Well-Being Literacy in the Academic Landscape: Trioethnographic Inquiry Into Scholarly Writing

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Abstract

Writing well and being well as academic writers is rarely spoken about, often hidden, and at times evaded. We believe that developing, maintaining, and growing well-being literacy not only engages the act but also allows awareness, reflection, and metacognitive thinking that enable mindful writing for well-being. Well-being literacy, the capacity to understand and employ well-being language for personal, collective, and global well-being, intrigues us. It encompasses nurturing, sustaining, and safeguarding well-being for individuals, groups, and systems to thrive. As scholars delving into well-being literacy, we, a diverse collective from across higher education career trajectories, investigate its role in scholarly writing and our academic realities. Our focus lies in unraveling the paradoxes inherent in higher education, particularly as researchers and writers. In this paper, we examine our own stories as a trioethnography and the impact of our writing practices on our own professional and personal lives. By doing so, we reveal the place of vulnerability, relationships, and meaning in who we are and are becoming as academic scholars. Guiding principles are shared with peers and colleagues in how they might cultivate writing practices while valuing and embodying well-being in the higher education space.

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Introduction

Valuing your well-being and self-care as an academic in the higher education context can be difficult. The culture of overwork and dismissing the needed well-being resources that value who we are and what we do has been problematic for a sustained period (Eager, 2021; Lemon, 2021b). There exists a battle between what you know is good for you personally and the tension that emerges from the dominant professional rhetoric around academic success, creating knowledge, and career advancement (Fang, 2021). Reflecting on this culture, these systematic flaws can impact us negatively. It is impossible to sustain a healthy work environment with continual and continuing rankings, one size fits all measuring, and external pressures of scholarly production causing anxiety (Bergen et al., 2020). For those who value both personal and professional well-being, the ability to stay grounded, centred, and true to oneself can be a challenge.

As scholars who research well-being literacy, we come together as a collective, representing different career trajectories and lived experiences in higher education. We seek to explore well-being literacy in the context of scholarly writing and the reality of our academic lives. Well-being literacy is the capability to comprehend and compose well-being language across contexts with the intention of using such language to maintain or improve the well-being of oneself, others, or the world (Oades et al., 2021). As a capability both for and about well-being, well-being literacy embraces the building, maintaining, and protecting of well-being in order for individuals, collectives, and systems to flourish. We are interested in the paradoxes that are contextualized for us in higher education, particularly from the perspective of being researchers and writers.

This paper employs trioethnography (Le et al., 2021) to explore the emotional experiences of academic writers. Utilizing ourselves as the research site, we compare our reflections, focusing on interpretative, participant-centred vignettes that emerge during the research (Alexakos, 2015). The study emphasizes learning, emergence, and contingence in professional contexts, specifically higher education, with a central inquiry into well-being. Examining these vignettes, we delve into the essence of becoming an academic writer and explore the metacognitive skill of well-being literacy in navigating the complexities of academic writing. The conclusion proposes guiding principles for peers and colleagues to interrupt, interrogate, and cultivate writing practices while prioritizing well-being in higher education.

Well-Being in Higher Education

The growing attention to personal well-being and self-care extends to higher education, as highlighted by various studies (Edwards et al., 2021; Lee & Miller, 2013; Lemon, 2021a; Shaw, 2014; Weale, 2019). While addressing mental health concerns among undergraduates remains crucial, there is a mounting focus on the well-being of PhD students, postdoctoral researchers,

and academic staff (Evans et al., 2018). Recent meta-analysis data reveals that around 17% of PhD students grapple with anxiety, and 24% experience depression (Satinsky et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing disparities, heightening stress and burnout among academics (The Chronicle of Higher Education, 2020). The struggle for balance amidst escalating workloads, job insecurity, and relentless productivity pressures underscores the perception of academic work as ceaseless (Morrish, 2019). This is compounded by a culture of overexertion and the demand to achieve more with fewer resources (Eager, 2021; Preece, 2021). Challenges like short-term contracts, job instability, limited availability, and promotional constraints accentuate the issue of precarity (Ashcraft, 2017, 2018; Bristow et al., 2017; Crozier & Woolnough, 2019). Amidst these challenges, some scholars advocate for a holistic integration of well-being into academic life, promoting a healthier and more balanced academic environment (Lemon, 2021a, 2021b, 2022; Lemon & Salmons, 2021; McDonough & Lemon, 2021), aiming to "live well within the academy" (Garbett & Thomas, 2020, p. 2).

