chance to chat and contribute is also a very positive feature.

**Workshop attendee- Teaching with the Heart and Brain in Mind**

## WHAT OTHERS SAY...

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Megan's presentation was on point. I learned so much from her experiences as a teacher. I can tell she puts in the work necessary to get the job done by continually sharpening her skills.

*Online Summit attendee- Teacher Wellbeing*

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Thoroughly enjoyed a straight forward and extremely important message for us all supporting or in front of the classroom. So often we spent our life worrying, working and supporting the ones in our care that we forget to care for ourselves. We all know we need to take time for ourselves, however so often we forgo this. Refocus and energise! Thank you Megan - great session.

*Online Summit attendee- Teacher Wellbeing*

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She was a terrific support, both professionally - in setting out goals, offering ideas to aid reaching them and assisting me to improve my teaching skills, and personally - helping me to gain confidence in myself and be more resilient. This was always observed with great insight and empathy.

*Jane H*

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Meg's seminar on Thinking and Learning with the Heart and Brain in Mind "... gave me a range of strategies and tools to use with my students now and in the future, plus it ties in with our current unit so I have some ideas on how to help my students understand how their brain controls their body/emotions.

It was powerful for me as an educator to learn and apply this new knowledge to what I already know and I am excited to see how my students respond this week.

You have so much knowledge to share and it is an obvious passion of yours, so thank you for sharing it."

*Sacha*

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Megan is passionate about well-being and therefore ensures that this is top of the list when touching base with me.

Megan has a positive approach and helps me to tackle potential issues with a clear mindset. She works alongside me to create a plan going forward and remains focused on working towards goals.

Megan has an upbeat manner and looks at life holistically. She works hard to develop relationships that are meaningful. Because of this Megan was able to focus deeply on areas I wanted to improve and changes I wanted to make. Megan has enabled me to look at my career, relationships with other staff and parents in a positive manner and she has given me numerous strategies to use. I have been able to transfer these into my personal life too. My goal setting has become more meaningful and I have clear structure to follow.

I am grateful for the skill sets Megan has equipped me with and support I continue to receive.

*Katie H*



## WHAT OTHERS SAY...

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I have had the pleasure of attending several of Meg's workshops as well as observing her teaching in the classroom. Her workshops are real, based on current research and always thought provoking. Her knowledge is phenomenal and at her core is her love and passion for people, and their well being. Meg is an inspirational educator.

*Sue M*