Recent Writings and Press Coverage for
Howard Gardner and Project Zero

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I

The App Generation
Getting Smart About Smartphones

In September, Jean M. Twenge chronicled the potential ill effects of ubiquitous smartphones and social media on young adults ("Has the Smartphone Destroyed a Generation?").

We are often asked whether social media and smartphones are good or bad for teens. Parents, teachers, policy makers—even teens themselves—seek clear and simple answers. In this respect, Jean Twenge’s article does not disappoint.

Twenge draws a straight line tracing broad trends to a single source: networked technologies. We see three main problems with this. First, Twenge uses correlational data to make causal claims. Yet correlation neither implies nor confirms causation. Second, despite stating that “no single factor ever defines a generation,” Twenge devotes her piece to a single-factor characterization of “iGen.” Third, just as digital media are unlikely to be the sole cause of teens’ attitudes and behaviors, they’re also unlikely to have a singular, uniform impact on all teens.

Our research documents that youth can have distinctly different experiences on the same networked platforms; existing peer and family relationships and prior levels of well-being are among the many factors that converge to determine whether a teen has a positive or negative experience on Instagram, Snapchat, or iMessage. Cherry-picking studies overlooks more nuanced accounts of teens and technology, as well as the reality that many youth have routinely positive experiences online. Giving in to the allure of simple narratives does a disservice to our young people and undercuts our ability to help them. Only through the deciphering of teens’ complex relationship with technology can we fashion effective strategies for supporting them.

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After a whirlwind year of division and controversy in American politics, many of us may be anxious about dinner-table dialogue with family and friends this Thanksgiving. There is no denying that the way we communicate about politics has fundamentally changed with the proliferation of technology and social media. Twitter bots, fake news and echo chambers are just a few of the highlights from the political scene. Much of how we’re conversing online can’t – and shouldn’t – be replicated around the family table. We are getting out of practice at conducting meaningful, respectful conversation.

There’s not a quick fix. We need more empathic communication – the slow, deep (inter)personal discourse that can nurture identity and build and strengthen relationships. Yet contemporary communication platforms can make it harder to build empathy with conversational partners. Even the phrase “conversational partners” seems unfitting in the world of 140-character limits, followers, likes and shares. In many ways, our devices help us talk at (@?) instead of with one another.

Literally meaning “in-feeling,” empathy is a process of internalizing another person’s perspective. Empathy-building is unselfish; you suspend your own sensibilities and try to fully imagine and embrace those of someone else. You can gain empathy by learning about other cultures from different media, by experiencing what others have gone through personally, or by having deep conversations with others.
My research into cross-cultural communications has taught me that empathy is not only the key to feeling connected – “I understand you” – but also the foundation for changing our narratives about one another – “now I see we are not so different.” That’s an important point to remember after such a difficult political experience. Building empathy requires communication, specifically talking to one another. But, not just any talking will suffice – especially not the type of talking promoted by today’s highly popular communication technologies.

Americans are more digitally connected, yet less interpersonally connected, than ever.

For an increasing number of us, feeling connected – to family or otherwise – is becoming more difficult. A review of empathy research from the past 30 years revealed that college-age Americans were less able to imagine others’ perspectives and feel sympathy for their plight. The trend has been accelerating since 2000. At the same time, the number of Americans who report that there is no one with whom they discuss important matters nearly tripled, to roughly 25 percent of the population, between 1985 and 2005.

Technology may be part of the problem, making it harder for us to build and maintain strong relationships. It may be breeding increasing individualism, self-importance, loneliness, depression. The theories behind this link vary. In “Generation Me,” psychologist Jean Twenge argues that cellphone ownership – once a luxury for the elite – promotes illusions of grandeur. In “The Lonely American,” two psychiatry professors suggest that communication technology encourages us to remain physically isolated by providing remote connectivity. In “Alone Together,” social scientist Sherry Turkle offers that we are drawn to our devices more than to those in our presence. In “The App Generation,” information scholars Howard Gardner and Katie Davis claim that communication apps promote transactional rather than intimate exchanges.

**Words matter**

Talking is more than just exchanging information. Substantial personal communication can build empathy. Therapist Peggy Penn’s research has explored the power of language to connect family members in this way.

When you talk, or even write, you reflect on your own position. But, more importantly, you also reflect on the position of your audience: What is she currently thinking? How does my story fit into her experience? How might she respond? This is what Penn (referring back to philosopher Mikhail Bhaktin) calls “double-voiced” communication: it’s relational. Moreover, when you talk and write, you are crafting a narrative, even if a short one. Sometimes, you can surprise yourself when the words come out, gaining new insight into the meaning of your life and hers. In this way, talking can deeply change people, building and shaping mutual identities.

Yet, our written interactions through technology are increasingly short, with less sophisticated language or no language at all (think: Instagram). More and more, our thoughts are broadcast to everyone instead of intended for someone special. Back-and-forth exchanges can be difficult to engage in or follow. All of these may be playing into the tendency on social media to consume others’ content but not to directly communicate with friends one on one. The “double-voiced” communication that spurs empathy is short-circuited.
How to achieve empathy

We can improve our communication with each other, both face to face and via technology, if we focus on building empathy in the following ways:

- Get personal. Make sure you are communicating in a private or semi-private space with one or a few dedicated others. This environment encourages self-disclosure and intimacy toward relationship-building. That’s different from seeking to impress others or be validated by them, as is often the case with social media postings. Further, in small groups or in one-on-one conversation, it becomes possible to imagine each others’ individual perspective. When your communication is focused on or intended for another person, it can catalyze empathic connection because you have to imagine and capture the other person in your text.

- Write it down. Talking is great, but writing encourages more deliberate wording. Consider writing your thoughts out before you bring them up in conversation at the table. Or, if your face-to-face conversation did not go so well, consider writing a letter after the fact to better communicate your intentions. Personal writing is a form of self-reflection and narrative crafting. Simply writing your thoughts out can change them. This is why therapists sometimes recommend journaling or writing letters to your conversational partner as an intervention that encourages both partners to realign their perspectives.

- Take your time. Whether you are engaged in a face-to-face dialogue or communicating through Skype or email, investing time into the conversation is important. The more time you spend in conversation, the more time you spend getting to know each other and the more able you are to share complex thoughts, relatable stories, or convincing arguments. From a linguistic perspective, without back-and-forth dialogue there is simply no opportunity to negotiate meaning and come to mutual understanding. For relationship therapists, without ongoing discourse, there is no way to try out new narratives, change your mind and theirs, and reconnect empathically.

When we have an opportunity to spend time with people who matter to us, we should embrace it, seeking to understand them and to present ourselves openly, to be understood as well. When we are apart, technology can be used to connect us. But, the types of technology we use and the ways we choose to use them really matter. When you’re at the dinner table this Thanksgiving, and especially when you go back home, keep empathy and the perspectives of others in mind.
II

Education
Celebrating Every Learner: Activities and Strategies for Creating a Multiple Intelligences Classroom 2nd Edition

by Thomas R. Hoerr (Author), Sally Boggeman (Author), Christine Wallach (Author), The New City School (Author)

Howard Gardner’s groundbreaking theory applied for classroom use
This important book offers a practical guide to understanding how Howard Gardner’s theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) can be used in the classroom. Gardner identified eight different types of intelligence: linguistic, logical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, naturalist, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Celebrating Every Learner describes the characteristics of each type of intelligence and follows up with ready-to-use lesson plans and activities that teachers can use to incorporate MI in their pre-K through 6 classrooms.

