Chapter 17
Mindfully Living and Working in the Academy: Continuing the Conversation

Narelle Lemon and Sharon McDonough

Abstract As scholars and administrators in higher education institutions begin to implement mindfulness practices and perspectives, it is worth examining what can be learned through examining their diverse understandings and perspectives. In identifying the formal and informal mindful practices used by the contributing authors of this volume, we argue that they provide others with a basis for reflection on their own practices and perspectives. In this chapter, we present seven approaches to mindfulness as enacted by the chapter authors. We present an overview of these key strategies and approaches and suggest the possibility of such approaches for individual and collective change.

> Each time I sit down to read a chapter something in me feels unlocked. Maybe it's hope. Maybe it's recognition. Maybe it's acceptance. I feel like somehow in this collection we've managed to bring together a group of like-minded people. Reading these chapters makes me feel like maybe the academy is for me — because these people, their stories, their goals and aspirations for how they want to live and work — feel like mine. Finding yourself in the words of someone else is a beautiful form of recognition. I understand more about them and about me by reading their words. And what a gift that is.
>
> —Reflection from Sharon

> When we first talked about the place of mindfulness for us in our lives personally and professional we noticed we were talking behind closed doors — off campus, away from ear shot of colleagues, away from the higher education environment. It was like it was a secret. But why should it be like this? The hope and vision we had in this book project has so been enacted. We wanted voices of many to be heard. We wanted to shift the conversation to a more public space. We knew we would find it beneficial. We knew that others who we were having these conversations with behind closed doors would find it beneficial. There is something in the sharing that we knew would be mindful in itself. And as I read these chapters I have this overwhelming gratitude to the authors for sharing their experiences. I'm

N. Lemon (✉)
Department of Education, Faculty of Health, Arts and Design, Swinburne University of Technology, Melbourne, Australia
e-mail: nlemon@swin.edu.au

S. McDonough
School of Education, Federation University Australia, Ballarat, Australia
e-mail: s.mcdonough@federation.edu.au

N. Lemon and S. McDonough (eds.), *Mindfulness in the Academy*,
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-2143-6_17

> so touched in the openness to be able to learn from these experiences, and allowing others to learn from them as well. Our vision to bring the discussion to the forefront is beginning. I feel such a sense of relief, that what I have experienced, what Sharon has experienced, and what many of my academic friends and colleagues have experienced is beginning to be revealed. I'm so excited. I'm so touched. I think this is the beginning of a collective change.
>
> —Reflection from Narelle

17.1 Introduction: Sharing Experiences and Gratitude

As editors of this book, we have been profoundly touched by the author contributions. When we envisaged this book project, it was as much for us as academics, and individuals working in higher education and developing our identity, as it was for our colleagues and those who work in the sector. We have both personally grappled with the contemporary higher education context and the finding of our place. Mindfulness through formal and informal practices has been a large part of this. Over cups of tea, Instagram, Twitter, text messages, Skype and face-to-face conversations, over a number of years, we have shared our highs and lows. We have decoded and problem-solved together. It was these conversations, and many we had with others, that sparked the idea for this book. If we learn so much through sharing our stories and lived experiences together, we believe then others will as well. Our understandings have enabled us to grow and to disrupt the everyday experiences that leave us drained, questioning and sometimes looking for time and space to reflect on where we will be in the future. Our collective sharing has also enabled us to be mindful about what it is we love so much about working in higher education; pedagogy, students, colleagues, ideas, research, impact, collaborations, different, perspectives, teaching and learning.

As we have curated this book, we have openly shared with each of the authors and publicly through social media (@MindfulAcademic on Twitter and Instagram) the experience their writing has had on us as editors. The act of curation and editing has indeed been such a learning experience for us both. We have learnt through the stories we have read; the background to the authors' experiences; the process of writing; the finding of hidden mindful moments in amongst meeting deadlines; putting words to paper and sending out chapters for reviews. We have also learnt through the life surprises; health, and moments when we have had to care for others in need; through the loss of loved ones; through job insecurity; and personal challenges. Each author has had a journey alongside us. The creation of an edited collection does not happen in a vacuum. Lives continue to unfold and play out while authors and editors craft the text. In this unfolding, each of us has had to be mindful of others, and of ourselves, and we have sought to model care and compassion through the process. It has been tremendously rewarding and we have such gratitude towards those who have contributed to this book and who have shared their lives and experiences with us. We are truly grateful and appreciative.

17.2 Working Mindfully with Our Colleagues: Insights into the Editorial Process

The editing process is also a mindful task in itself. For us, it has been thinking about our own time, what it is that we want to contribute, and how we want to bring others together. We have been mindful throughout the process—from conception, proposal, acceptance of the contract with Springer, through to invitations to authors and the timelines set. Then, there is the review process. This is heavily positioned around feedback and what comes with this in terms of valuing and appreciating the words on the page versus changes that need to be made in order to meet academic requirements. We also have had to consider how deadlines fit into already existing deadlines for ourselves, but also the authors, and indeed, the reviewers.

We wanted the experience of contributing to this collection to be a good one. We were mindful of the way the book editing, chapter writing and the review process at times can become a task to be done where it is possible to forget that sitting at the other end of the document is another person, sending their stories out to the world to be judged. Opening yourself up to critique places you in a vulnerable position and we wanted to be mindful of this as we designed and engaged in the review process. We have had uneasy experiences when writing for others, and our mindful approach to this book built from this as well as our vision of this being an opportunity for mindful reflection and growth. Throughout the process, we have had to consider the role of the writing and academic review process, and as such we have the following:

- Planned ahead of time to design and follow a well thought-out schedule of the writing and editorial process.
- Communicated openly but mindfully in an attempt not to overwhelm others.
- Sent soft reminders of deadlines and an ability to negotiate these.
- Created a longer time to write reviews than would normally be enacted.
- Created a review sheet for reviewers so time and feedback are specific and is valued. In carrying out this activity, we invited the choice to make track changes on a chapter itself as an easier means to provide feedback.
- Carefully mapped out appropriate reviewers to topics and across experience in academia to support author experience and growth.
- Provided a quick turnaround in initial response from us as editors to a chapter to those who were feeling anxious to reinforce their contribution and support any need for refinement.
- Provided clear and succinct information in a timely manner.
- Contacted the authors as editors to thank them for their contribution before reviews were completed to highlight their contribution, and the impact their lived experience has had on us as editors.
- Shared the process through social media to engage a wider audience and showcase the work being completed.
- Built relationships and trust with each of the authors.
- Kept notes on progress to value contributions and made an effort to not call on authors or reviewers to remind us of work they have completed.

