# Standing up for Yourself

## Setting the rules needed to protect your well-being

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- **The realties of being a school leader**

**Protecting your own mental health**

**Shane Martin C.Psychol,. Ps.S.I.**

**Rules are better than…..**

**Habits that are never formed**
**Strategies that are never implemented**
**Noble aspirations**

**Stronger in terms of psychological construct**

# 5 rules

Rule 1.

# The most precious time I spend is the time spent with family

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## *Liu D et al. (2026)*

Associations were found between work-to-family conflict and subsequent mental health symptoms, burnout, and general mental distress.

The associations broadly similar across men and women

The need for social policies that support working families, including parental leave reforms, expanded access to high-quality care for children and older adults, flexible working arrangements, and clearer work-home boundaries.

## *Hobbler et al (2010)*

Work-family conflict is an important and modifiable contributor to workers' mental health

Perhaps counterintuitively, sacrificing family time does not necessarily make someone a better-performing leader.

Rule 2.

# I do things I love doing - activities that give me flow

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## *A 2025 review of research on hobbies and mental health -Exploring the Impact of Hobbies on Mental Health and Well-Being (Cleary M et al 2025)*

Depression, anxiety and stress: Hobbies were associated with reductions in psychological distress.

Quality of life and wellbeing: Hobbies contributed to relaxation, pleasure and life satisfaction.

Social interaction and support: Hobbies helped people develop relationships, connect with others and build a sense of community.

# 3 key questions

1. What do you do that you truly love doing?
2. How often do you do it?
3. Have you tried anything new lately?

Rule 3.

# I accept my own limitations and the limitations of my role

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**When leaders accept the limits of their own abilities, acknowledge the limits of their authority and recognise what is beyond their control, they experience less psychological strain, lower stress and better mental health.**

**Luo et al. (2022) – *Humble Leadership and Its Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis*.**

Humble leadership was positively associated with:

Job satisfaction.

Trust.

Work engagement.

Psychological empowerment.

Positive relationships between leaders and employees

Rule 4.

# I have a daily exercise routine.

*Ding D, Nguyen B, Nau T et al.*
*Daily steps and health outcomes in adults: a systematic review and dose-response meta-analysis (The Lancet Public Health, 2025)*

**More walking is associated with better health.** Increasing daily steps is associated with reduced risks across a range of diseases, not just premature death.

**7,000 steps a day is a meaningful target.** The research suggests that around 7,000 daily steps is sufficient to achieve substantial health benefits for most of the health outcomes examined.

**10,000 steps isn't essential.** For many health outcomes, increasing from 7,000 to 10,000 steps appears to offer relatively little additional benefit, although some conditions may benefit from further activity.

**Increasing activity is beneficial.** Moving more and reducing sedentary behaviour are important for both physical and mental health.

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Rule 5.

# I never lose sight of the positive difference I am making in young people’s lives

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- Meaning anchors leadership through every challenge

Doing my best within my scope of influence to inspire, motivate and cultivate a positive learning environment where all of the school community can flourish.

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