Academic Writing and Well-Being

The process of academic writing and peer review in scholarly publications remains a subject of robust debate. While undeniably pivotal within academic publishing, individuals' firsthand encounters with this process vary considerably (Paltridge & Starfield, 2016). Numerous prevailing discourses underscore this phenomenon, encompassing themes such as the imperative to publish, the longstanding "publish or perish" ethos that has held sway for decades, and its recent amplification due to the embrace of neoliberal accountability and global measurement strategies (Chan et al., 2019; Ertas & Kozak, 2020; Horn, 2016; McGrail et al., 2006; McPherson & Lemon, 2018). As such, academic publishing is emotional work (Hammond & Lemon, 2022). Support, encouragement, and motivation for authors is a required but varied lived experience for most (Badenhorst, 2020; McGrail et al., 2006).

In her seminal work, "Skirting a Pleated Text," Richardson (2006) relates how her creative writing project outcomes do not fit into her discipline, and discusses academic and experimental writing as "The pleats can be spread open at any point, folded back, unfurled" (p. 2). This folded pleat is a "partial-story"—one that generates and positions "knowledge [as] contextually situated, local, and partial" (Richardson, 2006, p. 2). As writers, we understand how the knowledge we make is about our positionality, in context, local, and always a partial story. As we write together, we create a space that is able to unfurl. We consider academic writing and the intersection with our well-being as an act of "listening for the unfurling, unfolding of ourselves, listening to our bodies and minds, resonating with the making in the writing" (McPherson & Lemon, 2021, p. 135). Knowledge is a dynamic process that involves its creation, deconstruction, and subsequent reconstruction. This cycle is shaped by activities such as writing, engaging in conversations about writing, reflecting on progress, and evaluating

approaches to knowledge production. From this perspective, we look to our writing practices as a part of the self-actualizing process of engaging in the process of learning, which hooks (1994) describes as an engaged pedagogy. Thus, as we learn, we acknowledge that this academic life will be different for everyone, and as such, well-being literacy, broadly defined as the mindful use of language about and for well-being (Oades et al., 2021), is relevant in the discussion of our unfurling writing and shared thinking.

Well-Being Literacy

Well-being literacy refers to the capability of understanding and using well-being language effectively in various situations, aiming to enhance the well-being of oneself, others, and the world (Oades et al., 2021). Well-being literacy fosters the development of a vocabulary around well-being, cultivating comprehension, contextual awareness, and purposefulness. By wielding the language, knowledge, and skills of well-being, intentional communication for personal and communal wellness becomes feasible—a process that binds individuals, groups, and systems, including educational contexts, in the quest for flourishing (Oades et al., 2021 p. 327).

Well-being literacy is demonstrated through the intentional thinking about thinking, in relation to writing for well-being. Intentionally communicating for well-being and for quality writing with sensitivity to a particular workplace context, requires responsive introspection, reflection, and metacognition in relation to well-being, and writing. Metacognition involves thinking about thinking (Flavell, 1979), knowledge and self-regulation (Flavell, 1979; Karlen, 2017; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011). Regulation involves self-managing to successfully achieve the writing goal and includes the procedural aspects of writing (Karlen, 2017). When writing for well-being, metacognition may therefore incorporate knowledge and self-regulation associated with both quality writing, well-being literacy, and well-being. When academic writers focus on well-being, reflective practices and subsequent actions have the potential to facilitate the quality and growth of academic writing while concurrently informing the sustenance of writer well-being.

Methodology

This paper presents a trioethnographic exploration of well-being literacy in the context of scholarly writing and the reality of our academic lives. Using ourselves as the research site, we compare and contrast our experiences through exchanging written reflections. In the next section of this paper, we discuss the methodological decisions made before presenting an analysis of the juxtaposed narratives.

Trioethnography

Ethnography in qualitative research is also called thick description as it involves an up-close observation of the participants and a detailed description of their cultures, behaviours, mutual

differences, and practices. In this paper we draw on duo and collaborative ethnography methodology as a trioethnography (Le et al., 2021) as we reveal reflexivity as a distributed process to strengthen the ethnographer's interpretative authority and to constantly push the conceptual boundaries of the participating disciplines and professions (Bieler et al., 2021). Juxtaposed are our stories of three researchers and academic writers who experience a similar phenomenon, with data generated from written dialogue between us as the researchers; as such, we serve as the sites of inquiry (Burleigh & Burm, 2022). Taking up the spirit of trioethnography, we are curious, allowing this process to embrace an embodiment of understanding of self, with the journey being "mutual and reciprocal" (Norris & Sawyer, 2012, p. 13) through the exchange of written reflections.