- Supported and mentored early career academics new to the process of writing a book chapter or undertaking reviews for the first time.
- Supported authors and reviewers in moments of stress to negotiate revised timelines.

We consciously share this as part of our learning journey but to also mindfully support others taking on this role in the future. As Williams and Hayler (2016) argue, co-editing a book is about much more than 'administrative tasks and the reading of drafts to bring the collection to publication', rather it is 'a creative and important part of our own development' (p. 152). In ways similar to Williams and Hayler's experience (2016), the process of editing this book provided us with a reflective lens to consider the role of mindfulness in all of our practices as academics, including our role as editors. Engaging with the authors enabled us to learn and grow from their experiences, and we were also able to learn from each other in our work as editors. Sharing the mindful practices, we have employed as editors, enable us to engage in ongoing learning, while also offering an insight for others into the process of co-editing.

17.3 We Do Not Believe in McMindfulness or Uber-Mindful Practices

> Academic practice and an authentic sense of self have converged on some common interpretations of authenticity: namely that the authentic emerges from a sense of self that does not seek to imitate others, is not driven by managerial imperatives or performance evaluations, it is associated with a sense of ontological security and freedom and is understood as a moment of connection between the self and its world. (Cannizzo, 2017, p. 102)

There is no doubt that the current academic is a new 'model' that differs from stereotypical notions of what it meant to be an academic in the past. Talent, output and personal achievements must be presented in a wider array of areas, at the same time, as well as at higher levels (Austin, 2002; Beer et al., 2015; Cranton & Taylor, 2012; Kasworm & Bowles, 2012; Mountz et al., 2015; Pitt & Mewburn, 2016; Ryan, 2013; Wang & Cranton, 2012). The context of universities has changed and continues to change. These changes include who can become students and access higher education degrees; the expectations of students; costing; the growth of internationalisation; management styles; business models; campus locations (including online vs. face-to-face); partnerships the continued and growing problems of casualisation; tenure; the frequency of institutional restructures; the impacts of new technology; community expectations; government interventions and the awareness that higher education is an 'ever changing world' (Austin, 2002, p. 95).

Mindfulness is not a cure to this. It is not an intervention, a program offered through Human Resources (HR) to alleviate stress, nor is it short one day off-site training that is undertaken to 'fix' the problems that exist in contemporary higher education contexts. It does not cure stress alone. It is a not a one size fits all. It is not

a script. It is not to be used in an instrumental way to enable academics to become more productive. It is not about being told to be more mindful, or to meditate so you can display mindful qualities. It is not a microchip that is placed within one's brain that translates into actions, strategies and ways of being. Mindfulness is not just a free pilates class. These things represent an Uber-mindful approach or one that separates the deeply held principles of mindfulness, sometimes called McMindfulness. This is not what mindfulness is. Nor is this what this book is about.

17.4 Mindfulness and Self-awareness

Mindfulness does allow you the space to look at all the aspects mentioned above differently, however, and to look at them with curiosity and openness. Mindfulness is a way of being. It comes from the heart. It comes from an individual. It comes from a way of being and experiencing the world. It develops over time and can look different for different people. It can be an informal practice, formal practice, or a combination of both. According to Purser and Milillo (2015), Buddhist approaches to mindfulness have an ethical stance and involve 'cognitive transformations that dramatically lessen self-centeredness by removing mental afflictions and unhealthy states of mind, while enhancing ethical sensitivity, moral development and an altruistic concern for the welfare of all sentient beings' (p. 19).

Self-awareness is a key to mindfulness. Put 'very simply, one of the first impacts of practicing mindfulness can be the capacity to move out of an aroused, activated, stressed state into a calmer reflective, regulated state' (OpenGround Training and Consulting, 2016, p. 12). The act of being self-aware of the environment, how you are a part of your environment and how you respond is central to being self-aware. Becoming aware of what is happening in one's discipline, faculty or department is a first step to being mindful. Identifying what place, you have, and your role and responses is also key. This may seem like it would be presumed or self-evident, however, this would be a mistake. Self-awareness of the environment, and the reality of that environment, rather than accepting or replicating someone else's version of the environment is often missing in our interactions. If we navigate higher education in a state of stress, approaching experiences as this is happening to one alone, trying to control external circumstances, then experiences will forever unfold in the negative; and in feelings of, for example, frustration, anger, or resentment. Alternatively, if we come at the higher education environment from a stance of curiosity, we open ourselves up to more varied emotions, feelings, and observations that support a way of inquiry, exploring and finding out new ways of being or viewing situations. This promotes a mindfulness.

Sometimes we find ourselves out of balance, in the midst of unravelling, feeling anxious, stressed, pulled in multiple directions in several ways, not because of the work itself, but because we have forgotten to be self-aware of the environment. We have forgotten to be self-aware and to consider what options might be possible in a mindful state. Becoming self-aware of how one wants to engage with the environment

is required in order to navigate those moments when we feel out of kilter with our environment. Self-awareness does not mean, however, that you will not experience negative or challenging feelings, but it does mean that you will be conscious of your own responses and feelings rather than suppressing them. Self-awareness of how one will 'wear' or 'ride the wave' cannot be ignored. 'Mindfulness is about making what you are doing right now the most import thing in the world' (OpenGround Training and Consulting, 2016, p. 6). It is about being present, noticing and being and sitting with feelings of satisfaction, excitement, uneasiness, embarrassment, contentment or uncomfortableness, for example. Mindfulness enables us to become self-aware of our emotional responses and of our interactions with the environment around us. In this book, we have been able to present chapters that shine a light into the ways in which the authors have employed practices and principles of mindfulness that have enabled them to become more self-aware and to mindfully approach their work and interactions with others.

17.5 The Mindful Journey: More Than a One Size Fits All Approach

Just like mindfulness, this chapter is not a one size fits all type of chapter. Actually, this book is not a one size fits all publication either. It is, however, written from a space of compassion and curiosity and in this chapter, we begin to extend the dialogue about what might be possible in applying mindful practices to working in higher education. The book is a collection of chapters that begin to disrupt the conversation of current experiences and perceptions of life in higher education contexts and allows the opportunity for the reader to shed light on different ways of doing things. We hope that this book serves as an inspiration to others and that it begins to move closed-door conversations into open, collegial and collaborative conversations. In this book, we do not solve the systemic problems that exist in higher education as this problem solving cannot be done individually. We write this book from a perspective that encourages us, and readers, to examine how we can look at ourselves as individuals within the environment and how might we disrupt those environments through mindful actions and formal or informal mindfulness practices. Not one author writes from a position of having found a solution, but does, however, share insights, strategies, and approaches that provide possibilities and opportunities for others to explore what mindful practices might look like or be like for others. While we do not offer a one size fits all approach, collectively, however, we may inspire others to work in these ways or consider other possible mindful approaches.

