What keeps Australian early childhood teachers working in long day care?

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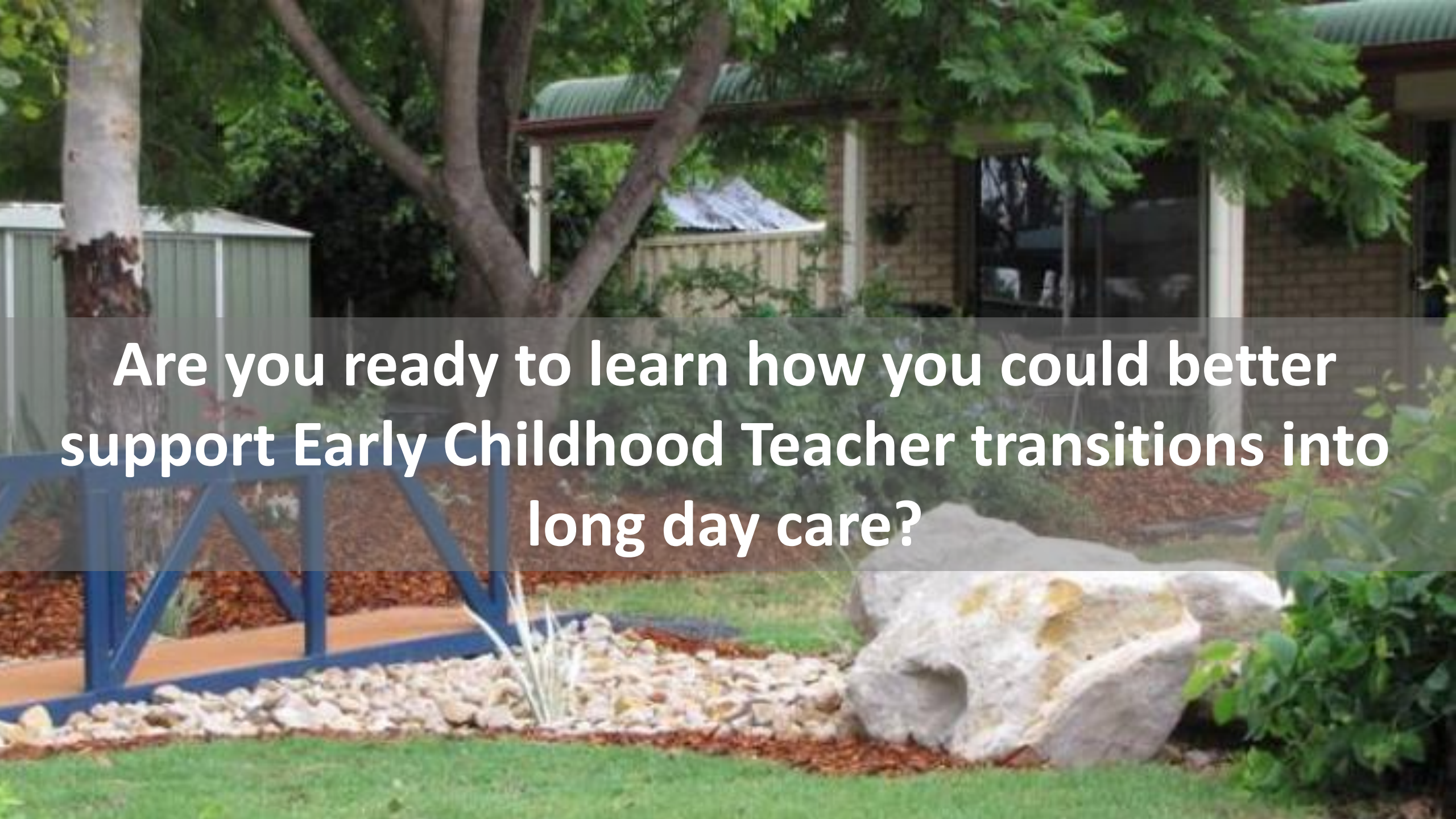
Have you ever wondered what attracts
Early Childhood Teachers to
work in long day care?