Trioethnography enhances the development of critical consciousness (DeCino & Strear, 2019). By reshaping narratives, it fosters a heightened awareness and critical understanding of the world from diverse perspectives, leading to transformation (Breault, 2016). Actively engaging with differing viewpoints purposefully disrupts dominant metanarratives often found in solitary writing (Norris, 2017; Norris & Sawyer, 2012). The encounter with another person's perspective becomes a catalyst for personal change, challenging established perceptions (Hammond & Lemon, 2022; Schultz & Paisley, 2016). Sharing and examining deeply ingrained assumptions and values allows researchers to transcend the familiar, opening up new possibilities for exploration and understanding (Amundsen et al., 2019). This approach values the equality of individuals involved, sharing lived experiences, questioning, and co-creating meaning. The relationship between the researchers is characterized by equality, where they research with each other rather than against each other. In this approach, the narratives of each author exist side by side without aiming to create a singular, authoritative voice. We thus embrace an openness that allows each author to incorporate what resonates with them during the reworking of their narratives. Similarly, the reader becomes a "co-author" of meaning by drawing from each story what resonates with their own experiences and reflecting upon them in relation to the narratives (Norris & Sawyer, 2012).

Participants

Trioethnographers come together based on a significant difference between them to illuminate how the difference shaped their experience of the same phenomenon. In our case, we come together with diverse experiences as scholars who engage in academic writing. Narelle is an interdisciplinary scholar drawing on arts, education, and positive psychology; holds a professor role; values mentoring others with their writing; and is an active writer, having disseminated research extensively in both traditional and non-traditional formats. Jacqui is an early-career researcher who has recently completed her PhD. As a teaching specialist, Jacqui lectures, researches, and seeks opportunities to facilitate equitable access to knowledge and skills about

well-being through engagement and dissemination projects, including writing. Lisa is an early-career researcher, coming to academia through post-graduate studies late in her career. Formerly a teacher and mentor in early education, her study and writing now bridge well-being science and early childhood education. We met through our passion for well-being science and the field of education. Each of us had taught in the Australian schooling sector at various levels from early education to primary to secondary, and now within higher education.

Our Process

We present our work as our individual stories rather than collective accounts of shared experience. We make no reference to specific people or projects; our writing is a representational composite, although we were reflexive about specific academic writing projects when composing our stories. Our process involved three distinct, sequential phases: individual reflection, individual responses to each other, and collective synthesizing. The process of examining our experiences began with us separately writing an autoethnographic account (individual reflection) of our scholarly writing experiences, responding to the question: Are there any noticeable impacts on my well-being during the process of academic writing? These individual reflections were then shared, and we noted our reactions and where our stories were similar or diverging. In our individual responses to each other, we continued with free writing, still thinking about well-being literacy, academic writing, and learning from each other, while also considering the question: What resonates? What challenges you? What pushes you forward? What are you not sure about at the moment? Our individual responses to each other were shared after each of us had responded.

Themes that emerged from our reflections and collective synthesizing were discussed. These are shared in this paper via snapshots of reflections and our transformations. The aim, at the end of this three-stage process and in light of emerging themes and transforming perspectives, was to consider the concluding question: What does well-being literacy as a metacognitive skill look, feel, and sound like when looking after our own well-being in the complex context of academic writing? Reflecting the fact that trioethnographic researchers are co-participants (Sawyer & Norris, 2013), we used our first names, Narelle, Jacqui, and Lisa, for the following discussions.

Analysis of Juxtaposed Texts and Emerging Themes

In this section of our paper, we present emergent themes followed by vignettes of our voices that represent reflection and transformation.

Vulnerability

Vulnerability encompasses uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure, forming the basis for crucial human experiences like love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity (Brown,

2013). Embracing opportunities amid discomfort is the key to transforming vulnerability into strength (Schulte, 2005). However, we may remain unaware of our own vulnerabilities (Bloor et al., 2010; Sampson et al., 2008). Disclosing private anguish, as Burr (1996) advises, can be emotionally taxing, possibly leading to vicarious traumatization (Pennebaker, 1997). In academic writing, we grapple with vulnerability, considering its impact on ourselves, participants, and colleagues during data work, lived experiences, representation, and dissemination. This vulnerability cultivates well-being literacy, intertwining awareness of oneself and others.