The lived experiences, honesty, openness, curiosity shared through this collection are themselves acts of mindfulness. Each author has written through an inquiry process and the very nature of sharing personal narratives scaffolds this. Richardson (1997) argues that 'writing is a theoretical and practical process' (p. 295) through which we can reveal assumptions, challenge and change existing scripts and 'nurture

our emergent selves' (p. 295). In the process of writing these chapters, some of the authors mention the way the writing process has become an act of mindfulness that has provided them with insights for themselves (for example, Chang; Lemon, this volume)

As we have put together this collection of chapters, mindfulness has been the through line. Lived experiences framed through Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical approach have ignited the sharing of what it is like working in the academy from the perspectives of what is behind, to the side and in front. We have asked the following questions:

(1) What experiences have you encountered that caused you to pause and consider your work in more mindful ways?
(2) What do we do to survive and prosper in academia?
(3) How do you enact mindfulness in your practice as an academic? What are the possibilities of this focus?

While some of the contributors talk about formal mindfulness practices and training and refer explicitly to mindfulness as a practice, others mention informal practices that enable them to be mindful of their work. In doing so, they may not make an explicit connection to the principles or philosophical underpinnings of mindfulness. In this text, we have not judged either of these positionings as wrong or right, as what is evident in the chapters is reflection on and in action towards non-judgmental, compassionate, caring and open experiences. The act of writing these chapters has allowed for a curiosity towards academic identity, and we see the chapters as an invitation to readers to reflect with curiosity on their own practices and their responses to the chapters present within this volume. The chapters illustrate a slowing down and a becoming present in considering place, actions and contributions, with Hassed and Chambers (2014) arguing that the

> … present moment is the only moment that has any legitimate claim to reality. The past and future never actually exist, although in the present we may notice that the mind projects what it imagines the future to be or what it thinks the past was. The residual effects from past thoughts, feelings, actions and decisions may be with us now, but those effects are also only ever observable and experienced in the present moment. (p. 17)

Cannizzo (2017) reminds us that 'academic freedom emerges from one's role in an intellectual institution, passion and authenticity are read as qualities of selfhood' (p. 93). He goes on further to add that 'what is significant about academics' sense of connection to their labour is that it invokes an idea of "freedom" that influences their "self-meanings"' (p. 104). As we navigate through this idea, it is undoubtedly one of the attractions to working as an academic; that is the freedom to explore, express passion and authentically investigate, for example, learning and teaching innovations; or fields of research that are of interest but can also impact others. We all want to make a difference. Our research also informs our teaching, and thus subsequent work across engagement, service and leadership. This is one of the rewarding aspects of working in higher education. It is one of the shining lights for many of us; including us, as editors, with Cannizzo (2017) contending that the 'culture of authenticity

encourages academics (and, arguably, also students) to seek out a personal connection with their labour, creating a source of intrinsic motivation for academic labourers' (p. 103). Despite this, however, Cannizzo (2017) identifies that 'many academics were dissatisfied with the degree to which they could effectively engage in work that they perceived to be valuable' (p. 94), with Lindholm (2008) arguing that 'the main thing is to be sure one's preferences actually do express one's truest desires' (p. 66).

Academic freedom and the ability to write about the work we perceive to be valuable is associated with this book. We are privileged to be able to curate the final product, and as authors we are all are writing from a state of privilege, we have opportunities to reflect and write about the ways we have embedded mindful perspectives and practices in our work. Some of the most profoundly exciting parts of curating an edited book are the conversations that are generated, the dialogue that follows, and the thinking that emerges. We hope this book sparks many more conversations among others as well.

In the next section of this chapter, we invite you to consider the approaches and strategies that each of the authors have presented throughout the text. We have curated these in a way to support considerations and thinking. It is for inspiration and to provide an opportunity for reflection, rather than as an attempt to solve problems. We have intended that presentation of the formal and informal mindful practices illustrated by our authors might function as a tool for reflection, and possibly for the beginning of your own journey into formal or informal mindful practices. In structuring this section of the chapter, we consider seven key approaches: mindfulness is not enough; formal mindfulness practices; informal mindfulness practices; leadership; working with others; health, mind and body; and social networking and digital identity.

17.6 Mindfulness Is not Enough

Pinto and Close's chapter invites us to really think about the place of mindfulness. They tell us mindfulness is not enough in the discussion centering around casualisation in contemporary university contexts. Pinto and Close provide us with much to consider about the structural issues of casualisation as they argue that

> Mindfulness and other contemplative practices can be part of these strategies of care, and we have both drawn on these to help us to cope with our jobs this year. However, we have concluded that even a critical sociological mindfulness is no match for the kind of structural, institutional and managerial frameworks that cause so many of the problems of casualisation. (this volume)

From their standpoint, Pinto and Close encourage us to question:

> *What do we do when mindfulness does not trigger where we can go and what we need to do?*
>
> *What will we put up with?*
>
> *What do we want to change? Can we change this?*

What is the actual trigger point as individuals? What are the blockers or barriers to shifting this?

How can we conceptualise the system we work in?

As Chang argues in her chapter, it is about not being the doormat. She asks the questions:

Can observing non-judgmentally be enough?

Does it shift the anger?

Can it shift the anger?

What is the moment?

Can our experiences and understandings of these changes shift and alter over time as we practice?

As Chang reminds us sinking into numbness or repression of experience would be an unskillful application of a non-judgmental attitude. She goes on to further say

> [b]ringing an attitude of non-judgmental acceptance to formal meditation practice is not a call for passive acceptance or numbness in the rest of one's life. Again, I think of Mattis-Namgyle's (2016) call for us to ask: *What is this moment?'* (para 14). Yes, when we follow this question, we connect with an aspiration to see reality, to see the true causes of our stress. Once seen, action may be required. As a teacher of mine used to say, *the dharma doesn't mean that you become a doormat*. In other words, let's not interpret the dharma to mean that it's okay for people to walk all over us. The distinction here is between how we experience the moment (non-judgmentally), and how we choose to understand and follow through in our actions outside of formal meditation practice. (Chang, this volume)

Juicy!

Makes us think.

