**Practical Tips for School Leaders – #47**          **October 29, 2020**

## *Embrace Your Humanness*

I have had the opportunity to visit with a number of school Principals over the past couple of weeks and listen to them dialog about their practice.  Though each of these conversations has been unique, at the heart of each one was the importance of building trust through developing strong relationships with everyone in the building.  Each Principal expressed their commitment to making a positive difference every day in the lives of the people they serve.

They shared the strain on teachers this year due to new demands and changing environments.  In many schools teachers are teaching distance learning with brick and mortar students.  Each one of them expressed their desire to be the front-line problem solver so the stress of uncertainty could be relieved for others.

The purpose of these conversations was for them to discuss some of the problem solving and decision-making processes they had used this fall to make sure school year 2020-2021 began smoothly.  They identified a variety of items that had been addressed and the various people they had involved to guarantee different perspectives were considered.  These Principals are collaborative leaders and believe in the strength of the team process.  They stated they didn't need to be perfect, yet they needed to confidently tackle the myriad of daily challenges head on.  The Principals I listened to think of themselves as facilitators of processes to help the people in their schools achieve common goals and results.

I read George Couros, *The Innovator's Mindset*, Leadership blog and couldn't help but see a striking resemblance to the words I heard from the principals in the quote below:

"We don't have to be perfect to make a difference. We need to care deeply about our words, and we need to embrace our humanness." – Meghan Lawson, October 2020

School leaders are charged with assembling the best staff, using the best practices within the best system to nurture and help all stakeholders reach their goals.  How do leaders model humanness?  By caring about the health and safety of self and others, promoting open, rich communication, and proactively solving issues within a culture of positivity and responsiveness.

Are you taking care of yourself so you can be what others who depend on you need? If not, what are some minor changes you can make to embrace your 'humanness'?