Reviews

Daniel J. Siegel, Tina Payne Bryson

The Power of Showing up

Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Mamania, 2020, p. 287

I reached for this book for two reasons. First of all, because of the issues raised in it, which I have been interested in for several years, among others, the theory of the bond. Secondly, I was encouraged to do so by the interesting cover showing a large yellow umbrella protecting two pairs of yellow rubber boots, belonging to an adult and a child, from the rain, which correlated with the title of the book and became a kind of metaphor for protecting a child from life's hardships and obstacles.

The presented publication consists of a greeting, six extensive chapters, a summary, a refrigerator card, thanks and notes about the authors. Daniel J. Seigel is a Professor of Clinical Psychiatry at the University of California, Los Angeles, and director of the Mindsight Institute. Tina Payne Bryson, on the other hand, is a psychotherapist, founder and director of the Center for Connection and the Play Strong Institute. The book is the fourth publication from these authors on our publishing market, previously the following titles were published: *The Whole-Brain Child* (2013), *No-Drama Discipline* (2015) and *The Yes Brain.* (2018). In my opinion, the reviewed item belongs to the parental guidebooks category. This is supported by its design and direct address to the reader as a parent, although the authors reserve that they also address it to teachers, specialists and all professionals working with parents (p. 38). There is an impression that the authors assume that this group of recipients is already familiar with the role of a parent. As a result, a professional, being a childless person, may feel a slight discomfort, getting acquainted with its contents directed to the parent.

In my opinion, the detailed discussion of the content of the six chapters of the book, as it is usually the case in a classic scientific review, is not

relevant. Thus, I will try to refer to a few issues raised in the publication, which are closely connected and permeate each other, i.e. styles of attachment and four pillars of presence (*showing up*). In their book, the authors stress many times how important it is for a parent to behave and show emotional support in a manner that is predictable (i.e. stable) from a child's perspective (even if it is not ideal) and systematic, which consists of the so-called four pillars of "parental presence", through which a child will feel: 1) *safe*; 2) *seen*; 3) *soothed*; 4) *secure*. One chapter has been devoted to each of these pillars. Each of them contains strategies supporting the above-mentioned pillars. They have a huge impact on the formation of the brain structure of the child and a safe attachment style. Therefore, the presence of a parent with the child is a means of helping them to achieve the goal of a safe style of attachment (p. 27). The understanding of these four concepts is actually the content of the whole book, and achieving one pillar is important for achieving the next, which does not mean that achieving a given level is a kind of constant. As the authors themselves point out, this is not possible, as there is simply no ideal upbringing. However, the authors have a positive idea and belief that everything can be fixed. They note that although conflict is unavoidable in a relationship with both a child and a partner – it is important to repair this fractured relationship every time, as it is essential for optimal, healthy child development (p. 16). From the information contained in the book it seems obvious that it is important for a child's sense of safety (first pillar) to feel protected from physical, emotional and relational harm. Above all, children must be convinced that their parents, even if they fail in this field, will fix it as soon as possible. The issue of repairing a relationship by a parent seems to me to be crucial for emotionally unstable or immature parents. In my opinion, this issue should also be raised more often during parental (educational) skills workshops. In my pedagogical practice I have heard several times that a parent takes offence at their child, does something out of spite, is cold to them or ignores them. Parents justify their own behaviors by the child's disobedience, while at the same time forgetting about the autonomy of the child and the fact that, being a child, they are only learning to communicate their needs and, above all, that in this relationship – they, nobody else – play the role of the parent, i.e. an adult who becomes a kind of role model. If they fight the child, enforce obedience through screaming, even though the intended goal may be reached, this will discourage the child from sharing their experiences in the long run. It is then probable that a non-safety attachment pattern will develop. In an emergency, a child who is in the right relationship trusts their parents when it comes to them.