Hassed and Chambers (2014) in their book 'Mindful Learning' talk about three areas to work towards enlightenment in regard to the workplace:

1. Be aware and accepting of what we are working on, no matter what we think.
2. Treat others as we would like to be treated, no matter what we think of them.
3. Helping others work towards where we need to get by helping others work toward where they need to get. (p. 262)

These areas are related to self-actualisation, that is finding out about what is real for us as individuals and actualising it (doing something with it, working with it and being enlightened from a perspective of joy and contentment). They are a reminder for how we interpret and move towards mindful practices. Such an approach is underpinned by awareness and openness. From a curious stance, we open ourselves up to connecting with what we are observing. As Bone reinforces in her chapter, 'mindful practice can become a new way of *being* and present a way to think, speak, and act differently while negotiating a demanding role' (this volume).

17.7 Formal Mindfulness Practices

In presenting practices that are more formal in nature, we have focused on mindfulness as framed around the elements outlined by Hassed and Chambers (2014)

- To know where the attention is;
- To prioritise where the attention needs to be; and
- For the attention to go there and stay there. (p. 7)

In thinking about the context of higher education and the chapters presented, there have been a variety of examples shared across different contexts that support the definition of mindfulness itself. Hassed and Chambers' (2014) outline of mindfulness supports the following examples:

- Utilising the sense upon which to train the attention.
- Engaging the mind in the present moment.
- Fostering self-control through non-attachment to transitory experiences such as thoughts, feelings and sensations.
- Encouraging an attitude of openness and acceptance or being non-judgmental about such transitory experiences.
- Cultivating equanimity and stillness by being unmoved by, or less reactive to, moment-to-moment experience. (p. 6)

Formal training in these areas is often positioned around meditation, or mindfulness meditation. It cultivates a present-moment attention and attitude of acceptance (rather than a reactionary response or feeling compelled to react without choice or discernment) of moment-by-moment experiences. In the chapters by Chang; Lemon; Wilson; Binder, Martin and Schwind; Correia and Strehlow; McDonough; and Bone, formal mindful practices are connected across a variety of contexts. Each author shares a variety of experiences that led them to a formal practice. For some, it was stress, for others it was searching for a way to calm the mind and navigate anxious experiences, and for others, it was a natural progression from experiences and influences from childhood and young adulthood.

In finding a formal mindfulness practice many of these authors have mentioned formal training that sparked ongoing practice including:

- Formal sitting meditation.
- Daily practices and rituals, for example, as Chang describes 'I walked between meetings, pebble in hand, tending the anger by watching my breath' (Chang, this volume).
- Mindful movement such as stretching or walking.
- Studying Buddhism and contemplative practices.
- Japanese calligraphy practice.
- Practice with like-minded communities.
- Body and breath meditations.
- Awareness of internal and external stimuli.
- Compassion-based meditations.

- Mindful-Based Stress Reduction—an eight-week program generated by Jon Kabat-Zinn.
- Yoga practice.

17.8 Informal Conversations About Mindfulness

Along with the use of formal mindfulness practices, the authors in the collection have presented descriptions of the ways they have embedded informal practices which have enabled them to be more mindful and intentional in their academic work. We collate some of these in the following section of this chapter.

17.8.1 Self-awareness of Use of Time

In thinking about the churn of academic work not becoming a normalised practice, strategic and mindful use of time needs to be addressed. Becoming self-aware of the use of time is a mindful practice that involves friendly, non-judging, anxiety-reducing, present-moment awareness achieved by purposefully paying attention to things ordinarily overlooked. Clear boundaries and working on strategies to apply these are required to honour both personal time and work time as reiterated by Vigurs; Lemon; McPherson and Lemon; McDonough; Khoo and Fotinatos (this volume).

McDonough (this volume) asks the following leading questions:

- How are we then to bring a mindful focus back to academic practice in order to become more than parts of a machine?
- How do we move from mindlessness and adopt practices that are instead intentional, purposeful and mindful?

She further recommends that 'adopting a mindful approach to practice as an academic offers the possibility of challenging the mindless acceleration and provides us with both the individual and collective hope of reclaiming the authenticity of our work and purpose as academics' (McDonough, this volume). Her practices remind us that the act of multi-tasking does not work and so she:

- Avoids: taking phone calls while driving to schools; catching up on emails during meetings and taking marking and research home to do at night and on the weekends.
- Finds ways to negotiate the multiple demands and stakeholders to be able to undertake projects and work that are aligned with her sense of purpose as an academic.

Similarly, Khoo (this volume) specifically recommends the following strategies to protect her time and boundaries:

- Make my availability known;

- Leave work at a regular time;
- Say ‘no’ a lot more—knowing when there really is not the time to take on new projects;
- Not looking for certain opportunities; and
- Deliberate and mindful choice to not work after hours.

From a collaborative perspective, Lemon (this volume) adopts the following processes:

- Book time into complete tasks that come from a meeting, so you can meet the deadlines, and if you can’t speak up sooner rather than later to support renegotiations;
- Plan ahead of time; and
- Communicate with others how you will work and allow for ongoing conversations about this.

Likewise, McPherson and Lemon (this volume) in their approach to co-writing honour time by:

- Scheduling regular meetings ahead of time;
- Meet face-to-face and discussing the writing, while writing away from each other through shared documents;
- Know that as a collaboration they need to connect and talk ‘life’ as well as the writing, so plan for this during meetings; and
- Negotiate deadlines to align with other tasks.

17.8.2 Holding the Space

Being aware lends itself to finding ways to hold space. In higher education, there are times when we need to be ‘paying attention to what is happening’ (Wells, 2013, p. 7) from the perspective of what we are doing, who we are working with and indeed what we commit ourselves to.

McDonough (this volume) refers to employing a mental post-it note connected to the word ‘no’, which then gives her the space to hold off on replying immediately to requests and to think mindfully about them. In doing this she is:

- Taking this time for contemplation to enable the action of thinking time about new requests rather than mindlessly churning from project to project;
- Reminding herself about not constantly striving for new things; and
- Making mindful and intentional decisions about involvement that are aligned with a sense of purpose as an academic rather than having her attention and focus scattered across a wider range of projects that do not hold meaning.

Khoo (this volume) reminds us that personal time and family commitments change and in holding the space for this she:

- Reconsiders the alignment of work and personal practices;
- Is self-aware of needs; and
- Changes priorities, in a recognition that work or career do not have to be at the top of the list at all times.

Correia and Strehlow extend this further through the facilitating of formal mindfulness practices that support the reconnection to self and to find breathing space, to be mindful of *being*, and to take a break from doing. They share how they hold 'brief meditation sessions sometimes before work or during breaks, as well as with each other and with colleagues, as we seed the possibilities of mindful practice communities' (Correia & Strehlow, this volume). This practice supports the:

- Providing of a space to set, or reset intentions;
- Bringing a mindful awareness to other parts of the day;
- Enacting a mindful posture each time during practice in academic work spaces as a way of developing cues in those spaces to be more mindful; and
- Holding the 'pause' to support the de-escalation of the reactivity that can occur.