- Offers a treasury of easily implemented activities for engaging all students’ multiple intelligences, from the New City School, a leading elementary school at the forefront of MI education

- Provides ready-to-use lesson plans that teachers can use to incorporate MI in any elementary classroom

- Includes valuable essays on how and why to integrate MI in the classroom

- Hoerr is the author of a bi-monthly column for Educational Leadership as well as the editor of the "Intelligence Connections" e-newsletter
Visible Learners: Promoting Reggio-Inspired Approaches in All Schools 1st Edition

by Mara Krechevsky (Author), Ben Mardell (Author), Melissa Rivard (Author), Daniel Wilson (Author)

A progressive, research-based approach for making learning visible

Based on the Reggio Emilia approach to learning, Visible Learners highlights learning through interpreting objects and artifacts, group learning, and documentation to make students’ learning evident to teachers. Visible classrooms are committed to five key principles: that learning is purposeful, social, emotional, empowering, and representational. The book includes visual essays, key practices, classroom and examples.

- Show how to make learning happen in relation to others, spark emotional connections, give students power over their learning, and express ideas in multiple ways
- Illustrate Reggio-inspired principles and approaches via quotes, photos, student and teacher reflections, and examples of student work
- Offer a new way to enhance learning using progressive, research-based practices for increasing collaboration and critical thinking in and outside the classroom

Visible Learners asks that teachers look beyond surface-level to understand who students are, what they come to know, and how they come to know it.

“Many educators have pondered whether the ‘Reggio Approach’ can be employed with older children and under different conditions. In this highly original book, the authors demonstrate how the principles developed in a small city in northern Italy can be realized across the ages, across the seas.”

– Howard Gardner, Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education.
Primary school in Sevvapet adopt innovative methods in teaching subjects

If you’re curious about the relationship between yogasanas and mathematics, class IV and V students of S.K. Vidyalayam Nursery and Primary School in Sevvapet can give you a lesson or two — thanks to their maths teacher.

N. Geetha is trained in what is called the multiple-intelligence methodology. The methodology is being imparted through a project called ‘Good to Great’ implemented by Shraddha, an educational services organisation.

“For example, the boat pose is performed by the students to understand acute angle. Or, we sing songs on geometry and other mathematical concepts,” said Ms. Geetha.

The teachers are taught to infuse multiple-intelligence methods in the curriculum and they have introduced innovative methods in their teaching. “For example, I use a snake and ladders game to educate the children on good habits,” said science teacher R. Ashwathi.

The multiple intelligence methods theory was propounded by Howard Gardner, professor of cognition and education, Harvard Graduate School.

“Each student understands the subject well if taught in any one of these methods,” explained Madhumati Narayana, co-founder of Shraddha. V.V. Jalaja, the school principal, said that teachers undergo regular training from Shraddha.
Cathy Williams, the District 7 representative on the Muscogee County School Board, noted Muscogee Educational Excellence Foundation director Marquette McKnight beamed with pride “like a mama” during Monday night’s meeting. Here’s why:

Seven of the nine MCSD teachers who attended a professional development program called Project Zero at Harvard University this summer – thanks to a total of $56,000 in donations through MEEF – spoke to the board to express their gratitude for the experience and report on how they are sharing the learning with their faculty, so MEEF’s investment in them yields compounded dividends to the school system.

Arnold and Cobis couldn’t attend the meeting, McKnight said. The other seven Harvard Fellows took turns at the microphone and delivered inspiring testimony about the power of this program.

Baugh, a third-grade teacher at Double Churches, said she has read countless books to be better at her profession, but taking a class from the person who wrote one of those books is “like being in there with a rock star.”

Even better, Baugh added, was learning from her fellow fellows from MCSD. “We rocked together,” she said. “... Even now, we’re still doing it, we’re still getting together, and we’re still talking about it.”

Lawrence, a 10th-grade literature teacher at Carver High School and the 2016 MCSD Teacher of the Year, said the best moment at Harvard for him came while walking across the square with renowned professor Howard Gardner.
“That conversation probably lasted two, three minutes real time,” Lawrence said, “but it felt like forever. ... Howard Gardner is probably on the Mount Rushmore of education. He’s the founder of the multiple intelligences theory, that people express their genius in different ways: kinesthetically, auditorily, visually.”

But what he talked about with Gardner, Lawrence said, was the “spirituality involved in education.”

By that he means thinking about teaching as a “spiritual conviction,” Lawrence said. So if educators would guide their words and actions “as if their soul was at stake for these kids, we would be able to accomplish so much more,” Lawrence said.

Mewborn, an English teacher at Kendrick High School, said her Harvard experience helped make her subject relevant for her students.

As a result, Mewborn said, “I’m happy to report to you that my children are doing so much better. They’re loving learning, and they’re loving life at this moment.”

Estes, a kindergarten teacher at Fox Elementary School, said her most significant takeaway came from author Ron Richard, who “talked about the cultural factors that influence the culture in the classroom,” she said.

For example, Estes said, Richard encouraged the teachers to better connect with their students by asking, “What makes you say that? It’s kind of a window into their thinking, to understand where they’re coming from.”

Richard also cautioned the teachers about the pronouns they use in the classroom, Estes said. “Instead of using ‘I’ and ‘you,’ start talking about ‘we’ and ‘our,’ and that way you’re really building that sense of community,” she said.

He told the teachers to apologize to their students when appropriate. “Let them know that we all make mistakes,” Estes said.

Another suggestion from Richard, she recalled: “Don’t be afraid to say, ‘Wow.’ Let them surprise you. Show them that you’re in awe of what they’ve done.”

And perhaps the most important piece of Richard’s advice, Estes said, is the impact of listening to students, summarized by the acronym WAIT: Why Am I Talking?

Toole, a fifth-grade teacher at Blanchard Elementary School, used a spoon and a dustpan – “I was going to bring a shovel,” she said with a laugh – to demonstrate a lasting lesson about critical thinking she learned at Harvard.

“My kids were thinking, but I was using a spoon,” Toole said. “And my kids can’t think deep if I don’t ask them deep questions.”
Then she referred to Proverbs 27:17 as she concluded, “When iron sharpens iron, we sharpen each other. And that’s what this group of people has done.”

Pownall, the music teacher at Britt David Magnet Academy, found renewed appreciation for reflection while at Harvard. Instead of rushing to finish a lesson when the bell rings, Pownall said, she now plans a moment of reflection at the end of class, asking her students, “What did you take from today’s lesson?”

Such a question produces two benefits, Pownall said: “It allows students to digest what they’ve learned and also, as a teacher, it helps me see what they didn’t get or what really stood out to them in that lesson, and it may not have been what I planned for it to be.”

Crouch, a fifth-grade teacher at Double Churches Elementary School and one of 35 U.S. educators who received $25,000 in 2016 as a Milken Educator Award winner, called the Harvard Fellows “a pillar of strength for our district. These are some of the best advocates for children you’re going to find anywhere in the country.”

Crouch said his time at Harvard taught him to ask himself, “Why not?” That prompts him to ask another question: “How can we challenge our children to think that way as well?”