Narelle's Reflection

Writing can seem like a luxury or a chore in academic life. For me, it's a luxury that enhances me, my thinking, and bringing ideas together. Writing helps me get my thoughts out of my head; it stops ruminating. The constant circling around of ideas re: "I can't write" or "I can't seem to be able to articulate this idea." It's an interrupter to this, the complete opposite... I'm giving myself permission to process on the page. To understand myself as I express myself, this expression changes, grows, and develops over time as my thoughts are influenced by more thinking, not thinking, conversations, reading, or a connection that I make from not writing. This is especially important as I write about self-care... I'm simultaneously writing for others as I am for myself—decoding the science, our lived experiences, and working with the richness that comes from qualitative data.

Jacqui's Reflection

I care about our First Nations People and their well-being. I feel heartbroken by the history of trauma for First Nations People, and what our country carries. I see myself as an ally, open to learning and to helping, as we work towards a better future. However, this space is deeply complex, and when writing, I need to take care not to get stuck in the preparation phase. There is a lot to learn. In front of mind are the rights of Indigenous People (as articulated in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples). When it comes to academic writing, the idea of reciprocity sits close. I regularly circle back to the questions: In what ways does my work/writing benefit, and in what ways am I learning from (honouring and representing) the community I am working with?

Lisa's Reflection

Academic writing can be bloody hard. I ooze imposter syndrome; perfectionism gnaws, and doubt is constant. I'm vulnerable, alone, and scared. These things are not a well-being boost. The impact, while episodical, is grey and cold for me. I can feel alone and lonely.

Narelle's Transformation

I have been pushed to think about the vulnerability we have for and with ourselves as we write.

Emerald and Carpenter (2015), in writing about vulnerability, remind us that we have a responsibility for our qualitative research community and to each other no matter the career stage, and especially for and to our new generations of researchers, whereby we care for each other, and that includes our health and well-being as we research, write, process, review, provide feedback, ask hard questions, and examine social issues in our work. We take a great risk when we open ourselves up as we write words on a page. Shame, guilt, fear are juxtaposed with passion, meaning, intrigue, appreciation, hope, or awe. We feel vulnerable with ourselves, participant voices, colleagues, peers, and those readers who we do not even know. When we feel disillusioned, doubtful, or fear we are at our rawness. I think of ourself, our mind, thoughts, writing, relationships to the work, and those providing the feedback that we might not want to hear or perhaps aren't ready to hear. What do we listen to? Who do we listen to? How do we care for ourselves at this moment? The tension between languishing and flourishing surfaces. That tipping point is hard, and we can be so harsh on ourselves and on our writing as well. … You know those moments where we want to delete the file or scribble out the words on the page. Is it these moments when we tune into them that carve out our greatest moments as writers who write well and are well as we write?

Jacqui's Transformation

A sense of vulnerability is often present in the writing we do for ourselves and also in the writing we do with and for others. However, an openness for vulnerability is unlikely unless we are operating in psychologically safe contexts—contexts in which we as individuals feel comfortable revealing ourselves without adverse consequences to self (Kahn, 1990) and where teams share a feeling that interpersonal risk-taking is safe (Edmondson, 1999). Well-being literacy reminds us that context matters (Oades et al., 2021). Fostering environments that nurture psychological safety (positive leader relationships, positive interpersonal relationships, and group dynamics) (Frazier et al., 2017) paves the way to learning behaviours, including among those vulnerability. Creating contextually appropriate, psychologically safe conditions allows us to exercise both wise and courageous vulnerability and to communicate vulnerability as a pathway for personal and professional growth.

Lisa's Transformation

Vulnerability is a background but constant companion in academic writing. We are ethically bound to be reflexive researchers and writers, yet as Kleinasser (2000) notes, reflexivity is a process of being self-critical. This continued, active interrogation of our biases and paradigms intends to create valid output but equally promotes self-doubt and vulnerability. This highlights one of the paradoxes of the higher education space we sought to reflect on: how this underlying current impacts our well-being, individually and as a profession. If well-being is feeling good and functioning well (Huppert, 2009) in the systems and contexts in which we live

(Kern et al., 2020), we need to reflect and illuminate our doubts and vulnerability as writers. I believe these words, facts, and knowledge about well-being, shared in the context of academia and with the intention of illuminating and supporting our professional flourishing, speak directly to our well-being literacy.