17.8.3 Turning Questioning into Curiosity

The political nature of higher education can often present many academics with the tension of experiencing conflicting values and this can lead to a questioning of place. This has been especially illuminated by many of the authors: Is this the place for me? (McDonough); adjusting to my new academic role required considerable sacrifice and patience (Fotinatos); being a FIFO academic (fly in and fly out) accompanied with the role of being a change manager through leadership (Tairi); be the change or leave (Lemon); the pressure to conform (Taylor & Klein); the pressure to 'publish or perish' (McPherson and Lemon); and the pressure to always achieve (Khoo). Morrison describes the external policy pressures that continually drive a need for change; while Pinto and Close acknowledge the issues around holding an ongoing position versus a casual contract, with Chang also discussing how working in higher education presents itself with contracts ending or going missing in the process of sign-off leaving work completed but unpaid. Each of the authors uses these experiences as a prompt for thinking more mindfully about themselves and their work environments.

In the chapters of Lemon; Bone; Pinto and Close; and Chang (this volume), we can identify the shift from moving from questioning to a sense of curiosity where they explore questions of:

What am I noticing? What am I feeling? What is making me uncomfortable?

Morrison (this volume) describes a mindful approach where he:

- Acknowledges the anger and frustrations that can be present in himself and others;
- Works to remain focused on long-term goals to position groups for success; and
- Works hard to develop the capacity to listen to concerns without providing responses and to acknowledge his part in the change process, something he

describes that can at times be 'confronting but immensely beneficial'. (Morrison, this volume).

17.8.4 Humour

The dual experiences of stress and coping in higher education are not uncommon. If the perceived demands are high and our perceived resources are low there is a mismatching of what can be expected and achieved, thus a threat emerges and is perceived. Frydenberg and Lewis (2006) talk about one coping strategy that is identified as neither non-productive or productive—that is, humour or being funny as a diversion. The authors McDonough, and Taylor and Klein (this volume) refer to this in their chapters as a way to mindfully interrupt experiences:

- McDonough uses humour as a form of dialogue and conversation to begin to reclaim the space for discussing academic work and to engage in spaces for resistance; and
- Taylor and Klein tell funny 'self-deprecating stories about ourselves that are not boastful, trying to help others see that we are humans who make mistakes, have sleepless nights, and struggle' (this volume).

17.8.5 Bringing Back Attention to Present and Being Non-judgmental

The situation presented in higher education can often bring a tension point in how to work with others, negotiate deadlines, policy, colleagues and conflicting demands. As Vigurs (this volume) reminds us, there is a need to be aware of playing to others agendas, something that requires us to be aware of our own responses.

Bringing our attention back to the present requires that we are able to notice what is happening in the present moment. Mason (2002) describes the act of noticing as a 'collection of practices, both for living in, and hence learning from, experience and for informing future practice' (p. 29). For Mason (2002), the act of noticing is an intentional stance, where one becomes aware of the present and seeks to notice without judgement. Close describes that she has become open to noticing what is happening in the present moment, writing that 'being mindful has meant stopping to face the reality of my situation. Mindfulness in academia has usually meant trying to manage feelings of insecurity, precarity, deficiency, rejection, and inferiority between a love for engagement based around scholarship' (Pinto & Close, this volume). Similarly, Fotinatos (this volume) talks about

> shifting my attention to positive focused projects (i.e.: reward and recognition projects) helped with changing the mindset into one filled with optimism and positive reflection. It

> was pivotal to accept that the mask and distractions from the actual challenges, could only last for so long.

In each of these examples, we see a focus on the present and an attempt to regard experiences in a non-judgmental rather than a critical or negative way. In order to remain focused on the present rather than caught in thoughts of the past or in future thinking authors suggest:

- Taking permission to pause through 'emotionally charged situations' (Fotinatos, this volume);
- Centering through breath and reflection while focusing attention on key priorities (Fotinatos); and
- 'Re-charge my own light' (Binder, this volume).

The notion of being mindfully present is further illuminated by Correia and Strehlow through their focus on how the work with others and within the higher education space can be engaged with through mindful awareness. They describe how in the middle of a meeting or work with students that they bring:

> attention to the present moment to notice when our attention has drifted away, or to become aware that we or others are responding reactively with stress to a trigger. It means, in the moment, consciously and intentionally bringing our attention back to being present and listening, cultivating an attitude of non-judgmental acceptance of ourselves and others, to reset our intention and act accordingly. This may also mean that we acknowledge and accept the moments when we have acted counter to our intentions and values. (Correia & Strehlow, this volume)

Across the range of chapters presented in this volume, authors have identified a range of informal practices that support a growing self-awareness that is at the heart of their mindful approach to their work and to their interactions with others. In the next section of this chapter, we consider the role of leadership from a mindful perspective.

17.9 Leadership

Sharing the journey of mindful practices has been a form of enlightenment for many of the authors, and while some hold formal leadership positions, for others they are informally leading conversations with others around the concepts of mindfulness. McDonough shared how having conversations with other about her approach to mindfully consider tasks and projects have sparked interest and action in others, while Fotinatos shared that being present with her mindfulness journey has enabled open dialogue amongst her team.

Through mindful leadership in their formal roles both Fotinatos and Tairi have reinforced that through this action there has been a curiosity that supports:

- Colleagues seeking advice and guidance;
- Requests for support resources;

- Open and honest discussions that humanise the personal challenges of leadership;
- Embedded and authentic academic and professional support mindful strategies;
- Use of short reflection writing to manage intense periods of challenge and revisit thoughts in a week and re-evaluate its importance; and
- Establishment of boundaries to complete work.

In this process, reflection and acknowledging the act of being present has scaffolded the dissemination of learnt lessons with peers in similar positional roles. This has supported a re-conceptualisation of traditional leadership behaviour within a reflective awareness model which is open, expansive and not-judgmental. The experiences shared in these chapters suggest possibilities for the potential of a mindful approach to leadership and for leaders to engage in open dialogue about the vulnerabilities, possibilities and opportunities of leadership.

17.10 Working with Others

One of the other key practices described across the range of chapters is the way that authors work with others. In this section of the chapter, we present a range of strategies, drawn from the collection, that consider ways to be mindful in: collaboration and relationships competitiveness; and working with students.

