

## Episode 1: Mindset for the Unthinkable

What educators need to keep in mind from a leadership aspect as we adjust to our new reality:

- **There is a need for a sense of care and compassion**
  - Everyone, students, colleagues, caregivers of students, need to feel an outreach from educators in leadership positions
  - Caregivers need to be reminded, as they take on the role of primary educators, that we are here for them and that we are far from perfect as teachers, something we all know ourselves
- **There is a need for consistency**
  - Steady and consistent communication is imperative
  - Where we leave gaps in communication, people want to fill in the blanks
  - They need to know you are there, that you are caring for your own loved ones but they can lean on your humanity and knowledge
- **There is a need for personal well-being**
  - Students don't need you to push yourselves so hard that you forget about your own well-being
  - Teachers are a giving group of people, but you're only as good as your own health
  - Pushing yourself to a point of breaking will not serve your family, your students, or your communities well
  - Working with your fellow teachers and leaning on each other for ideas and support
- **Other Thoughts**
  - Use this time to prepare. With what has been studied about summer learning loss, and based on the regulations in place (in provinces such as Saskatchewan) that schools will not resume until September, teachers must be prepared that the return to schools will require some extra work
  - Online classes and remote courses will not be perfect. Nothing will replace the dynamic responsiveness of having teachers and learners in the same place
  - We will go through distinct phases throughout this time away from the classroom and some of those will be moving forwards, some sideways, and occasionally some backwards
    - Initial phase
      - Working hard and coming up with ideas
      - Flurry of work getting adjusted
    - Maintenance Phase
      - Phase of unknown
      - Must treat it as a marathon, or even an ultra-marathon, rather than as a sprint. It is imperative to find a sustainable pace to work at
    - Recovery phase
      - The world we return to may not be the same

- Given the cyclical nature of pandemics we may return to traditional face to face schooling and then be again forced to isolate if the incidence rate begins to go back up again

### **Closing Thoughts**

Important for those of us who work in the academic profession, and are in positions of privilege with our employment to be outward looking and serve a public good. We need to connect with the public who profess and proclaim that we serve, and not just in the traditional comfort of our classrooms and meeting rooms.