So the main task of parents is to protect children from harm. They should take particular care that they themselves are not a source of fear and terror (p. 107). While discussing the issues of child safety, the authors also discussed the problem of overprotection. And rightly so. My teaching practice shows that I increasingly often work with overprotective parents (whose attitude hides hidden fears). This can actually be seen from the first grade of primary school, e.g. when parents prepare competition works for their child, etc. They do not realize, however, that in this way they are giving them a clear signal that the child cannot do it on their own, that they do not believe in their skills and competences, etc. Parents who want to have a mentally resilient child should allow it to fail, to learn that it is not always possible to succeed despite great efforts. Overcoming obstacles also shapes the strength of their character (Muszyński, 1987, p. 55–56). It is important to be by the child's side when they experience it. This does not mean that the child has to do something that exceeds their capabilities. Of course, there are situations that exceed the psychophysical capabilities of the child (e.g. violence from older pupils), then the parent should even intervene to protect them.

Seeing a child as the second pillar means both the physical presence of the parents (e.g. coming to plays, concerts, playing and reading together, etc.) and the emotional and relational fine-tuning of the parent to the child. Other authors sometimes refer to it as attention (Gerhardt, 2018; Gibson, 2018; Sutherland, 2019). It is a skill that requires a great deal of sensitivity, empathy and focus in order to notice what is happening to the child both in their mind and under the mask of behaviors. The parent who is endowed with it draws attention to both the happy and sad moments in the child's life. Fine-tuning consists in systematically enjoying successes and being sad together with the child when they suffer or fail (p. 23).

The third pillar is to soothe the child in the most difficult moments of their life. This does not mean that parents are able to protect their child from any discomfort or pain (although they certainly want to), such as conflict with a friend. However, it is important that children, experiencing these difficult moments, are aware that they do not have to suffer alone. The parents' task is not to prevent their child from experiencing difficulties or failures, but to equip their child with the right tools and emotional resilience to cope with difficult moments. It is the parents' responsibility to go through these difficult moments with them.

So, if *the child feels safe, seen and soothed, they will feel secure* (p. 26) – which is the fourth pillar, based on the predictability of the parent's reactions, behaviors and demeanor. A child with a sense of inner security believes that

their parents will always stand firmly behind them and support them when the need arises. Parents will be a safe base to which they can always turn for help.

What is important is that at least one of the parents is fine-tuned and present. Then a safe style of attachment can be created, thanks to which, when moving about in the world, the child will be psychologically resilient, emotionally mature (i.e. they will be able to regulate their emotions and body) and self-aware (i.e. they will have insight into their own mind and conduct). A positive experience of one parent's presence can sometimes offset the harmful effects of the other parent (e.g.: fits of anger).

However, you may ask yourself: Is it possible for a parent who themselves had emotionally immature parents (Gibson, 2018) to create a safe haven with their child? In the publication we will find not so much an answer as an indication of how this can be achieved. A necessary condition is to recognize one's own style of attachment (probably based on Bartholomew and Horowitz's classification). To this end, the authors discuss and describe them with examples. This recognition can be made by thinking about one's own story (through self-therapy) in order to create a "coherent story" about one's past. This is necessary so that the negative experiences of childhood do not decide and define the parent and so that the parent does not continue this style of attachment in relations with their children. Only such parents, according to the authors, can provide so-called "parental presence". Thanks to the relationship established with the therapist, one can work through loss or trauma, and even find meaning in the history of our lives (so-called post-traumatic growth). Understanding one's own negative experiences, but also those of one's parents, leads to acceptance and forgiveness, which is a liberating experience and a break with the current cycle. This way, even parents with experiences of non-safe attachment styles can create a safe bond with their children.

The authors refer in their publication to the well-known scientific theory of attachment (Bowlby, 1969 Quoted from: 2007), attachment styles (Ainsworth, 1985; Main, Solomon, 1990), classification of attachment patterns in adults (Bartholomew, Horowitz, 1991), but also to interpersonal neurobiology and the concept of neuropathy. Unfortunately, the whole book does not mention the authors of the above mentioned concept, which I consider quite a big shortcoming. All the more so because they are the basis for the authors' concept of four pillars of parental presence. Moreover, a reader who is not familiar with these theories and concepts may have the impression that both the theory of bond, styles of attachment and its patterns are identical. Throughout the book, the authors repeatedly refer to scientific research, but here too there are no specific names or research centers. In my opinion, the