17.10.1 Collaboration and Relationships

Building relationships and connecting have been a strong through-line throughout many of the chapters. As Binder, Martin and Schwind share '[o]ur collaboration and the continuing network of like-minded professionals we have encountered contributes to stability in challenging situations' (this volume). Many authors in the chapter consider the ways in which they can be intentional and mindful in their collaborations with others with Lemon approaching collaborations by thinking about her own contribution and how she can learn from others. She presents guiding reflective questions that underpin actions of:

- Being present;
- Self-awareness of levels of commitment;
- Listening non-judgmentally;
- Building relationships;
- Learning how you can best utilise time together;
- Mutual respect;
- Flow;
- Connect, breathe and smile;
- Booking yourself in for time to complete the tasks associated with the collaboration;

- Setting clear boundaries which includes clear roles and responsibilities, and time frame;
- Always learning and being curious;
- Learning who you can collaborate with;
- Developing plans that excite you;
- Care—of self and others; and
- Having an exit plan.

Modelling what successful collaborations can look like is addressed by Taylor and Klein as they reflect on what it looks like to honour the person and the professional across all collaborative interactions. They enact:

- Growth through empathy, listening, and through giving back to one another;
- The nurturing of each other's intellectual and emotional needs; and
- Continual encouragement.

Positive relationships fuel connections and friendship in higher education, and Pinto and Close acknowledge that '[a]cademic networks are important both as systems of support and sustenance, and as opportunities for employment' (this volume). They enact actions as follows:

- Listening;
- Showing empathy and gratitude when trying to understand others' experiences;
- Making space for their voices, both individually and collectively;
- Being careful about the work that is passed along to colleagues;
- Not making promises of work that they cannot honour; and
- Providing help with applications, networking, and strategising.

Likewise, McPherson and Lemon illuminate how their co-writing collaboration is underpinned by curiosity and the act of making. They refer to mindful acts of being:

- Present in each other's company and with the co-writing process;
- Having a genuine curiosity to the research and the writing they are working on at the time;
- Compassion and honesty;
- Energised by the work and each other;
- Maintaining communication with each other in a variety of formats;
- Open to thinking, processing and being with the making and creative process away from writing;
- Helpful to each other in other areas outside the co-writing process;
- Knowing when to give each other space;
- Open to learning new things and being pushed with their thinking;
- Able to set realistic goals;
- Able to publish on their own agenda; and
- Curious about the co-writing process and sharing this with others.

In each of these approaches to relationships it is possible to identify a mindful approach to developing and sustaining relationships. The ethical stance of mindfulness to improve the conditions of others is also reflected in the spirit of reciprocity that is reflected in the strategies used by authors. This spirit of generosity and reciprocity is at odds with the competitive higher education environment.

17.10.2 Competitiveness

In the environment of higher education, competitiveness is ever present and many of the authors share insights into how they have approached this mindfully. Noticing and labelling when they identify competition has enabled them to be self-aware, present and view experiences through a non-judgmental lens while building collaborative relationships. Binder, Martin and Schwind describe:

> Finding like-minded colleagues, who share similar philosophical perspectives is like raindrops on a flat surface, coalescing with one another until they create a larger puddle, a more significant body of water. That is how we survive and how we thrive … supporting one another through the challenges and demands of academic life. (this volume)

The concept of finding colleagues who you trust and with who you share similar goals and values is also represented in the work of McDonough, who writes that

> In seeking to adopt a more mindful approach to academic work that enables me to be intentional about the work I do, the projects I undertake and the people I collaborate with I try and model mindful practices in my interactions with others, including colleagues and students. (this volume)

Similarly, Khoo who describes 'I have established practices and collegial expectations that afford me a large measure of confidence in doing my work well, within the boundaries I've set' (this volume). Fotinatos, too, writes of working 'with like-minded colleagues who have similar invested interests in reaching target goals and aspirations' (this volume). Being mindful of the goals and motivations of others is described by authors as a key to enabling them to develop positive and collegial, rather than competitive relationships.

17.10.3 Working with Students

Relationships with students of higher education is just as vital as those with our colleagues. Bone reminds us that 'by practising mindfulness in action I can influence the learning of others' (this volume) and many of the authors in the collection consider the role they can play in modelling mindful practices for their student (see for example: Bone; Binder, Martin, & Schwind; and Correia & Strehlow, this volume). In considering ways to adopt more mindful interactions with students' authors describe:

- The ways in which we as teachers can attempt to help students connect meaningfully with the course material. Curiosity is based on how do I do that thoughtfully, sensitively and with respect for each student and their experiences? How can we think about the stories of others, and about our own stories? How do we understand the dynamic of empathic connection?
- Develop trust as an essential component in creating a safe, respectful and mindful learning environment for students, particularly in those courses that explore sensitive topics.
- How to be open to moving with the students through the learning process with creativity and compassion while modelling approaches that reflect the care and the mindful practice of child and youth care work.
- At the beginning of this semester resist the easy pathway and reflect on what that might look like. It is easy, after teaching for a while, to recycle lecture notes and PowerPoint slides and to simply perform the role of lecturer without bringing passion or meaning to the role.
- Establish a clear approach that values wellbeing, taking a considered, mindful and care/ful approach, and being aware of the classroom as a microcosm of a future workplace was especially relevant to the unit I was teaching.
- Reflect upon own long-term practice of yoga as a way to approach working with students and to take a calm and middle pathway that fits the yogic tradition. Yoga is a balance between effort and ease. From this perspective, the pedagogical decision making would not be about easy/difficult dualisms but would be centered and balanced.
- Maintain the underlying scientific principles of mindfulness, but flexibly adapted the form of delivery to enhance cultural sensitivity, such as mindful walking, that promote a mindfulness mindset. This recognises the capacity of each student to practice mindfulness in a way that may enhance psychological skills in attention and awareness that may be of benefit to their study but also cultivates a socio-emotional context in which cultural heritage is respected.
- Support the learning and application of mindfulness by reflective practice in students about how mindfulness is relevant to their learning in the unit and the program, and for their own personal and life growth.

17.11 Health, Mind and Body: Care of Self and Others

In adopting more mindful practices, the scholars represented in this collection have identified the ways they engage in acts of self-care, along with care for others. Self-care in the higher education context is often a dirty word; that is something we don't talk about, it is something extra, often dropped in the fast-paced nature of work requirements (Berg & Seeber, 2016). Self- care is worthy of our attention, and mindfulness creates an awareness around this, with many of the authors talking about this concept throughout the book. Fotinatos describes that 'looking after oneself has implications for the challenges on personal health, wellbeing and team/service effec-

tiveness… [there is a need to] identify my current thought patterns' (this volume) while Tairi (this volume) highlights the personal sacrifices that can be made in pursuing career opportunities. Pinto and Close position self-care from the perspective of being staff 'on both sides of the divide' and that they both 'experience very high levels of stress and anxiety associated with their jobs' (this volume); demonstrate an awareness of the need for those in higher education to be aware of and care for others. Binder, Martin and Schwind remind us that '[a]s academics we are also seeking collegial support, a sense of belonging, and a safe place within the context of the institution to express ourselves openly and honestly—to share our vulnerabilities—to feel cared about' (this volume).