All of which motivates him and his students, Crouch said, to “push forward and learn through failure.”

This was the seventh group of MCSD teachers that MEEF has sent to Harvard, totaling 54 educators, McKnight said. Williams called the program “phenomenal” and said, “We are blessed to live in a generous community.”

MEEF, which also conducts MCSD’s Teacher of the Year program, allows the 10 Teacher of the Year semifinalists from each of the past 10 years to apply for the Harvard Fellows program, McKnight explained.

“The last couple of years, we’ve taken all that applied,” McKnight said. “As long as we can raise the money for it, we’ll take all that apply.”

It costs approximately $6,500 to pay for the expenses of each Harvard Fellow, she said.

Board chairwoman Pat Hugley Green of District 1 thanked MEEF for providing this “opportunity for light to shine on those individual teachers.” This public-private partnership is “one of the things that make our city great and our school district great,” Green said.

Superintendent David Lewis said Harvard officials “were so complimentary of our teachers. They spoke so highly of them for the way they engaged in the classroom discussions and with one another. That means an awful lot. So we can be proud as a community for the way they serve as ambassadors for this community and this profession.”

Lewis said the Harvard Fellows personify MCSD’s mission statement: “to inspire and equip all students to achieve unlimited potential.”
Can science change the culture of education?

Tom Neumark | Dec 7, 2017

What if education were more like medicine? That’s the question Douglas Carnine asked 17 years ago in his essay “Why Education Experts Resist Effective Practices”: “In education,” Carnine wrote, “the judgments of experts frequently appear to be unconstrained by objective research.” Today education remains an immature profession, much like medicine was before the Flexner report in 1910, which addressed the propensity for quackery by raising admission standards for doctors and requiring them to be trained in scientifically based medicine.

The culture of education has a different idea of what it means to be a professional. Some education schools actually ask teachers to develop their own “personal philosophy” of how to teach reading, for example, rather than adhere to scientifically validated methods. In medicine, if you chose your own way to treat cancer instead of an accepted protocol based on science, that would be grounds for malpractice. But in education, the idea of professionalism is linked to the idea of professional autonomy: Educators often believe they should have the freedom to patch together lessons from various sources using techniques they choose, even though their approach hasn’t been tested to see if it works.

In her book, “Myths and Misconceptions About Teaching,” Vicki Snider argues that this “eclectic” teaching is ineffective. In well-designed curricula all the elements of the program have been carefully researched to work together. “The problem,” Snider wrote, “is that when teachers use incompatible approaches, learners may become confused or may adopt a strategy that is ineffective in the long term.” The common response to this argument — that students are different and teachers should customize learning —
misses the point. What students know determines where you start them within a well-designed curricula, but the ordering of content and techniques used are driven more by a logical sequencing of skills and evidence of effectiveness than student characteristics.

Students are different and some amount of tailoring is helpful. Teachers need to be smarter than the programs they use. However, education schools’ emphasis on student differences tends to ignore the fact that human beings have a lot of similarities and that we can develop reliable, standard ways of teaching specific topics that will work for most students most of the time, with validated secondary protocols for those who struggle. Snider points out that teaching is technical, and that an overemphasis on student differences has led the profession to largely ignore scientific findings in favor of teachers’ creating homegrown approaches based on personal experience and opinion.

In his book “Essentials of Assessing, Preventing, and Overcoming Reading Difficulties,” David Kirkpatrick points out that few educators read books on scientifically based instruction, since most assume specialized knowledge teachers lack, and books for educators that accurately cover the advancements in the field are “surprisingly scarce.” In his book “Can You Trust the Experts? How to Tell Good Science From Bad in Education,” Daniel Willingham attempts to bridge that gap by providing a practical way to evaluate the claims educators and education vendors make.

Willingham points out common myths many people believe, such as teaching to students’ “learning styles” is more effective (it isn’t), that Howard Gardner’s multiple intelligences theory means a strength in one intellectual area can make up for a weakness in another (that’s actually counter to his theory), and that studying Latin makes you smarter overall (it doesn’t, though you will likely learn more Latin).

Humans tend to focus on an idea’s plausibility, not proof; we often take shortcuts to evaluate ideas and reject those that don’t fit with previously accepted beliefs. In his book “Language at the Speed of Sight,” Mark Seidenberg explains that education has “coalesced around the work of a few major historical figures: John Dewey, Lev Vygotsky, Jerome Bruner, Jean Piaget, and Maria Montessori. [But] with fifty to one
hundred years of additional research and thought their main insights have been assimilated, and the field has moved on.”

Seidenberg wrote that education is focused on “maintaining a shared belief system,” unlike science, which reevaluates competing theories based on evidence. The good news is that many teachers would love to reach more students with reliable methods, though they face a cultural barrier to doing so. As Marla Migdal from Decoding Dyslexia, a group promoting scientifically based approaches in Frederick’s public schools, said, “Teachers are really interested in learning how to do this, but they often want to discuss it behind closed doors.”

So how can public and private schools move forward? Until education schools stop spreading inaccuracies about learning, teachers, administrators and board members will need to seek out better information, such as the books and articles previously cited, all of which should be required reading for anyone involved with education.
Double major in disparate disciplines? That’s the best way one can benefit from college education

Here is a key advice I would offer smart and ambitious young people in 21st century India:

If you are attracted to different disciplines, don’t choose between them. Go for them both, as much as your educational system allows it.

Feeling torn between disparate disciplines is the best possible thing. It is a mark of genuine liveliness and curiosity. To those of you who don’t feel torn between incompatible things — those who know what you love and are monogamous about it, it is worth trying to cultivate a disciplinary field that is quite different from, even incompatible with from your primary interest. Contra-disciplinarity is the best model of liberal artscience education. It is also its exciting future. Dual majors such as Computer Science and English, or Music and Computer Science — as those piloted by Stanford in 2014 —embody high models of contra-disciplinary education. Philosophy and Physics might form a similar pair, as old as it is new, a timeless
classic. Their shared interest in explaining the universe is split between the natural, the human, and the spiritual. Between concrete reality through the senses and larger patterns that appear as abstract. Experience and data on one hand and theory on the other. Both moving toward the latter through the means of mathematics — the ultimate symbolic system of abstract language.

These are tall orders. No matter how exciting. For those to whom these feel too tall, there are plenty of other options. If you truly hate and fear mathematics and have your heart set on the arts and the humanities, perhaps you could pair your specialisation with a quantitative social science. Of such social sciences, economics would be the bravest choice, as in its current form it’s not that different from mathematics. If that’s too daunting, there is sociology, which, too, makes liberal use of quantitative models, unlike, say, cultural anthropology, which, as it’s practised today, is softer, far less quantitative, a qualitative or imaginative social science rather. And the least courageous would be to combine a core humanities subject, such as literature, with history, a subject that straddles the humanities and the social sciences.

