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Power of vulnerability – Leadership attribute for School Leaders

He, whether He fashioned it or whether He did not,

He, who surveys it all from the highest heaven,

He knows – or maybe even He does not know.

- Rig Veda, X.129

Even the scriptures, which are the guiding light for some, make a mention of the unsurety of things in a certain context.

Schools are public institutions and have several stakeholders who may have fleeting interactions with the leadership team. Strong perceptions are formed in these short interactions in the minds of these stakeholders, and hence, there is constant pressure on the leadership to always appear and be in control and behave and demonstrate as if one has all the answers for all things now and emerging. One of the expressions of vulnerability is the demonstration of authentic leadership.

Being authentic requires immense courage, strength and a conviction to first understand and admit one's imperfections and to state them with a clarity of thought and purpose in the relevant context. Many school leaders of progressive schools have shared that the ability to reflect and have a deeper understanding of oneself is a powerful attribute requirement. This sentiment is also echoed in William Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' in the aphorism "to thine own self be true." Even though the statement looks simple, it takes decades of serious and honest reflection of one's actions and underlying emotions to understand their impact on others.

Training programs with interventions designed to address this attribute for school leaders keeping in the mind the cultural context can be of immense value. One well-established program which addresses this requirement is the Principal School Leadership conclave by Tata ClassEdge. This program has been helping many school leaders to reflect deeply and discover their blind spots, and thus have meaningful and candid conversations with their teams for sustaining a vibrant and positive work environment.

Talented teachers and staff thrive where the leadership creates a very vibrant and empowering environment. Authentic conversations, honest relationships and deeper connect with teams are cornerstones for delivering consistent high-quality outcomes.