Looking after the mind, body and soul and taking time to celebrate the good in our experiences as academics is reflected in the mindful practices of authors. Taylor and Klein describe the embedding of practices that have helped them work through the strains and tensions that include:

- Encouraging each other 'to find spaces for our needs as humans in a world where constant work is the norm' (Taylor & Klein, this volume);
- Support each other in efforts to turn off email;
- Rotating the taking of vacations; and
- Working from home in a space that is nurturing.

Making time for care of self and of others is reflected in the chapters of Bone, and Lemon respectively (this volume), as they write about the power of connections. They refer to the power of:

- The smile;
- Getting to know your colleagues and students; and
- Listening and appreciating without judgement.

Similarly, McPherson and Lemon (this volume) share that they celebrate their collaboration and connection through:

- Sharing creative endeavours and new skills;
- The making process; and
- Discussing writing over coffee or a cup of tea in a cafe.

A number of authors (Bone; Chang; Lemon; McDonough; Taylor & Klein; Wilson, this volume) describe engaging in physical movement, including dance, walking, running or yoga as a means of being self-aware of the need to care for self. They identify the way movement enables a care for both the physical and emotional self. Fotinatos (this volume) describes

- Resetting positive sleeping habits;
- Making improvements in my eating routine;
- Introducing accountable routine exercise patterns;
- Increasing purposeful family and friend social interactions and activities;
- Seeking professional support and advice from a combination of medical, personal relationship and employee assisted program counselling; and

- Extending my professional learning with specific mental health training, situational leadership theory, mindful leadership practice, and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

She goes on to describe the ways that these mindful practices for self-care have enabled her to introduce improved workplace changes such as:

- Setting clear boundaries between my work and personal life;
- Expanding delegation and decision making with trusted members of my team;
- The incorporation of several mindfulness strategies into daily work habits including setting and focusing on one key task at specific times and days and reduced the volume of busy/unproductive work;
- Walking and developing an increased appreciation of silence and sounds of nature; and
- Increased engagement and awareness of staff conversations, meetings and key discussions.

Bringing the body back into focus has been a mindful self-care focus for McDonough, rather than detaching from the body and being in our 'heads' all the time. In mindless academia, McDonough contends:

> the body is forgotten about, ignored and treated badly; bodies sit hunched over desks, heads are bowed over books, lunch is quickly eaten on the run, breathing is hurried and any feelings of disquiet that the body might seek to send are ignored. (this volume)

Bringing the attention back to the body involves approaches such as:

- A mindful attention on the body and on the breath;
- Ensuring regular breaks from a desk, eating lunch with colleagues or outside in the sunshine and implementing at least 10 min of mindfulness meditation practice; and
- Being present and remaining connected to how she is feeling and what she is noticing about herself.

The mindful attention of being engaged in creative pursuits is represented in the work of Binder, Martin, & Schwind and in that of McPherson and Lemon.

A self-care strategy described by many of the authors is the finding of places that support mindful restorative practices. For some, this is being in nature (Binder, Martin, & Scwhind; McDonough, this volume), while for others it is through participating in yoga (Bone; Lemon; Wilson, this volume) or creative pursuits such as printmaking or craft (McPherson & Lemon, this volume).

For Taylor and Klein part of their focus on self is the attention they give to their appearance and they articulate how this is a conscious, intentional practice:

> [w]e have a reputation for wearing fierce fashion and in many ways this is our armor. We dress to the nines, disrupting the frumpiness more common of academia, and of academic women in specific – who are often urged to tamp down on their female expression. Since we have been told that our collaboration can at times intimidate, we assert ourselves through our clothing, shoes, makeup, and accessories. This is also a way for us to flaunt our womanhood with pride. Our students and university colleagues often comment about how we dress,

> remarking that they never see us in jeans, are impressed with the height of our heels, or even situate us in a fashion magazine. We are conscious of how we are perceived and therefore take care in the way we look. We each have our own unique style but we dress the way we engage in the world: boldly, taking risks with new trends, and often without fear. (this volume)

17.12 Social Networking and Digital Identity: Wider Emotional Support

As we construct our identities within the academy, there is an outward way of being that both Vigurs, and Tairi (this volume) talk about in each of their chapters, positioned around mindfully engaging with social media and the construction of their social networks. Vigurs shares her use as a 'means of being more mindful about the role of research and scholarship in the ongoing construction of my academic identity' (this volume) that she continually navigates and negotiates as a means to support her research work and identity as a researcher.

According to Vigurs (this volume) mindfully being on social media offers the possibility of:

- A sense of academic community that enables mindful interaction and the ability to evaluate how social media interaction supports the complex cognitive and emotional demands of working in higher education; and
- Being part of a network that can lead to more fluid, dynamic and creative working practices that can often be achieved in a bureaucratic, hierarchical organisation.

17.12.1 Create Your Own Approach to Professional Learning

In connecting to the possibilities of social media use in academia, Vigurs shares in her chapter how she 'join[ed] Twitter as a step towards activating wider, external networks in these fields was my way of attempting to disrupt the anxiety I was increasingly experiencing due to cultures of micro-management and managerial panic' (this volume). Both Tairi and Vigurs highlight many tips that support this approach as they build their own online network for professional learning:

- Using Twitter daily to be more mindful about research and scholarship as a core part of professional identity;
- Following a range of people to learn how Twitter could be used for learning and how to curate it;
- How to build reciprocity and durability through Twitter, through 'liking' tweets;
- Sharing of resources and moral support;
- Sharing content and experiences to contribute to the demystification of research in academia;

- Development of genuine, reciprocal relationships with researchers from different disciplines; and
- Developing an openness to online relationships becoming professional in real life. Vigurs further reiterates that some social media platforms such as Instagram can be: 'a space where I can currently share more of the back stage and off stage parts of my life, rather than focusing solely on what front stage (my academic identity) looks like. It allows a more holistic representation of myself across my different identities' (this volume).