Are you ready to learn how you could better support Early Childhood Teacher transitions into long day care?

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Early Childhood Teachers
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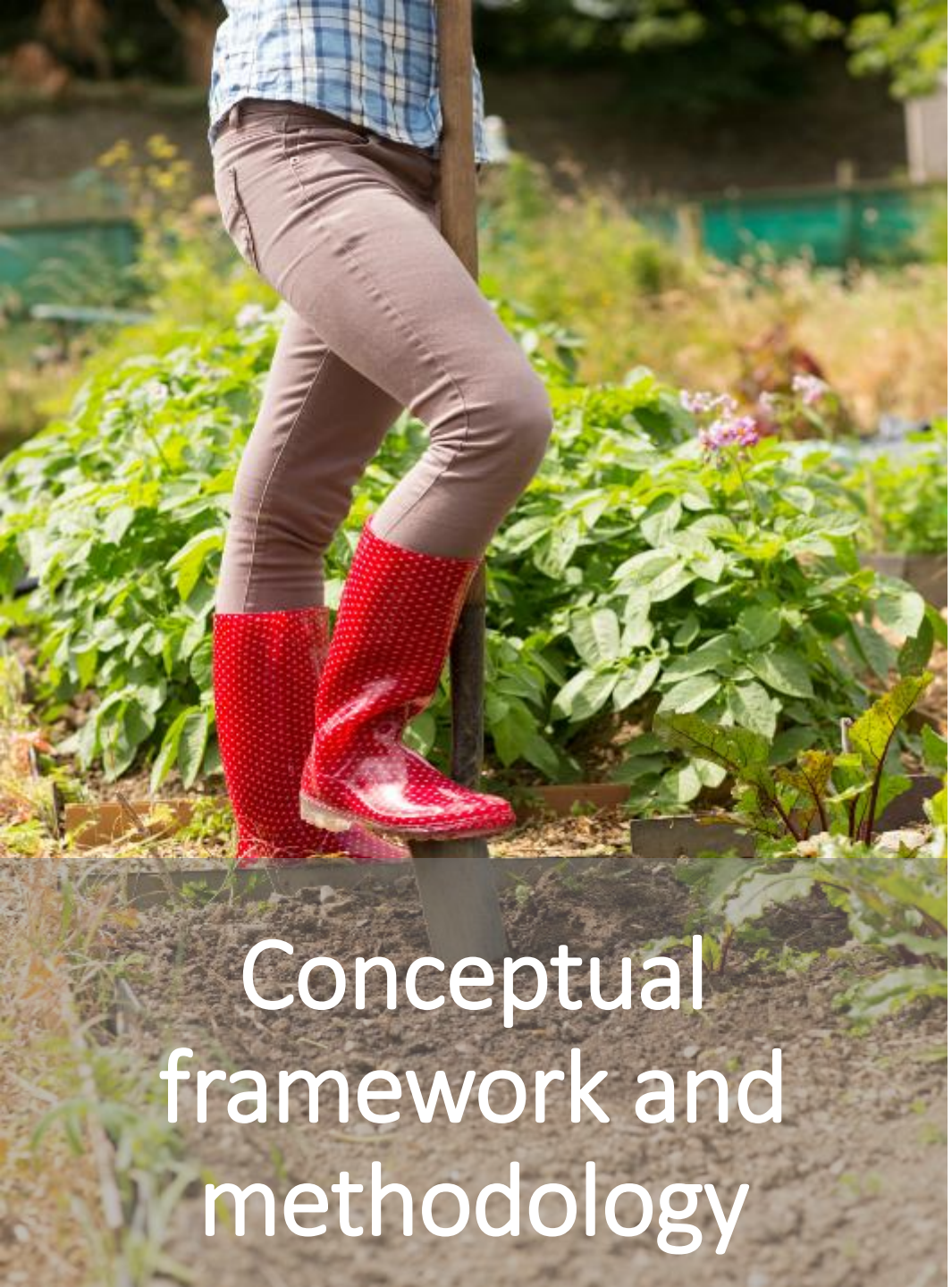