Placed next to each other, literature and the social sciences shed light on each other’s epistemic forms in ways that do not come to surface when studied on their own. Literature, particularly in its modern life, is imagined as the articulation of a special individual — the artist who creates life and reality out of her own mind. More importantly, literature seeks to portray the private lives of individuals; the commitment of literature, as of all art, is to the particular, not to the general. Social sciences on the other hand, are more interested in the general than the particular; in larger patterns more than the individual stories. If they are interested in the particular or the private, it is usually as a means to understanding general or larger patterns in society. The collective instinct of the social sciences throws into greater relief the private instinct of literature. For the student of literature, it is the invaluable reminder that even the most private of lives exist on a canvas of larger social reality; that things that we imagine as pure personal idiosyncrasy are in fact a strange chemical compound of the personal, the familial, the cultural and the material, in mind-boggling ways that the various elements can never be separated or sifted out.

Still, these are predictable combinations between disciplines that are close to each other. As is the time-honoured combination of physics and mathematics, still an intriguing mix of abstract patterns and material reality. Mathematics delights in abstract patterns for their own sake; in
physics, such patterns are used to make sense of material reality and to identify laws that govern the universe.

Mathematics and the arts come together to embody this model of artscience education with greater richness. A marvellous play of the abstract and the concrete defines the sensibility of the student with a dual focus on mathematics and art, be it visual, performative, or literary. The visual arts might combine spatial with logical-mathematical intelligence, just as the literary arts might combine the latter with linguistic intelligence, to use the educationist Howard Gardner’s term for the diverse range of human potential. Mathematics aspires toward the pure and the abstract; the arts, however, are defined by an eternal tension between the experiential and the theoretical, the concrete and the abstract. Without the concrete there is no experience, and without the abstract there is no understanding. The arts must have both. A student specialising in mathematics and art will delve into the contradictory relation with the abstract and the concrete that defines the two domains, even as they experience the play of patterns, numerical or spatial, that hold the musical and the visual arts in friendship with mathematics.

These are indeed, some of the basic axes around which the disciplines revolve: the individual and the collective, the private and the social, the abstract and the concrete. Then there is the human and the natural, which is supposed to distinguish the humanities and the social sciences from the natural sciences. Finally, there is the quantitative and the qualitative — probably the most important of these binaries: numbers or language — which of the two key symbolic systems to use, or both, and in what combination. Dual specialisations that combine a qualitative discipline with a quantitative one offer the next-generation model of artscience education. They can be tailored in whatever combination works best for the student and the institution. In whatever form allowed by the curriculum, and the student’s will and capacity. The most ambitious student will go for the double major in disparate disciplines. Others may choose to major in their field of passion and minor in something far apart; or at the very least, a major and a cluster of courses in the other, enough to form a sub-specialisation.

The fetishisation of a single, monolithic intelligence in existing models of IQ test finds its academic counterpart in the preoccupation with a single discipline that defines the honours system currently in vogue in many universities. Intelligence is now established to be pluralistic. Most of us possess more than just one kind of intelligence. The best way for
college education to nourish and enrich our native intelligences is through a more fragmented model of disciplinary specialisation.

Contradisciplinary specialisation in multiple subjects will define the spirit of artscience education in the twenty-first century.
The 2018 RHSU Edu-Scholar Public Influence Rankings

By Frederick M. Hess | January 10, 2018

Today, we unveil the 2018 RHSU Edu-Scholar Public Influence Rankings, identifying the university-based scholars in the U.S. who are doing the most to shape educational practice and policy. Simply being included in this list of 200 scholars is an accomplishment, given the tens of thousands who might qualify. The ranked scholars include the top 150 finishers from last year, along with 50 "at-large" nominees chosen by the 31-member selection committee (see yesterday’s post for a list of committee members and all the salacious methodological details).

Here are the 2018 rankings (scroll through the chart to see all names and scores, or click the link below the chart to view the table in a new tab). Please note that all university affiliations reflect a scholar’s institution as of December 2017. The bottom line: This is a serious but highly imperfect attempt to nudge academe to do more to recognize and encourage scholarship which engages the real world of practice and policy.

Without further ado, let’s get to the results. The top scorers? All are familiar edu-names, who have authored influential works and played outsized public and professional roles. Topping the rankings, once again, was Stanford University’s Linda Darling-Hammond. Rounding out the top five, in order, were Harvard’s Howard Gardner, U. Penn’s Angela Duckworth, U. Wisconsin’s Gloria Ladson-Billings, and NYU’s Diane Ravitch. The rest of the top ten included Stanford’s Larry Cuban, Temple’s Sara Goldrick-Rab, U. Penn’s Marybeth Gasman, Stanford’s Jo Boaler, and the University of Virginia’s Carol Ann Tomlinson.

Harvard’s Dan Koretz made the biggest single leap from last year, climbing 132 spots to 20th place. His rise was fueled by the success of his much-discussed University of Chicago Press book, The Testing Charade: Pretending to Make Schools Better. Others making especially big jumps from 2017 included Harvard’s Stephanie M. Jones and David J. Deming, Stanford’s David F. Labaree, and Michigan State’s Barbara Schneider. Also notable was Stanford’s Raj Chetty debuting at 14th, on the back of his high-profile work on equality of opportunity and college mobility.

Stanford University and Harvard University had the most ranked scholars. Stanford placed six scholars in the top 20 and Harvard four. U. Penn also placed multiple scholars in the top 20. When it came to overall representation, Harvard led the way with 24 ranked scholars. Stanford was second, with 20, and Columbia was third, with 14. All told, 55 universities had at least one scholar make the cut.
A number of top scorers penned influential books of recent vintage. U. Penn’s Angela Duckworth’s best-seller *Grit: The Power of Passion and Perseverance* continues to do exceptionally well. A few other books that did especially well were Richard Rothstein’s *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*; Harvard Dean Jim Ryan’s *Wait, What? And Life’s Other Essential Questions*; and Jo Boaler’s *Mindset Mathematics: Visualizing and Investigating Big Ideas*.

As with any such ranking, this exercise ought to be interpreted with appropriate caveats. Given that the ratings are a snapshot, the results obviously favor scholars who published a successful book or big study last year. But that’s how the world works. And that’s why we do this every year.

A few scholars tended to lead the field in any given category. For those of you keeping score at home, here’s some highlights:

More than 40 scholars maxed out on Google Scholar. When it came to book points, fifteen scholars maxed out, including Darling-Hammond, Gardner, Ravitch, Larry Cuban of Stanford, and Carol Ann Tomlinson of the University of Virginia. Duckworth and UC-Berkeley’s Richard Rothstein finished first and second in Amazon points, with 20.0 and 19.9 respectively. Fourteen scholars maxed out on syllabus points, including Ladson-Billings, Stanford’s Sam Wineburg, and UT-Austin’s Angela Valenzuela.

As far as attention in the education press, Darling-Hammond, Duckworth, and Temple’s Sara Goldrick-Rab topped the charts. When it came to mentions in mainstream newspapers, Goldrick-Rab took the top spot, with Stanford’s Raj Chetty and U. Penn’s Marybeth Gasman not far behind. In terms of web presence, over a dozen scholars received the maximum score, including Stanford’s Sean Reardon, Harvard’s David Deming, and Marc Lamont Hill of Temple. When it came to social media, Ravitch and Lamont Hill posted the top Klout scores for the second year in a row.

If readers want to argue the construction, reliability, or validity of the metrics, go for it. I’m not sure that I’ve got the measures right or how much these results can or should tell us. That said, I think the same can be said about college rankings, NFL quarterback ratings, or international scorecards of human rights. For all their imperfections, I think such efforts convey real information—and help spark useful discussion.