authors refer to scientific sources too vaguely (e.g. *research has shown that if we see what is happening in the mind of our child, they will also learn to notice what is happening in their mind* (p. 23); *research results are quite clear here: we should develop emotional and social intelligence through relations based on a secure bond* (p. 56); *research shows that cases of violence, neglect and other negative experiences of childhood causing fear are more frequent than most people think* (p. 99); *To tell the truth, research shows that the opposite is true* (p. 253); *Research shows that if a child feels safe* (p. 255), *but based on research and experience we believe that parents are able to maintain authority* (p. 256), etc.) There is also no bibliography. Perhaps I underappreciate the knowledge of parents here, but I assume that the average reader, including the parent, does not necessarily have to have such an understanding (and does not have to). I think it is a kind of ignorance. This seems particularly important to me, since the authors themselves stress that this book can serve as an introduction to their earlier publications (p. 12). Perhaps they assumed that they do not want to overwhelm the reader with scientific content. However, they are not consistent in this as they refer to Peter Fongey, the creator of the term "epistemic trust" (p. 77), as well as to details of research on early trauma, i.e. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) (p. 109), or the educational activities of the Circle of Security International (COS) and the published publication on the circle of safety (p. 251). Another shortcoming of the book is that it contains many repetitions – we read about the same thing in several places. It seems that the content is presented quite chaotically.

To sum up, most of the information cited in the book about the advantages of a safe attachment style and the consequences of non-safe attachment styles is not innovative for those interested in the subject. However, the value of the publication is that it is described in detail, which fosters the creation of a safe style of attachment, as well as the presentation of several strategies for the creation of the four pillars of attachment presented in a synthetic summary at the end of the publication in the so-called refrigerator card (pp. 282–283). Undoubtedly, this book draws attention to the essence of communication and its improvement, the responsibility of a parent for the relationship with a child. It stresses that they are obliged to repair it if it is fractured or breached. And my professional experience shows that it still makes sense to promote such knowledge among parents.

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Reviews

Elżbieta Lisowska

Professional condition of teachers. In search of an effective prophylaxis for professional burnout

Oficyna Wydawnicza "Impuls", Kraków 2018, p. 273

In Elżbieta Lisowska's reviewed work, the first sentence opening the reviewed monograph announces that we will be dealing with an interesting and thought-provoking book. The author undertook the difficult task of arranging and refining the methodology of diagnostic procedures aimed at identifying the professional threat to teachers that professional burnout is. The main goal undertaken by the author was to describe the fullest possible diagnosis, which had not only a selection and qualification function, but what is more important – interventional, closely connected with the pedagogue's practical activity. The task that Elżbieta Lisowska set herself was not easy, just as the phenomenon of professional burnout is not easy. The recognition of this phenomenon is not and cannot be an intuitive process based on common, non-scientific knowledge, nor is it an independent activity – it is subject to strict rules of research procedure.

The psycho-social evolution of the teaching staff in the course of their work is determined by the ever-new expectations of the founding bodies, the management, parents and at the same time existential uncertainty. The general professional situation of a teacher aims at creating new premises for negative phenomena in the teaching community. In this respect psychology, work psychology and pedagogy have two functions: cognitive (diagnostic) and practical (preventive and prophylactic). The former is made possible by conducting basic research, the latter is implemented by developing conclusions and recommendations from practical research. The book proposed to the audience – psychologists, labor psychologists, educators and teachers – by Elżbieta Lisowska is an example of a dissertation on the latter trend and the

function of humanities and social sciences, including upbringing. Pedeutological diagnostics serves primarily to understand the adult teacher, to intervene more effectively, to change them and their immediate environment. This is only possible through diagnostics carried out in accordance with methodological, professional and ethical standards.

The book under review has a model structure. Starting from the theoretical basis, it aims to show the professional burnout in its three dimensions: emotional burnout, depersonalization and lack of sense of achievement, and finally it talks about elements of prevention and prophylaxis.