Meaning

A sense of meaning is central to the human experience, and there is consensus that making sense of one's life and having a sense of purpose are essential cognitive and motivational elements (Wong, 2017). A sense of meaning in life impacts well-being broadly and across the lifespan (Kim et al., 2014; Reker et al., 1987; Steger et al., 2009). Specifically, meaningful work is linked to personal well-being, job satisfaction, engagement, and performance (Steger, 2016). A mixed-methods study of a large Finnish multidisciplinary research university found contributing factors to meaningful work in the university context included sharing knowledge, collegial viewpoints, and learning (Riivari et al., 2020). However, there are workload and workplace tensions in the university context, impacting scholarly success and well-being. How do these complexities—both positive and negative—underpinned by meaning interplay with academic writing and the development of well-being literacy capabilities? Spotlights on these ideas were implicit in the trioethnographic vignettes:

Narelle's Reflection

I learned quickly that I love research and writing; I embrace it as everyday acts for both my personal and professional well-being. To build up the time in workloads strategically, it was important to establish a work ethic and practice that enabled both recognition of outputs/acknowledgment in Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with the allocation of work time while also establishing a research portfolio that aligns to my passions, interests, and purpose.

Jacqui's Reflection

This is a space that I care about. There is satisfaction and pride in the publication of work that has been completed and published. To me, it feels that publishing in collaboration with certain values-aligned people has a synergistic effect—academic influence and well-being experience—greater than the sum of the parts. For me, planning, making intentional writing choices (who, when, what, and why), and intentionally working with people who can communicate for the well-being of the team are critical parts of both successfully writing academically and doing it in a way that nurtures and sustains my own well-being.

Lisa's Reflection

I feel accomplished, capable, and proud when the writing process is done. … It's satisfying, engaging, and purposeful. As a person for whom accomplishment is a strong pathway to well-

being, having words on a page, pages in a chapter, and/or ideas in print gives me a boost. The challenges are real. … It's not always the uplifting experience you are seeking! Momentary discomfort and psychological waves are worth it for the end result of feeling strong, capable, accomplished, and having something tangible out there in the world.

Narelle's Transformation

What brings you joy? This is a question I have long been thinking about, and recently it has been something that has been a feature of conversations with colleagues in the academy. Joy is a positive emotion but also connected to meaning, and when it comes to academic writing, something I think is incredibly valuable to help one navigate the highs and lows, ups and downs, and light and dark of what it means to have the privilege to have the ability to express oneself this way.

Jacqui's Transformation

I wonder if meaningful work within an academic context is associated with higher education community well-being. Community well-being has been defined as greater than the sum of the parts (Sirgy, 2011). If a community is well, then it makes sense that the parts of the community are more likely to be well, that there might be a collective well-being synergy, and this might be evident in positive work outcomes for the community. For me, I feel that the meaning of my work relates to not only what I personally value but also to what my team and respected colleagues value, and that shared value is not accidental. The shared value comes from our aligned moral compass; it comes from collegial learning and critical evolution in our thinking; and it comes from intentional choice in who I collaborate with and what work I engage in. I wonder if shared well-being and meaning are more powerful than individual well-being and meaning.

Lisa's Transformation

Meaning and a sense of purpose are powerful pathways to personal well-being for me (and a great section of humanity, as the literature indicates). Personal, professional, individual, collective—it all intertwines and supports my writing and well-being, my sense of feeling good and functioning well (Huppert, 2009) as an emerging academic. Synergistically, being able to articulate meaning as a well-being pathway creates greater well-being. Having the words and knowledge about how meaning and well-being are connected, being able to define and express this within the complexity of an academic writing context, and intentionally leaning on this when challenges arise, are well-being and well-being literacy interconnected and in action.