That’s what I’ve sought to do here. Meanwhile, I’d welcome suggestions for possible improvements and welcome thoughts, questions, and suggestions. So, take a look, and have at it. And, don’t miss Ed Week’s special commentary package on the RHSU rankings—including a lively discussion of what happens when scholarly engagement in public debate ceases to be a good thing, how we can tell, and what can be done about it. Tune in to see what Wisconsin’s Diana Hess, UCLA’s Pedro Noguera, Seton Hall’s Robert Kelchen, Arkansas’ Pat Wolf, and yours truly have to say on that score.
Education must be more than mere consumption of knowledge, says Saikat Majumdar

Our universities have the scaffolding of a liberal arts-science system but not its real spirit, says the author of College: Pathways of Possibility

Novelist and academic Saikat Majumdar’s new book, College: Pathways of Possibility, is a bold critique of our higher education system. Following from the American example, Majumdar explores how a broader, more conceptual “liberal arts” education could greatly enliven the experience of college in India and make it more relevant to further study, work or just an imaginative life. He expands on these ideas in an email conversation. Excerpts:

College is a very impassioned plea for a more expansive and creative approach to undergraduate education. In India, at the undergraduate level, we either have a general education apparently disconnected from both life and the job market, or a highly specialised professional education of the kind presented by the IITs and IIMs. What needs to change here?
The existing B.A./B.Sc. system in the large public universities, as we know, is largely the legacy of a colonial system, designed by the British to train and certify government employees. College proposes a shift away from this understanding of education merely as the consumption of existing knowledge verifiable through examinations. It has three main elements: a shift from the complete preoccupation with the consumption of knowledge to its production in the form of research; the cultivation of at least one discipline as different as possible from one’s primary specialisation — what I call “contra-disciplinarity”; and finally, an expansive general education that combines some exposure to a range of disciplinary methodologies with deep specialisation in one subject. Many things might follow such an expansive edifice of undergraduate education — academic research in a particular discipline, further specialised training for a particular profession, or even a direct entry into the job market.

You question the ‘coverage model’ traditionally followed in Indian universities — the focus on covering the history of a subject rather than understanding what you call its soul. This is a very enlightening distinction but for the study of a subject like literature, don’t you need both — that is, to internalise the poem as a work of art in language, as well as understand the circumstances and politics of its production?

By the ‘coverage model’, I simply mean the compulsion to cover the entire canon of the discipline. Reducing this would allow time and energy for a more creative exploration of its key nodes and features. To let go a bit; focus on a few key things rather than to cover “everything”. This is a principle of intelligent selection rather than the prioritisation of the micro over the macro. To understand a literary text, both are equally important: close reading its features and distant reading its larger historical matrix. Combining the two is more important than ever to understand key epistemic moments in history. For example, the modern understanding of individual authorship in the 18th century. My sense is that the existing literary curricula in many Indian universities seek to provide an equal and ‘factual’ coverage of the entire canon, rather than a selective and strategic emphasis on its key structures and transformation.

I am fascinated with your description, following the writer Howard Gardner, of the kind of intelligences valued today. The intelligence needed to analyse symbols and codes is now highly sought after, and the one that renders a person a ‘master of change’. It seems to me that
both are manifestations of the corporation. Should we anticipate the complete rule of the corporation?

Symbolic systems are fundamental to all intellectual and artistic labour by human beings. Language, mathematics, and computer codes are all different symbolic systems. The corporation has no special or unique claim on it. The other kind of capacity, which Gardner calls the ‘master of change,’ it is true, is especially crucial to institutional or organisational life.

But the free-market corporation is not the only kind of institution, right? This kind of intelligence which enables institutional leadership plays a role in all kinds of social, civic and political organisations, as well as in those driven by profit.

More and more Indian universities are becoming settings for acute political polarisation, which among other things could also be an expression of disenchantment with the very idea of a general higher education. It seems unable to address the questions of the present. Would you agree?

Absolutely, and with great regret. But in this, the universities symptomise a larger, acute, and painful polarisation in Indian society and politics, at large; perhaps, in the world at large — the left and right, liberal and conservative, local and global — whatever we choose to call them. This polarisation grows bloodier and more violent every day. Having lived in the U.S. for many years, I must say the sense of being abandoned, ignored, left behind, felt by disenchanted groups — the rural, the provincial, and the working class — for which they blame the cosmopolitan neo-liberal class, is quite real. That’s my fear.

An excellent university system, including the pioneering system of liberal arts education, has not prevented this polarisation in the U.S.; and according to some rural right-wingers, it has rather aggravated it. Ironically, in spite of the far larger poor and illiterate population in the country, Indian universities, and Indian academics, it seems to me, are more connected to the public sphere beyond the academy, as opposed to the Balkanised American university. This is a real cause for hope.

You say to the ambitious young person in 21st century India, “If you are attracted to different disciplines, don’t choose between them. Go for them both.” Where could they go, within the country, to fulfil an aspiration of this sort?
Potentially anywhere. Back in college at University of Calcutta, an English Honours classmate of mine had mathematics as a “pass” subject. It is not so much the system but the mindset that prevents it. We already have the scaffolding of a liberal arts-science system in our public universities, but not its real spirit. A radical mindset can infuse it with the spirit. Even the IITs make something of a bid for the humanities and the social sciences, as MIT has done so beautifully. New universities like Ashoka provide a more encouraging environment to pursue contra-disciplinarity. But more than anything else, it is attitude that needs to change. It would really be a lot of fun!
So your preschooler can't sit still? Don't worry, it's normal.

By Jen Schneider | Jan 30, 2018

When I think back to my days in preschool (decades ago), I remember a lot of play. Climbing on playground equipment, hands-on activities and learning through movement are a few things that come to mind.

This is still a part of preschool today, but there’s an underlying message that kids are given in structured school — and even at home — that is unrealistic to expect from any school-aged child (and, frankly, adults, too).

Sit still.
Our brains can only process so much information to store into short term memory. Over-inundating children, especially very young kids, with new learning while they sit still doesn’t benefit them long term.

In fact, engaging multiple intelligences — which contribute to a person’s IQ — helps students learn more effectively and retain information, according to Howard Gardner, a professor of education at Harvard University.

Gardner’s multiple intelligences theory "suggests that the traditional notion of intelligence, based on I.Q. testing, is far too limited," according to the American Institute for Learning and Human Development. Instead, the eight different intelligences — verbal, logical, visual, musical, naturalistic, kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal — account for a broader range of human potential in children and adults, he said.

Now, that’s not to say learning proper social skills — such as sitting still and listening — isn’t important for kids. It is. Teaching those skills in proper context is important, but you shouldn’t be worried if your preschooler struggles to sit still during circle time or quiet time.

When my daughter was in preschool, I would ask the teacher quite often how she was doing in class. Her teacher told me that sometimes she had a hard time listening and being silent. At 3 or 4 years old, most kids would struggle with this.

Putting unrealistic expectations on kids to spend a large portion of their school day in silent compliance takes the interaction out of learning. Scaffolding those expectations by teaching kids how to be quiet in certain situations — for example, whispering in the library, being quiet or close to silent while others are napping — can start in preschool, but at this young age, they are not ready to sit with mouths closed and without movement for extended periods of time.