The first chapter is an erudite presentation of findings in pedeutology and psychology of labor. It is apparent that the author feels phenomenal in this issue. We receive a rich introduction to the issue of competence. It must be admitted that in the current literature, people writing about teachers rarely leave this area. Then we can read about the different concepts of teaching. The last part of this chapter deals with the professional condition of teachers. In this section we can read about the burning out of teachers, we get acquainted with comprehensive typologies of professional stressors. We learn about the psychosocial factors of teachers' professional stress. In the latter part we can read about fitting in vs. not fitting in to the teaching environment and burnout vs. engagement. This chapter closes with a reflection on the stages, scenarios and types of professional burn-out of teachers. Rich is the chapter and very important. A big thumbs up for that description.

Chapter two is a classic introduction to the methodological assumptions of own research. She has set three research goals for herself. She decided to check how and to what extent burnout and manners of burning out can be explained by clearly defined professional values. She declared her willingness to check whether seniority is an indicator of the conditions of professional burnout. She pointed out that an important direction is not only to look for differences in levels of burnout in relation to this variable, but also for differences in the causes leading to burnout.

The third objective is of a practical nature. The author has set herself the task of finding a model of a tool to measure the scale of the burnout risk due to the impact of separated work factors.

In connection with the goals set in this way, Elżbieta Lisowska posed three specific research questions. The first concerned the relationship between the burn-out of teachers with different internal structures and their professional functioning in six dimensions: the dimension of psychosocial burdens; the dimension of areas of organizational fitting in and not fitting in; the dimension of job satisfaction; the dimension of orientation towards professional values;

the dimension of sense of social mission in the profession. The second was "whether and how the professionalization of teachers determines the indicators of their burnout". The third was an alternative question: "Is there a model of teachers' sensitivity/susceptibility to professional burnout and if so, what are the professional and individual factors involved?"

The author also noted that the research was exploratory in nature and did not formulate any research hypotheses. This is the correct approach. In this arrangement of research we are dealing with a collection of different results, e.g. from different surveys and questionnaires either connected or not. In questionnaires or sheets examining the professional functioning of the teachers studied, information on various features and dimensions of professional functioning was collected. In such a case the author wanted to verify the relationship of some variables with other variables. Thus, the situation of the exploratory character of the study we will be dealing with when we do not know what may come out of our study, but we have a presumption that there are various important relationships in the collected data.

Therefore, it is worth taking note of and agreeing with the author, even though she did not say so explicitly, that in view of the enormous complexity of the phenomenon of professional burnout, and with the current state of research findings, there is still room for exploratory research in this area, and there is no reason for such research to be artificially "dressed up" as hypothesis testing.

In the latter part of the methodological chapter, E. Lisowska listed and described the tools used. She characterized each of them very meticulously. However, we do not learn anything about descriptive statistics, or how to standardize variables or count subscale values. To see if I am not mistaken in my thinking about how to examine professional burnout as proposed by C. Maslach, I reached for the work by Janusz Kirenko and Teresa Zubrzycka-Maciąg: "Współczesny nauczyciel. Studium wypalenia zawodowego." ("Contemporary teacher. A professional burnout study.") And on pages 66 and 67 I found what I had been looking for in vain in Elżbieta Lisowska's work – descriptive statistics and sten ranges. Each of the Professional Burnout subscales had a different scope: emotional burnout (0–54), Depersonalization (0–30) and Personal Commitment (0–48). The lack of these descriptions makes us believe that in the further part of the descriptions the author knows what she is writing about because, as she herself wrote, she is qualified to "rectify the data" and knows the rules of statistical description. Knowing what values the MBI subscales can take, reading the table is somewhat easier, although not ideal. The description I wrote about was found in chapter 5, and more precisely in tables 39 and 40. In my opinion this is a little late.