Conceptual framework and methodology

- Social constructivism (Raskin, 2002) and ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)
- Case study (Merriam, 1998)
- Purposeful sampling (Glaser 1978; Morse, 1991; Stake,1995)
- In-depth interviews (Glesne, 1999)
- Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2008; Patton, 2002)
- Research rigour (Lincoln & Guba, 1985)

Lucy Bella Molly Sophie Zoe

Tell me about your early days as a teacher in long day care?

How did you come to work in long day care?

How was your transition to this work?

What do you enjoy about working in long day care?

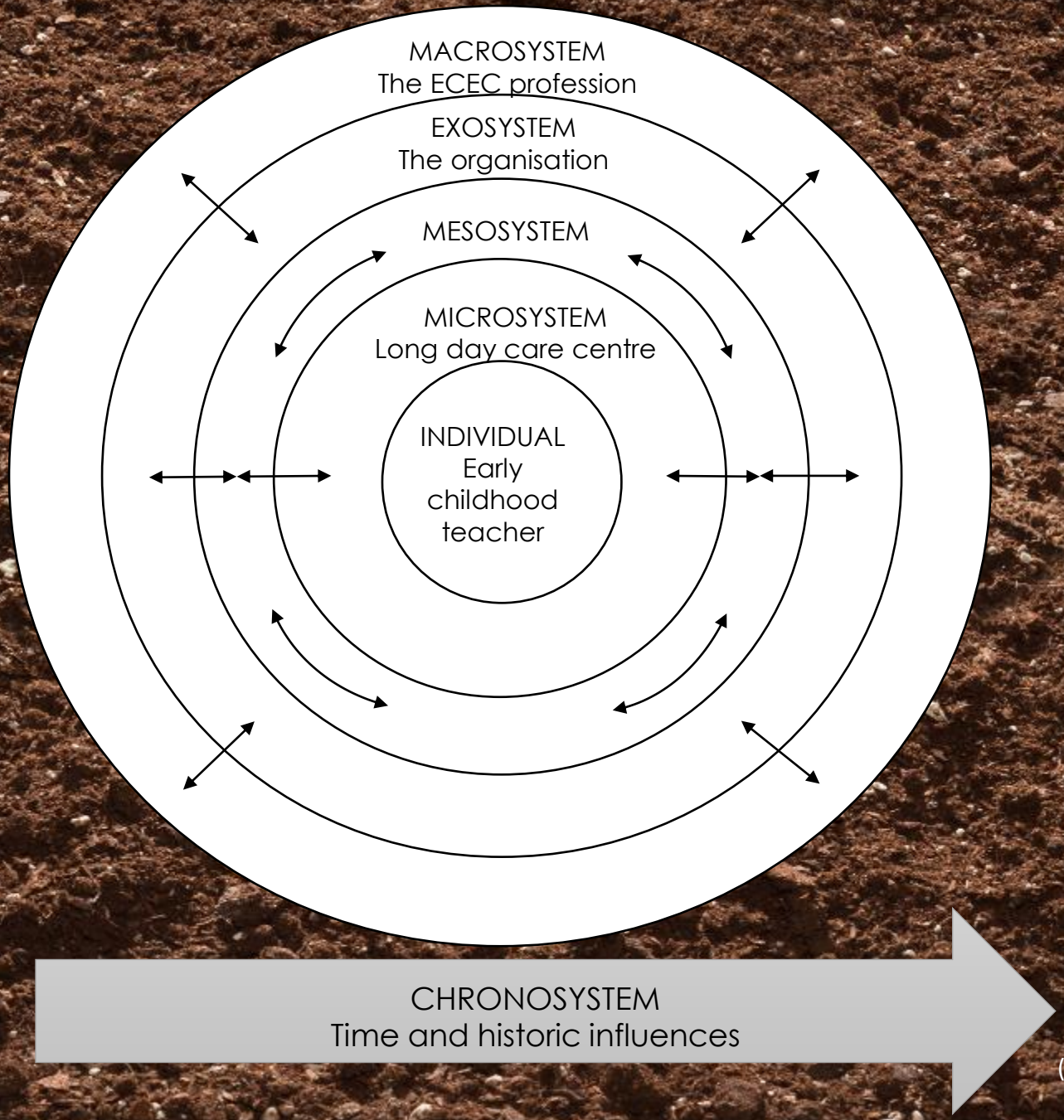
What don't you enjoy?