I recently presented during a staff development meeting for teachers. During my presentation, I notice these adults couldn’t sit still and silent for more than 20 to 30
minutes at a time. I can’t either! I want to interact with my colleagues, talk about what I am learning and even move around. It’s different when adults are sitting at a computer or working alone, focused on work.

But as an instructor, I try to build in interaction, movement and conversation into lessons for adult learners. I do the same for my seventh grade students. Even more time should be spent letting our little learners move around.

Let’s face it! We are social beings. We’ve always been this way, and it’s important to recognize that whether you’re hanging out with your 3-year-old or your spouse.

Don’t worry if your preschooler isn’t ready to sit through an entire movie or listen to a 20-minute reading lesson. Even adults benefit from movement and socialization throughout most of their work day. Preschoolers aren’t mini-adults, so we have to give them even more time to learn and take cues on when to be quiet and still, which shouldn’t be very often.
The Safari Kid believes that classrooms should be very stimulating space, facilitating multiple possibilities of action. The environment and the educational practices in classroom must coexist in meaningful ways that are related to students and their potential, says Jitendra Karsan, CEO – Safari Kid, India, in conversation with Elets News Network (ENN).

Share with us about the curriculum followed at Safari Kid. How does it ensure playbased, explorative and structured learning among kids?

As one of the key principles of our programme, the curriculum at Safari Kid is customised to fit every child’s individual needs and capabilities. This is accomplished by combining different approaches to learning methodologies, highlighting those that are more active and dynamic. It's clear from working and observing any classroom that Gameful Thinking is at the basis of children’s learning experiences. Through Gamification, children learn to live, and they rehearse the way they act outside the classroom. That is why at Safari Kid we present them with reallife situations all the time, taking contents into a lively
representation. Teaching through Gamification and Project Based Learning allows us to introduce topics that help children understand concepts and processes better. At the same time, it allows them to get deeper knowledge on themes that they’ve already delved into. Students must deal with situations and conflicts that help them answer their own emotional inquiries. In this case, we’re referring to structured or mathematical games, which give meaning to everything that students experience and explore with new concepts, without fear of being wrong.

This approach is based on games that follow instructions and learning objectives, instead of those of “free play” (even though both are key for the intellectual and social development of the child) and it is supported by other methodologies like Montessori, Reggio Emilia, Emmi Pikler, Waldorf, Howard Gardner, etc. As a result, gamification shows us a child’s intellectual development process.

To take theory into a practice, for example, when it comes to identifying and explaining the areas of geometric figures, we take the children and calculate areas in the playground.

Experience and scientific research shows us that students can learn any concept presented to them as long as we adapt them to their maturational age. Other methodological strategies that are incorporated into the SK curriculum include interdisciplinary projects, problem-based learning, mental maps and thinking routines.

“At Safari Kid, we understand that classrooms must be a very stimulating that facilitates and suggests multiple possibilities of action. The environment and the educational practices in the classroom must coexist I real, meaningful ways that are closely related to students and their potential.”

**How does the learning environment at Safari Kid help students to enhance its students’ imagination?**

At Safari Kid, we understand that classrooms must be a very stimulating space that facilitates and suggests multiple possibilities of action. The environment and the educational practices in the classroom must coexist in real, meaningful ways that are closely related to students and their potential.

Choosing wide, well differentiated, easily accessible and specific spaces is the key to optimising the teaching-learning process in the classroom. That is why our spaces
encourage creativity, public speaking, working on arts and exploring on different projects and themes. Our spaces allow and encourage joint assignments (like assemblies and dramatisations), always reminding the educational value of autonomy. Our spaces invite them to make hypotheses, build fantasies and narrate new experiences. This way, children’s imagination is not only enhanced but favoured from such rich environment, where discussions and reflections on what is known and what is new to be learnt is valued.

**What best practices, at par with global standards, are followed at Safari Kid to ensure students’ safety?**

Another of Safari Kid’s principles as a programme is to ensure the safety and caring of our children, their parents, and our employees. We have developed our own operations manual with high standards on safeguarding based on the best practices in childcare of different countries. Each child is treated as an individual, with a natural process of development and needs to be attended. Teachers and managers are trained and ready to identify if any child has special (social or physical) needs that must be taken into consideration.

Along with their training, all our teachers and employees go through a very rigorous interviewing process where their capabilities, backgrounds and references are checked to be up to our highest standards. Everyday, routines and aspects like the tracking of each meal had at the nursery, their toileting details and medication schedules are noted and journaled. This documentation, though confidential, is available to be shared with parents on a regular basis with all the detailed and written feedback available to them in the classroom, waiting to be shared also in individual or group meetings.

**Parents play an important role in holistic development of their children. How the school involves parents in students’ day-to-day learning?**

Along with their teachers, parents are partners in developing a child’s learning process. Therefore, effective, constant and personalised communication is crucial for Safari Kid. The way in which we approach this relationship is by creating the role of the Parent Relationship Manager, someone that closely follows every child’s needs and their development. Their task is to share the documentation of the children’s learning process and their performance along with our teachers. Parents are invited to witness their children’s work through activities held during the school year, including sports days, art
exhibitions and special celebrations or holidays: the classroom becomes a space where knowledge and growth is shared and celebrated. Also, parents get access to the daily activities and assignments performed by their children through the Safari Kid app, which is updated with pictures on a regular basis.

**Please describe the accelerated learning programme.**

At Safari Kid we believe each child is an individual. And, we must favour development of their all possibilities. By doing so we make sure that all the Multiple Intelligences (M.I.) are being considered. While some students access to learning from a mathematical logic, others accomplish it through other intelligences: if we present concepts through stories, we encourage linguistic-verbal intelligence; if we do it with a cooperative game, we encourage inter-personal intelligence; while reflection appeals to the intrapersonal intelligence. For some years now, the relationship between neuroscience and education has become increasingly important. The accelerated learning programme is an advanced teaching and learning method that sees it base on the latest neurological research to increase learning effectiveness. Accelerated Learning unlocks much of the potential for learning that has been left largely untapped by most conventional learning methods by actively involving the child, using physical activity, creativity, music, images, colour, and other methods designed to get children deeply involved in their own learning. As education professionals, we must attend to knowing how the brain works because it allows us to know its possibilities and how to take care of it better. Especially if, in addition to knowing how our students are performing today, we care about what they can become in the future.
Hermetically sealed disciplinary rigour is passe, says this book. Liberal arts-science college education has to embrace other fields, while tending to its roots.

India has 11,443 colleges and 789 universities. Yet the education they impart to its lakhs of students are incomparably lower than accepted global norms. Of the tens of thousands of graduates of ‘English literature’, for example, a majority can’t express themselves clearly in the language, nor would they be persuaded to learn. Most graduates, moreover, of science and humanities courses are unemployable. How is it that over a century of ‘modern’ education has yielded so little dividend? Saikat Majumdar’s *College: Pathways of Possibility* picks out our diseased system and charts an ambitious path for undergraduate education.