At the end of this chapter we receive information that 330 people were taken into consideration in the study, of which 316 were teachers, of whom 261 were women and 55 were men. This incomparable and unequal number of the examined group in terms of gender will have its consequences. In this chapter, there is table no. 4: "Characteristics of the teachers examined due to the analyzed professional variables". The table would make sense if we got to know basic descriptive statistics such as the minimum, the maximum, the median. The author also presented the statistical procedures used. This includes cluster analysis in the k-means grouping version. In this way, she singles out groups with EW and BPO dominance. What does the term "dominance" itself mean? It is hard for me to guess, especially since there are 125 people in the first group and 185 in the second. In the group with domination of DP (depersonalization), there were 6 teachers. And they were excluded from further analysis.

In the next – third – chapter, the author tried to find empirical connections between professional burnout and the stages of professionalization. She uses the cyclization of professional development as proposed by Kwaśnica, Gaś and Dreyfus. And yet C Day's proposition has been known for years. According to it, she divided seniority into three stages: from one to 10 years, from 11 to 20 and over 20 years. In general, this division allowed the author, for example, to state that in the group of teachers with the dominance of emotional burnout, the highest levels of emotional burnout and lack of sense of achievement are demonstrated by teachers working from 11 to 20 years, depersonalization appears in teachers with the longest seniority – over 20 years. In turn, in the group dominated by a lack of sense of achievement, the highest levels of emotional burnout and depersonalization were achieved by teachers working for 11 to 20 years and the lowest by those working from 1 to 10 years.

There are four very data-rich tables in this chapter. For example, table 32 titled "indicators of correlation between job variables and MBI performance of men with different seniority from the EW-dominated group" contains over three hundred fields. They are all occupied. However, only 25 statistics are statistically significant. The question arises why the author published a matrix where as much as three hundred fields are statistically insignificant? Table 33 looks slightly better, in terms of dependencies, where out of 342 possible correlations 68 are statistically significant. But the table still contains information that I think is unnecessary.

But even more puzzling is the summary of these two tables. Here we read: "There is an almost complete dependency between burnout and working factors in the group of men working from 1 to 10 years." Let us take a look at Table 32 to understand what is going on. First of all, the very phrase "almost

complete dependency" is not a statistical expressions. It is as deceptive as the often heard phrase "on the verge of significance". Secondly, out of 114 possible correlations, 8 are statistically significant. The value determining significance is the absolute value r=0.895 (at p=0.05). So what "almost complete dependency" is this about? But further on, we can read something more puzzling: "The determinants of burnout are the least numerous among men working for 11–20 years." Is that true? Yes. There are 6 statistically significant relationships. The logic of the argument here is impeccable.

However, I was most surprised by the correlations found in Table 34, where statistically significant correlations in the group of teachers with seniority started from an absolute value of 0.678 (for p = 0.05), and in the previously analyzed table from 0.8.

Or maybe it is true what the author wrote when interpreting table 32, only the proofreader or editor did not see the "*" describing statistical significance.

Let us move on to logistic regression analysis. It was implemented following the principle of step-by-step input of variables. This means more precise analysis. The results contained in Tables 36 and 37 and their design make their content difficult to read and follow the interpretation narrative. You have to be careful not to make a mistake, not to miss anything. The conclusion that comes to mind is that it could have been formulated more neatly (more legibly). But what is important from the point of view of the analysis is that some models explain a high percentage of variance, which means that the variables to be analyzed have been selected correctly (for example $R^2 = 0.61$ or $R^2 = 0.53$) and accordingly allow to indicate the factors determining the appearance of professional burnout in certain dimensions. In none of the nine groups have identical sets of determinants repeated. It seems very interesting in cognitive terms to include table no. 38 describing the professional conditions of burnout in female teachers of different seniority. This table is a synthesis of the conclusions of the analyses. Big applause for the author.

This chapter closes with a synthesis of the results. It reads "the results of research to date showing the link between burnout and seniority are ***non-conclusive*** and show that this problem can affect teachers at any stage of their careers". The author's findings lead to such conclusions.