What could be changed to make it better?

What do we take for granted about early childhood teachers working in long day care?

What expectations did you have of working in long day care?

What qualities do you feel an early childhood teacher working in long day care needs?



(Bronfenbrenner, 1979)

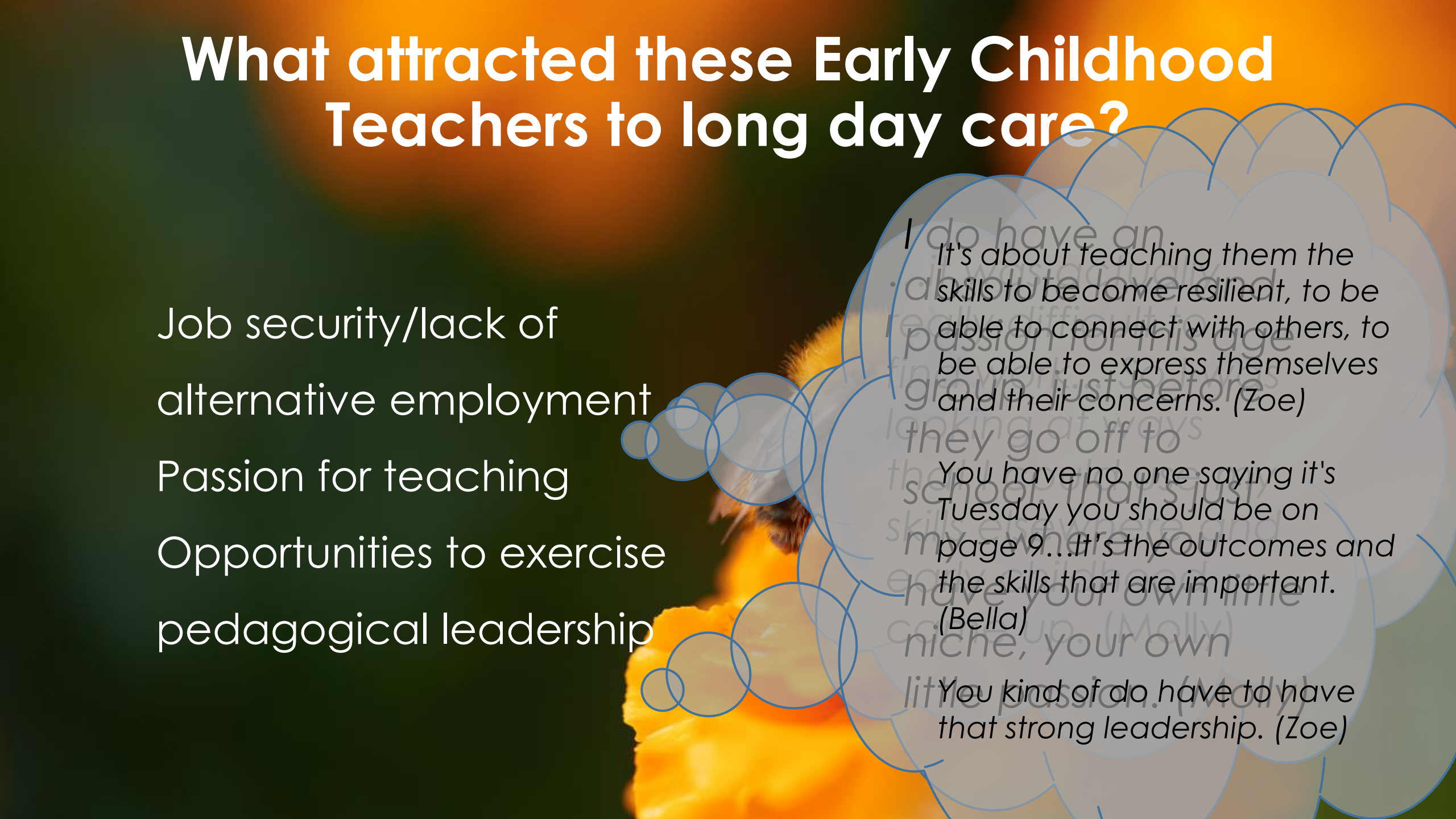
challenges
enablers

What attracted these Early Childhood Teachers to long day care?

Job security/lack of alternative employment

Passion for teaching

Opportunities to exercise pedagogical leadership



It's about teaching them the skills to become resilient, to be able to connect with others, to be able to express themselves and their concerns. (Zoe)

You have no one saying it's Tuesday you should be on page 9…It's the outcomes and the skills that are important. (Bella)

You kind of do have to have that strong leadership. (Zoe)

What supports the transition to long day care?

I guess I went through the first year of just
You have your Centre Director and your operational manager and your Assistant and sometimes depending on numbers you don't get an Assistant. I guess getting everything done and getting into the routine of children arriving late, children leaving early. (Lucy)

Prior knowledge and experience in long day care

Understanding the business and culture of long day care

leadership
perspectives
motivation
initiative
expectations
conscientious
creativity
compassion
believe
open
skills
standards
realistic
ideas
respectful
endurance
communication
empathy
adapt
friendly
drive
absolute
ethic
community
love
responsiveness
passion
understanding
genuine
different
outgoing
negotiate
curriculum
patience
strong
knowledge
professionalism
education
flexible
nurturing
tolerance
value

Why may these Early Childhood Teachers leave long day care?

Wages and conditions

Demands of the long day care context

Longer hours (longer day, longer year)