Relationships

Forming and maintaining relationships is considered a basic human need (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Maslow, 1943; Ryan & Deci, 2017). As human beings, we are intrinsically driven towards

significant interpersonal relationships (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Ryan & Deci, 2017). The intertwined nature of autonomy and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 2014) is elemental to high-quality relationships and is distinguished by being volitional and emotionally supportive (Ryan et al., 2005), authentic and open (Lynch et al., 2009), and having mutuality (Deci et al., 2006). People experience feeling cared for and respected (Rogers, 1951; Stephens et al., 2012), positive energy (Quinn & Dutton, 2005), vitality (Liu et al., 2022), wellness (Deci & Ryan, 2014), personal growth (Lee et al., 2018; Stephens & Carmeli, 2015), and high-quality motivation and performance (Ryan & Deci, 2017), all of which could be argued as valuable enablers of academic writing. Relationships are a valuable workplace resource (Reis & Gable, 2003) that can be developed (Smith et al., 2021) via perspective-taking (cognitive skill; Longmire & Harrison, 2018), expression of empathy (Smolyaninova et al., 2020), expression of positive emotion (emotional skills; Vacharkulksemsuk & Fredrickson, 2013), and being respectful and task-enabling (behavioural skills; Stephens et al., 2012). As collaborative scholars who value ongoing intellectual and personal growth, our intentional nurturing of positive relationships, with ourselves and with others, is pivotal for both writing well and well-being.

Narelle's Reflection

I really love the framing around reciprocity, especially as it illuminates the relationship we have with ourselves and others in the writing up of our research—the act of processing our ideas and disseminating them to contribute to the field or discipline. I'm reminded that the act of writing itself is not only an expression of what we have learned but also what we have embodied as a part of doing the research itself. It is a giving back; an honouring of the participants; a learning about self and others; a totally engrossing process that I think we forget about. We are deeply close to the work we do.

Jacqui's Reflection

Reading Narelle's reflection, I see evidence of a caring relationship with self. I see that writing for well-being can hold the opportunity for release from perfection, a release from judgment, and a mode to express self. There is also choice in how it emerges: journal, laptop, or phone. There is wisdom in the expression of agency, in the gentle crafting of the task, in the gentle and constructive associated thoughts, and in crafting the environment—for physical and relational comfort. That is good to see—intentional comfort. Sometimes I need to remind myself that good work can happen in comfort. We don't always need to be stretched or exhausted to prove we are worthy, to prove we are working hard, and to prove we are doing our part.

Lisa's Reflection

The trust and collaborative pieces resonated with me. My publication history is short, and most of it has been with collaborators (Jacqui being one of them!). I have been fortunate to only work

with people I trust, and, as Jacqui shared, I have experienced a "safety" in this space. There is joy and pride in the finished pieces and in having my name alongside theirs. Reflecting on this more, I think it's easier for me to avoid the well-being dips when collaborating—I don't feel so alone, exposed, imposter-like, or open to criticism. I know others are sharing the "load," so to speak.

Narelle's Transformation

As I read your reflections, Jacqui and Lisa, I am touched by the value of others paired with self-awareness. This is so important that we think about relationships in the academy and in our academic writing. There is an intentionality for how relationships with others impact oneself, but also how oneself impacts relationships with others that exists throughout all the stages of researching and writing—is this a holistic collaboration of and for academic writing we all try to embrace? I also begin to think about the intentions we set as a writing/scholarly community: How do we support each other to grow our well-being literacy in association with the act of academic writing? What does this look and feel like? How do we support ourselves and each other in this exploration? Is it the supervisor's responsibility? The institution? The sector? And who is helping the more experienced writers grow their well-being literacy? The layers are complex, and I often wonder about this. We are not alone in the work that we do, nor are we isolated from the pragmatics of academic writing, but so often we do feel alone and isolated, and our own private thoughts and feelings as writers remain hidden. The irony is not lost.

Jacqui's Transformation

In some ways, relationships come easy. It is deeply human to connect with others and to be in relationships with others. A challenge comes in fostering high-quality relationships in diverse contexts with diverse people, including at times of strain and challenge. Life in the academy is diverse, with different personalities, different power dynamics, different career stages, different life and professional experiences, different pressures to perform and produce, and different goals. Shared, however, is the need for connection and relatedness. Shared are the benefits of having caring, open, authentic relationships. Crafting a work life that enables high-quality relationships for the self and others not only makes sense but seems like an intelligent choice for anyone seeking a satisfying and fulfilling life. Building well-being literacy for workplace relationships enables a broader consideration of how relatedness is expressed, how relatedness is experienced, and how communication intentionally and reflexively evolves. Relationships, writing, and well-being seem to sit in gentle harmony with each other.

Lisa's Transformation

It is relationships that come forward strongly for me in the specific space of this trioethnographic encounter and more broadly in academic writing. Direct relationships with

colleagues, supervisors, and co-authors in the writing process and indirect relationships with those that may (or may not!) read what I write. My writing and my well-being literacy are both sociocultural practices, influenced by the ecosystem of personal and professional relationships in which I am nested.