17.12.2 Warning: Mindful Use of Social Media

In mindfully acknowledging the benefits of being connected digitally, Vigurs; Tairi; and McDonough (this volume) all mention the need to be present about boundary setting. Vigurs reminds us that there can be a spiralling into 'never switching off, always being connected—potentially further exacerbating academics' levels of stress and pressure' (this volume). Her strategies to approach this include:

- Deleting Twitter and Facebook apps during holiday periods;
- Taking a break from social networks;
- Reviewing if social media platform interaction is still mindful in nature; and
- Identifying clear boundaries for time spent on apps.

McDonough, in particular, highlights how she addresses 'turning off the connectivity monster', and does this by being aware of:

- Being connected constantly;
- Avoiding checking in and responding immediately to emails from students and colleagues;
- Taking time to think carefully about as by rushing to respond we dismantle the opportunities for quiet contemplation of challenging issues; and
- Making an intentional effort to not check email after 5.30 pm or on the weekends.

17.13 Conclusion

Living and working within higher education environments is complex and challenging, but as the authors in this collection have highlighted, it is possible to carve out the space for mindful and contemplative practices and philosophies. In this chapter, we have highlighted a range of areas in which scholars across disciplines and roles have embedded mindful practices in their work. We hope that in reading this chapter and the volume as a whole, you too may be inspired to consider the ways in which your own mindful practices might be reflected on these pages. You may be familiar with some of them, or you may be starting at the beginning of a mindfulness journey, but no matter the starting point, we invite you into a dialogue with others, to

consider how mindfulness in the academy might enable us to all be more humane, kind and compassionate; while considering how our actions might also lead to the development of more mindful systems and organisations.

References

Austin, A. E. (2002). Preparing the next generation of faculty. *The Journal of Higher Education, 73*(1), 94–122.

Beer, L. E., Rodriguez, K., Taylor, C., Martinez-Jones, N., Griffin, J., Smith, T. R., Lamar, M., & Anaya, R. (2015). Awareness, Integration and Interconnectedness. *Journal of Transformative Education, 13*(2), 161–185.

Berg, M., & Seeber, B. K. (2016). *The slow professor: Challenging the culture of speed in the academy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Cannizzo, F. (2017). 'You've got to love what you do': Academic labour in a culture of authenticity. *The Sociological Review, 66*(1), 91–106.

Cranton, P., & Taylor, E. W. (2012). Transformative learning theory: Seeking a more unified theory. In E. W. Taylor & P. Cranton (Eds.), *The handbook of transformative learning* (pp. 3–20). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Frydenberg, E., & Lewis, R. (2006). *Coping Scale for Adults: Second Edition (CSA-2).* Retrieved from https://www.acer.org/files/coping-scale-for-adults-2-long-form-kylie-sample.pdf.

Goffman, E. (1959). *Presentation of self in everyday life*. New York: An Anchor Book.

Hassed, C., & Chambers, R. (2014). *Mindful learning: Reduce stress and improve brain performance for effective learning*. Wollombi, NSW, Australia: Exisle Publishing.

Kasworm, C., & Bowles, T. (2012). Fostering transformative learning in higher education settings. In E. Taylor & P. Cranton (Eds.), *The handbook of transformative learning* (pp. 388–407). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Lindholm, C. (2008). *Culture and authenticity*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing.

Mason, J. (2002). *Researching your own practice: The discipline of noticing*. London: Routledge.

Mountz, A., Bonds, A., Mansfield, B., Loyd, J., Hyndman, J., & Watton-Roberts, M. (2015). For slow scholarship: A feminist politics of resistance through collective action in the neoliberal university. *ACME: An International E-Journal of Critical Geographies*, *14*(4), 1235–1259.

OpenGround Training and Consulting. (2016). *Mindfulness based stress reduction: A resilience training coursebook*. Bondi Junction, NSW: OpenGround Training and Consulting.

Pitt, R., & Mewburn, I. (2016). Academic superheroes? A critical analysis of academic job descriptions. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, 38*(1), 88–101.

Purser, R. E., & Milillo, J. (2015). Mindfulness revisited: A Buddhist-based conceptualization. *Journal of Management Inquiry, 24*(1), 3–24.

Richardson, L. (1997). Skirting a pleated life: De-Disciplining an academic life. *Qualitative Inquiry, 3*(3), 295–303.

Ryan, M. (2013). The pedagogical balancing act: Teaching reflection in higher education. *Teaching in Higher Education, 18,* 144–155.

Wang, V. C., & Cranton, P. (2012). Promoting and implementing Self-Directed Learning (SDL): An effective adult education model. *International Journal of Adult Vocational Education and Technology (IJAVET), 3,* 16–25.

Wells, C. M. (2013). Mindfulness in academia: Considerations for administrative preparation. *Education Leadership Review, 14*(3), 1–11.

Williams, J., & Hayler, M. (2016). Professional learning from the process of co-editing journeys of becoming. In D. Garbett & A. Ovens (Eds.), *Enacting self-study as a methodology for professional inquiry* (pp. 147–153). Herstmonceux, UK: S-STEP.

Narelle Lemon (D.Ed., M.Ed., B.Mus., B.Teach., Dip.Man.) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Education, Faculty of Health, Arts and Design. Narelle's overarching research area is focused on participation and engagement. She explores this through a variety of avenues including social media use for learning and professional development, creativity and arts education, and positive psychology specifically aimed at mindful practice and coping strategies. She engages with creative pedagogies, visual narrative and narrative inquiry to investigate lived experiences. She has received over $1.2 million worth of nationally competitive grants and awards. She has been successfully awarded research awards including La Trobe University Mid Career Researcher Excellence Award (2016); La Trobe University Early Career Researcher Excellence Award (2013); Early Career Supervisor with Most Publications Award within the School of Education, RMIT University (2012) and Early Career Researcher International Travel Award from RMIT Research and Innovation (2012). She is often invited as an expert speaker and commentator in the media and for online communities on research culture and education issues. She blogs at *Chat with Rellypops*, Tweets as @*Rellypops* and @*MindfulAcademic* and curates an online project to promote stories of how creativity and mindfulness are applied to people's lives from various disciplines in the community on Instagram through @*exploreandcreateco*.

Sharon McDonough Ph.D., is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Education at the Mt. Helen campus of Federation University Australia. Sharon has a commitment to working closely with schools and researches learning and teaching in school and university contexts. Her research interests are in initial teacher education, teacher emotion and resilience and mentoring. She is a member of the Australian Teacher Education Association (ATEA) executive where she has held the ECR/HDR portfolio since 2015. She is interested in the use of social media in academic work, tweets as @Sharon_McD and is the Australian host of the online virtual writing group @SUWTues (https://suwtuesdays.wordpress.com/).