The fact that Indian undergraduate arts-science education—as different from professional courses—is considered a cesspit of mediocrity is spelt out at the beginning, after a recounting of
engineering students cramming in Kota’s coaching dungeons: As Majumdar notes in comparison, the prestige of a degree from MIT or Caltech does in no way overshadow that from Yale or Princeton. His goal here is to “find some new avenues for art-science education in India today”. What ails such education is an ingrained prejudice against original thinking, a system that rewards expert swotters. The roots of this are well-known. In the words of Andre Beteille, who is quoted: “The first universities that came into being in 1857 in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras were set up primarily for conducting examinations and awarding degrees, and not for undertaking research or even teaching”. Known for ignoring scientific education, it was a gateway to clerkdom. Independent India did little to change this structure, and with the setting up of specialised centres for research in the pure and social sciences, art-science colleges are pushed further into making their drab journey through “India’s examination-centred pedagogy”.

Majumdar talks about how the Department of Computer Science at Stanford initiated two dual majors—Computer Science and English, and Computer Science and music, bemoaning the popularly assumed divorce between the ‘liberal arts’ (originally containing the sciences, now erroneously equated with the ‘humanities’) and science, leaving both streams impoverished. As in medieval varsities, where philosophy and nascent physics/maths sat on the same desk, nourishing each other’s growth, it’s time again, says Majumdar, for such happy commingling.

While supporting the demand for education to be more profession-oriented, he rejects the old opposition between ‘fusty humanities’ and ‘progressive sciences’, saying they have no relation to the needs of the contemporary global economy.

In his quest to chart a path for an ideal inter-disciplinary liberal artscience education, Majumdar takes the help of developmental psychologist Howard Gardner’s multiple intelligence theory, which helps obtain a glimpse into the “soul of disciplines”, bypassing the obsession with monochromatic canonical content in undergraduate disciplines, and into answering ‘big think’, epistemological questions that form its foundations. For example, in English literature pedagogy, we are obsessed with an exhaustive study of its evolution from Old English to Modernism and after, but neglect epistemic questions about the shifting nature of the worldview about literature itself, and about authorship, text, readership and consumption of literary works. The major flaw here, says Majumdar, is the project to equip every undergrad for post-grad education—a handicap for the current global marketplace for jobs, which only rewards an agglomeration of skills.
Elite colleges such as St. Xavier’s, Calcutta, were, crucially, agents of social change and modernity, but basically remained an awardee of degrees even after independence.

Majumdar argues this can only be through a happy interplay of the various intelligences—linguistic and logical-mathematical, as well as spatial, body-kinaesthetic, naturalist, spiritual, moral and existential—that help in understanding contrasting epistemic forms. This contra-disciplinary approach, where a qualitative discipline is paired with a quantitative one (like philosophy with physics), can be the only model for next generation student to keep him or her primed for the widest variety of careers. To achieve this, he repeatedly insists, current undergraduate courses have to relinquish some of their rigorous specialisation. Education like this ignites a passion for learning into those who decide to go further into the disciplines. To trigger the latter, production of new knowledge, or research, is essential, in addition to teaching and acquiring of established knowledge. Undergrad research is crucially important as exercises in the deployment of received knowledge. In India, where generations pore over the same syllabi, this seems to be a brave new world. Majumdar’s lucidly advanced and convincingly argued ideas on college education are radical and might take decades for it to spread evenly across the moth-eaten landscape, but a tentative start somewhere should be a cause for hope.
Learn to Unlearn
Dr Albert P Rayan FEBRUARY 10, 2018

Is teaching-learning limited only to application of knowledge already acquired? Or does it also call for looking at things anew?

“The illiterate of the future are not those who can’t read or write but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.” – Alvin Toffler

When we allow ourselves to be controlled by our preconceived and misconceived notions, governed by myths, conditioned by false assumptions and (mis)guided by wrong opinions we have formed about people, we are not open to new ideas and are unwilling to undergo a paradigm shift. When we fail to allow our minds to let go of “mis-and-dis-beliefs” we have held and learnt over a period of time, we don’t allow ourselves to blossom.

A close introspection will help us know whether we are really interested in unlearning what we have learnt. Unlearning makes us literate, educated, and wise. Unfortunately, the topic “unlearning” has not been much discussed in academia and the need for it is not emphasized in our educational institutions.

What is unlearning?

Unlearning is the process of realising that something which we learnt earlier is incorrect, ineffective, or obsolete, admitting it and deciding to erase such bad conditioning and misconceptions from our mind for good. It is the process of exploring what we have stored in our system and deleting all the unnecessary data. It is the process of saying bye to an old, obsolete, and outdated paradigm, and embracing a new paradigm and willingly undergoing a paradigm shift.

Unfortunately, we are controlled by myths which do not allow us to open our eyes to reality.
Common myths

About two years ago, The Guardian published a news report which stated that four neuromyths are still prevalent in schools. The myth that students will learn better if they are taught in a way that matches their preferred style of learning (visual, auditory, kinaesthetic) was believed by over 93% of the teachers surveyed, though there is no evidence to support the claim. The second myth that people only use 10% of their brain was also found to be most prevalent among teachers — no scientist has proved it. The third myth that the difference between the left hemisphere and the right hemisphere results in individual differences among learners was believed by 91% of teachers. The fourth myth is that playing brain-training games can help improve one’s memory, concentration, or intelligence.

I contacted world-renowned psychologist Howard Gardner, who developed the theory of multiple intelligences (MI), and Professor Michael W. Connell, Principal, Institute for Knowledge Design, via email to get their views on the myths. Replying to my query Gardner replied, “...I am not an enthusiast for the concept of learning styles – and am frustrated when “MI theory” is erroneously collapsed with ‘learning styles’... I agree that #2 and #4 are myths. #3 may have a shade of truth to it, reflecting hemisphere dominance and specialisation, but the statement itself is not helpful.”

Similarly, Michael W. Connell in his response stated, “I agree with Howard — #1, #2, and #4 appear to be persistent myths. As for #3, the popular notion of “right-brained vs. left-brained” is almost certainly a gross over-simplification that is not useful and may be used to justify ineffective teaching practices...”

Alas, myths become viral in the era of social media and make academics believe them as facts and scientific truth. That is the power of “post-truth”.

There are many more myths that are prevalent in India. Here are some such myths: 1) The teacher is the source of knowledge. 2) There are slow learners. 3) To help learners learn English pronunciation better, phonetics must be taught. 4) Only brilliant students can crack Civil Services examinations.

Categories of teachers

A few years ago, I had an opportunity to interact with a group of school teachers. A few had over 25 years, some over 10 years, and the rest had 5-10 years of experience. When I asked them, “Do you teach various subjects (courses) the way you were taught by your teachers about 20 years, 10 years or five years ago?”, some nodded their heads and gave an affirmative answer.

“Don’t you think it is important to be aware of the modern teaching methods and learn new skills and also to bid goodbye to traditional teaching methods and let go of false assumptions?” Their response was similar to this: “We have many years of teaching experience. We know everything. We are comfortable with our teaching methods. We don’t need to learn any new skills.” It clearly showed that they resisted change and were not ready to unlearn.

In this context, I categorise the teachers into three types: Neomethodophobes, Neomethodomaniacs, and Neomethodophiles.
Neomethodophobes are allergic to anything new — new methods, new approaches, new knowledge, new skills, new ideas, etc. They are neither open-minded nor willing to accept any change. Neomethodomaniacs are teachers who like novel ideas and methods of doing things but are uncritical of anything. They blindly accept changes and are very easily influenced by anyone as they lack critical thinking. Neomethodophiles are those who look at things critically and are willing to unlearn. (P’Rayan, A., IATEFL Cardiff 2009 Online Forum).