Findings in Light of the Process

In this trioethnographic exploration, acknowledging autoethnography's limitations, we discovered vulnerability, meaning, and relationships as key themes through rich narratives. Our personal approach delves into internal and external factors, exploring emotions, environment, and temporal dimensions. While navigating academic writing boundaries, we examined what well-being literacy entails. We acknowledge potential skepticism toward acquiring knowledge through personal narratives but value diverse voices. Embracing an autobiographical genre, we connect the personal to the cultural, recognizing the self-consciousness in claims to authorship and truth (Richardson, 2000, p. 14). Our layered narrative invites consideration of well-being and academic writing within the context of personal experiential journeys.

The academic context literature points to areas in which hearing the voice of others, vulnerability, a need for connection provided by a sense of meaning, and strong relationships are relevant. The experience of working in higher education and academic writing speaks to pressure, insecurity, stress, and accountability (Ashcraft, 2017; Bristow et al., 2017; Eager, 2021). It is evident that our personal and professional well-being is intrinsically coupled with our work and output. The interrelated questions of how do we write well and how are we well for our writing surface from the process and product of this trioethnographic exchange. The processes of writing, reflection, and transformation were distinct metacognitive experiences, as each contributor engaged not only with reflecting on their own experiences but also with intentional thinking about their thinking. With the initial prompt of considering noticeable impacts on my well-being during the process of academic writing, the focus on well-being was set.

Well-being literacy offers the capabilities of context awareness (adapting our language to different situations and needs) and intentionality (the habit of harnessing language to maintain or improve well-being), along with well-being vocabulary knowledge, comprehension, and composition skills (Oades et al., 2020). In our reflections and transformations, we have considered how well-being literacy, as a metacognitive skill, looks, feels, and sounds in relation to our own well-being in the context of academic writing. Using the construct and capabilities of well-being literacy as a prompt for surfacing guiding principles, the following questions are offered for consideration:

- What knowledge do we have, as writers, researchers, and academics, about and for our own well-being? We cannot ignore the complexities and interrelatedness of the systems in

which we exist (Kern et al., 2020) and the limited impact and agency we may therefore possess. However, being able to articulate what we value and draw on relevant ideas requires well-being vocabulary and knowledge (Oades et al., 2020). How and where do we seek this?

- How can we foreground our own well-being and wellbeing literacy while functioning effectively in our roles as writers in an academic context? As an exercise in metacognition, do we aim for well-being outcomes for ourselves (and/or others) in a way that is ongoing and habitual (Oades et al., 2020)? Embracing the sociocultural view of literacy as occurring between people (Gee, 1991), how do we continue to move beyond a traditional view of literacy to multiple literacies and well-being literacy capabilities to build, maintain, and protect the well-being of individuals, collectives, and systems?

- Many provocations lie in the themes that emerged from this trioethnographic exercise. How does our awareness and handling of vulnerability contribute to our well-being literacy? In what ways can embracing vulnerability as writers contribute to our personal and professional growth? How does the sense of meaning (and joy!) in our academic work impact our well-being as writers and scholars? How can we embrace meaningful work within an academic community and have an impact on the collective well-being of that community? What role do relationships, trust, and collaboration play in our academic writing experiences—with ourselves and others? What intentions can we set as a scholarly community to support each other in growing our well-being literacy in the context of academic writing, and how can institutions and the sector contribute to this effort?

Conclusion

This trioethographic encounter sought to juxtapose the experiences of three academic writers and illuminate shared perspectives and emerging themes. Additionally, to underpin reflections on the metacognition of well-being literacy and surface guiding principles for fellow writers, a trioethographic approach was used, with writings shared, reflected on, and transformed. Key themes of vulnerability, meaning, and relationships emerged. Well-being literacy served as both a prompt and a framework for articulating questions centred on well-being knowledge, well-being literacy capabilities, and provocations from the themes of vulnerability, meaning, and relationship intentionality. While we, as the authors, acknowledge skepticism may exist regarding this personal perspective approach, we believe in hearing the voices of others and reshaping narratives. Moreover, this discussion may support professional growth and the development of well-being literacy for academic writing. We hope for a resonance with colleagues and that this may be an encouragement for all writers to continue to reflect and be reflexive, embracing the metacognitive stance of well-being literacy and allowing both academic and well-being pleats and perspectives to unfold.

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