



# Leadership Seminar 2026

FRIDAY 20 MARCH 2026, at Kooyong Tennis Club



**Ben Palmer**

Genos International

**ENHANCING SCHOOL CULTURE**

Ben Palmer, Ph.D., is the founder and CEO of Genos International and creator of the Genos model and measure of emotional intelligence. A widely recognised academic expert on emotional intelligence, he has an extensive publication list in the field. He has received numerous academic awards, including the 2006 Australian Institute of Learning and Development Award for an outstanding contribution to the practice of learning and development. He holds a BAppSci (Hons) and Ph.D. from Swinburne University and is a member of the Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence. He is currently lecturing at the Sydney Graduate School of Management as co-facilitator of its program on developing human capital.



**Liam Wood**

Saints Knowledge Institute

**SUPPORTING OUR COLLEAGUES AND OURSELVES TO FIND UNCONDITIONAL POSITIVE REGARD**

Liam Wood is Acting Director of Professional Learning and Training at the Saints Knowledge Institute. He is an educator who has held a range of leadership positions across mainstream and alternative education. Liam's team are focused on building the capacity of educators and community service professionals in Trauma-Informed Practice and Leadership. Liam is passionate about utilising reflective coaching, professional supervision, and emotionally intelligent leadership to create supportive and protective trauma-informed environments.

Strong staff culture is shaped by how leaders respond in challenging moments. This professional learning session supports principals to build trust, psychological safety and accountability through the intentional practice of Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR). Grounded in real school contexts, the session focuses on responding to staff concerns without judgement, collusion or minimisation, while maintaining high expectations.

Participants will:

- Deepen understanding of UPR, conditional regard and negative regard in staff interactions
- Build confidence responding to staff concerns without judgement, minimisation or premature problem-solving
- Learn practical coaching strategies that promote perspective-taking and solutions
- Gain tools to support effective peer-to-peer conversations
- Explore how UPR strengthens high expectations, accountability and professional growth

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## PROGRAM

9:00	<b>Welcome</b> Belinda Hudak, VASSP President
9:10	<b>VASSP Member Presentation</b>
9:30	<b>Enhancing School Culture</b> Ben Palmer, Genos International
10:15	<b>Business Partner Presentation</b>
10:30	<b>Morning Tea</b>
11:00	<b>Business Partner Presentation</b>
11:20	<b>Supporting our Colleagues and Ourselves to find Unconditional Positive Regard</b> Liam Wood, Saints Knowledge Institute
12:50	<b>Closing Remarks</b> Belinda Hudak, VASSP President
1:00	<b>Collegiate Lunch</b>



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