The book closes with a very important fifth chapter devoted to the optimization of intervention in teachers' professional burnout – setting the objectives of interventional and prophylactic actions. The author writes that she has resigned from looking for professional burnout profiles, their analysis together with the determination of burnout levels, the indication of specific factors and their influence on the burnout level, and the determination of

links between the factors and burnout levels. Instead, she decided to choose the methodology of searching for specific factors with the strongest influence on the scale of the whole group and/or several subgroups by estimating the strength of the hitherto influence of particular factors and the sensitivity of the group on further influence of the factors. Only the author knows what this chapter is about. It contains descriptions, formulas and tables. While every researcher knows what SPSS, Statistica or SAS is, the correct definition of SOCMA, SVA, PHA or PSA requires certain expertise in browsing the Internet. I, personally, as a technical and non-digital person, failed to do so. The author assumed, as I presume, that after four chapters, hardly anyone would soldier on to read Chapter 5 and would not read what was in it. The reader, unless they are skilled in reading confusing texts, not so much statistical, but bordering on engineering, can go straight to the synthesis part without any sense of loss.

The whole is concluded by the "Summary and conclusions". We can find everything that is important for the professional burnout topic here. This is another daring display of the author's erudition. You read the "Summary" literally in one breath. It has everything that needs to be there and in the right proportions. Maslach and Leiter followed by Elżbieta Lisowska indicate that while examining burnout, one should simultaneously diagnose involvement (e.g. using UWES). Then the picture should be complementary, more holistic. Agreed, but maybe without the intricate and confusing statistics or statistical procedures, because these are executed perfectly by the author. Well, perhaps the groups studied should be equal as well.

After reading Elżbieta Lisowska's book, one cannot disagree with Maslach and Leiter's statement that effective responses to professional burnout must include prevention rather than therapy itself. But preventing the professional burnout of teachers under the conditions of every system, not only the Polish one, is an organizational revolution and requires the involvement of huge financial resources. It is also a revolution in the academic education of future teachers.

Reaching for this book, I was seduced by the second part of the title – "In search of an effective prophylaxis for professional burnout". After reading, I wonder why the author omitted prevention when C. Maslach is in favor of effective use of prevention as well as the therapy itself. Between us, this book ends where it should really start. But maybe I have too high expectations.

Elżbieta Lisowska's book is an important theoretical and methodological contribution to the unsolvable problem of professional functioning of a teacher. However, it allows those who work with the teacher on a daily basis to acquire the highest possible professional competence in diagnosing professional

burnout and mitigating its effects (although, as she herself points out, it takes the consent of Cristina Maslach and expertise in interpretation of results to apply the MBI scale). It enriches the specialist diagnostic workshop, which psychologists and therapists must not only master but continually develop throughout their professional lives.

The book is a model of a multidisciplinary approach to pedeutological diagnostics, which should – as in the case of social sciences – encourage separate education of specialists supporting pedagogues in their service, but in the light of the existing solutions in Poland, it requires the same qualifications from themselves. Elżbieta Lisowska sets her book in the broad context of pedagogical and psychological literature and personal counselling. It forces the reader to treat it as a supplement or a kind of recapitulation of other pedagogical and psychological publications that have appeared in the last thirty years. She calls up names like: Faber, Kirenko, Kretschamnn, Leiter, Marek, Maslach, Noworol, Plichta, Pyżalski, Madalińska-Michalak, Sęk, Tucholska or Zubrzycka-Maciąg.

In addition, the work contains a very rich bibliography – more than four hundred literature items, but it is in vain to look among them for literature or literature references to the statistical or analytical methods used, especially those described in the fifth chapter. It is also a pity that the editor of the monograph did not make any effort to provide material and personal indices that would allow for a purposeful return to the important issues raised in the work.

The book has another important function – psycho-pedeutological self-reflection. One should hope that self-reflection will lead to self-education and further self-development of the widest possible range of psychologists, pedagogues and teachers.

I read Elżbieta Lisowska's book in sections. The amount of information it contained was immense. But I do not regret it. I feel enriched and know what to look for in my future research. To sum up, I recommend the book by Elżbieta Lisowska to professionals working within the area of prevention and therapy of professional burnout. The book does not dispel doubts related to effective prevention of professional burnout, but it certainly reinforces the conviction that the burnout phenomenon will not affect teachers and people working in social support professions quickly. And there is still a lot to do in this area.

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