Documentation

More staff with different qualifications and practices

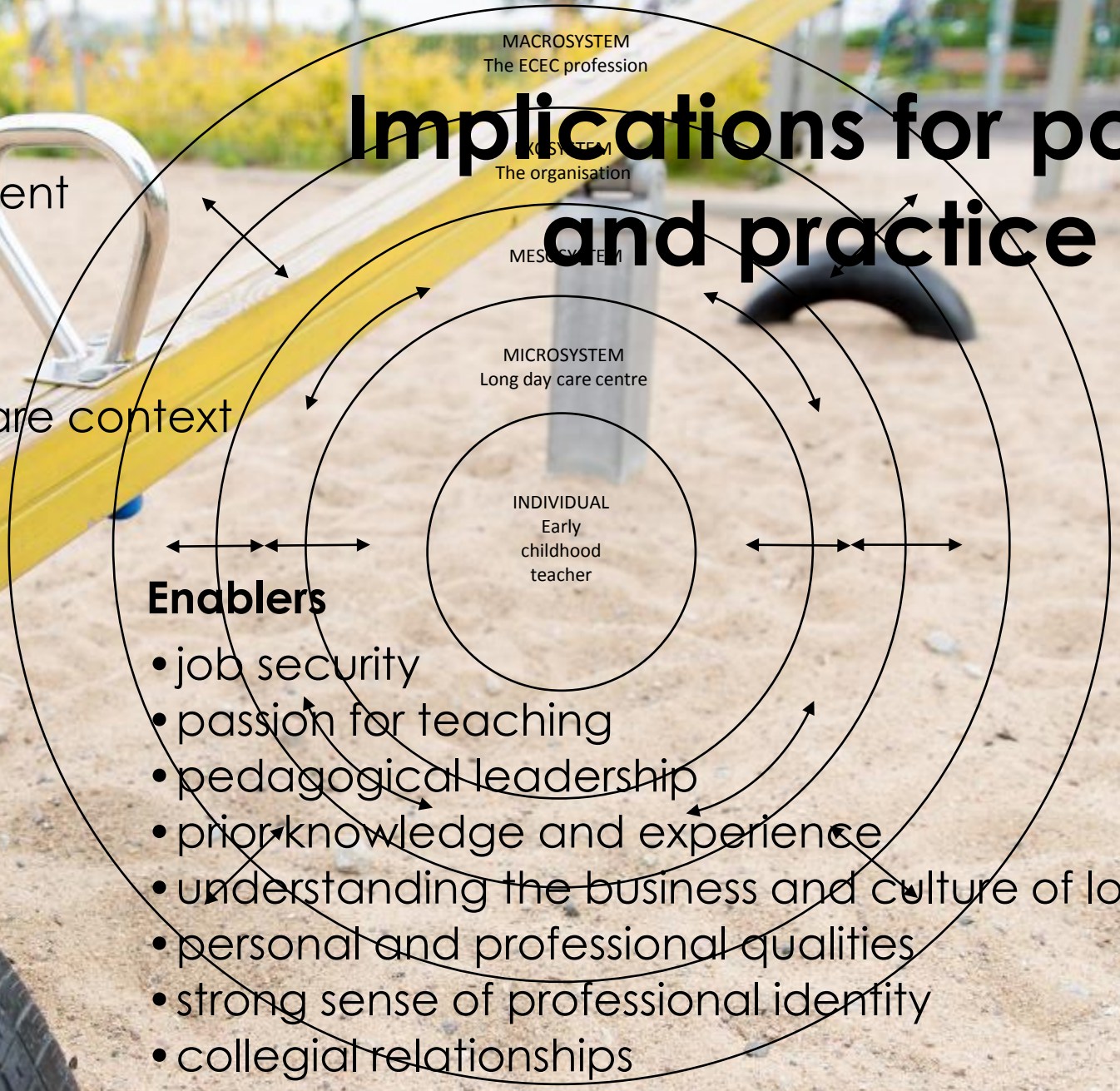
Changing dynamics of long day care

…if I was offered a position in a school at the same year level with similar sort of freedom I would take it because of the school holidays and the length of day … But it would be nice to reach a situation where if I was offered what was in the school I wouldn't move. (Bella)

Implications for policy and practice

Challenges

- lack of alternative employment
- no previous experience
- push down curriculum
- wages and conditions
- demands of the long day care context



Enablers

- job security
- passion for teaching
- pedagogical leadership
- prior knowledge and experience
- understanding the business and culture of long day care
- personal and professional qualities
- strong sense of professional identity
- collegial relationships
- centre and organisational leadership support

Individual
early childhood teacher

Challenges

- Team resistance to change
- Lack of recognition as a real teacher
- Business pressures

Enablers

- Personal and professional qualities
- Opportunities for pedagogical leadership
- Sense of professional identity
- Commitment to play based teaching and learning
- Freedom of curriculum
- Prior long day care experience
- Long day care business understanding

Microsystem
long day care centre

Challenge

- No desire for professional growth
- Structured teaching philosophy
- Lack of long day care business understanding
- Weak professional identity

Enablers

- Collaborative team
- Supportive centre leadership
- Sense of belonging

Exosystem
the organisation

Challenges

- Wages and conditions
- Business pressures

Enablers

- Employer of choice
- Mentoring programs
- Rewards and recognition
- Incentives
- Professional development

Macrosystem
the ECEC profession

Challenges

- Policy context
- Regulations and legislation
- Disparity of wages and conditions
- Lack of funding

Enablers

- Professionalising the field
- Parity of wages and conditions
- Realistic funding
- NQF (NQS and curriculum)

Priorities for future research

Identifying effective strategies to grow and sustain a professional early years workforce study

Professional identity of Early Childhood Teachers working in long day care

Professionalising of the ECEC workforce

Questions?