Teachers, as educators, who constantly unlearn are able to enable their students to learn to unlearn.

Ways of unlearning

The first step towards becoming an “unlearner” is not just to have a thirst for knowledge but to question our knowledge. Discussing our knowledge with those who are competent in a particular field, being challenged constantly, and being ready to be proved wrong will help us understand whether what we have learnt is still relevant or obsolete. It is also important to question one’s belief system and check whether we are treating myths as scientific facts.

The next important step is to take steps to develop creative and critical thinking.

Unlearning is required not only in educational institutions but also in workplaces. Not only teachers and students but everyone, irrespective of his/her profession, needs to learn to unlearn as it is the first step towards acquiring real knowledge.

Attaining knowledge is easy but attaining wisdom is difficult.

What Lao Tzu says is quite relevant today: “To attain knowledge, add things every day. To attain wisdom, remove things every day.”
On Creativity
by Agnes Gund | March 5, 2018

In our time, there is a great deal of spirited talk about creativity. Where does it come from? How can society encourage creativity? How can citizens make creative contributions to our shared life? Too often, creativity has been identified with the singular, often isolated genius working alone in a garret or a lab, cut off from others. In this view, creativity has been identified with specially endowed individuals who are just not like the rest of us. But that portrait of the creative individual is not sufficient. Creative individuals gravitate toward activity, toward places where change is happening, where ideas are in discussion. They look for spark, not necessarily for solitude. They want to make contributions to the world, not merely express their own ideas. This portrait of creativity leads to very different ideas about where it comes about, how it happens, whether it can be made to happen.

According to my friend Professor Howard Gardner, creativity can be learned. He describes three kinds of “minds” that matter: First, the “disciplined mind” that masters information; second, the “synthesizing mind” that utilizes information; and third, the “creative mind”—innovative, bold, the mind able to start ideas and make change. For
Gardner, schools are the agencies that can provide this discipline and synthesizing skill and, importantly, schools also free creativity.

At Studio in a School, a program I founded over forty years ago in the New York City public schools, and which now operates programs in five cities around the country, we have learned that creative classrooms grow creative people. Young people in Studio’s programs learn to confront and solve problems, to persist and iterate, and to express their way of seeing the world through art-making. They are developing the “habits of mind” that we associate with creative individuals.

In Studio’s programs, we have always hired professional, exhibiting visual artists to teach art. This is because artists are particularly well-suited to modeling an artist’s way of seeing and thinking to their students. In other words, they are helping to teach creativity. The artists who lead Studio in a School’s programs exhibit and foster creativity every single day in the work they do, inspiring children to dream and to dare.

It gives me a great deal of joy to visit Studio in a School classrooms and to experience young people engaged in the process of making art—to see their excitement as they pull their first print or learn to manipulate clay or mix colors for the first time. Every year, we host “Open Studios” where we ask well-known artists to visit a class. Last year, Jeff Koons joined a second-grade class on the Upper West Side and told them about a clay sculpture he made when he was their age. I thought it was truly special for him to recognize his own creative journey in their experience. I also remember being deeply moved when Teresita Fernández visited a class in the South Bronx. She told the students that they were all artists, that their point-of-view and way of seeing the world matters, that their creative expression matters. It was as if she was saying to the students, “Look, you matter.”

This is why I have devoted so much of my life to advancing equal access to quality arts education for children in New York City and beyond. Schools are not the only agencies that can foster creativity, and art is not the only subject through which a young person—or an adult—can develop the habits of mind we associate with creativity. But quality art instruction is uniquely suited to supporting these skills and unleashing a child’s creative capacity. The investment we make in art teachers and in making art a part of every child’s schooling represents an investment in our future and a commitment to raising a new generation of creative thinkers.
Riverview Charter School Recognized For Closing Education Gap

Kid's Community College has been recognized for closing the science achievement divide between black and white students.

By D'Ann Lawrence White | May 10, 2018

RIVERVIEW, FL -- Kid's Community College, a kindergarten through eighth grade charter school in Riverview, has been recognized for closing the science achievement divide between black and white students.

KCC was one only seven schools in Florida in which the science achievement gap was reversed. At KCC, black students outpaced their white counterparts on the 2016-17 eighth-grade Sunshine Science Assessment, according to a recent study conducted by the Educational Leadership and Counseling Department at Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University.

"It's wonderful to have student and teacher efforts recognized in such a way," said campus director Karen Seder. "Since our beginning, we have dedicated ourselves to small campus and class sizes that allow us to focus on individual
student needs. Studies such as this one validate that our approach continues to work well for all students."

Established in 2003, Kid's Community College provides a nationally accredited, individualized education based on Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory. It is that dedication to high-quality, individualized education that has gained KCC numerous instructional and achievement awards in its nearly 15-year history.

"The seven schools are an extreme phenomenon of interest for my research," wrote doctoral candidate Terrance McNeil. "I believe that not only should these schools be recognized, but the rest of the state, and the nation, could benefit from learning about their leadership practices for science education. I intend to conduct a brief inquiry on the policy, curricular and professional development practices that make these schools special. They represent only .008 of the middle schools in the state."

KCC has been recognized by the State of Florida for its "High-Impact Teachers" in various academic areas. It was also recognized by Florida Gov. Rick Scott for being in the top 10 percent of all schools in various improvement categories.

"At KCC, students develop strong academic, social and emotional characteristics. They are also more likely to perform well academically," said KCC servant leader Tim Kilpatrick. "KCC prepares students for the intellectual challenges of further education and focuses on the development of the whole child regardless of circumstance."

Kid's Community College, located at 10030 McMullen Road, Riverview, is a tuition-free public charter school of choice. For information, visit the KCC website.
Now that we have a new government serious in implementing change, with an inclusionist policy, I’d like to share my view of what the children of all Malaysians deserve.

We saw, especially in the era of the previous regime, our educational system plagued with themes of racial discrimination, student indiscipline, gangs in schools and the growing numbers of young people more interested in bike-racing past midnight in cities such as Johor Bahru.

Why this malaise in the most important sector of society: education? How do we bring back the joy of learning and the importance of education to the young? Herein lies the need to reconceptualise the way we build our schools in our hope to prepare the younger members of our society to participate in Malaysia’s democratic lives.

Each child has the right to be intelligent. This is a view of education the new regime needs to work on. I begin with talking about what an “ideal school” should look like as we keep afloat in this predatory “Blue Ocean” of globalisation, as we try to sustain ourselves economically, culturally, and cognitively.

The future is here. A long time ago, in fact. Schools need to change, the way they are defined and built. What kind of school would best fit the needs of Malaysia’s intelligent child?

It would be a “Transhumanistic -Renaissance school” Deweyian-Freirian-Monstessorian-Gandhian in nature, in which the child is a living, thinking, breathing and artefact-creating being growing up not only useful for himself/herself in society but also a culturally-responsive global citizen able to use
technology for peaceful purposes. The school, therefore, must be created, philosophically, artistically, architecturally, and responsively to nurture this new human being.

The principle of singularity-multiplicity will be applied, thinking without borders and knowledge framed constructively, and artefacts created for social use be produced altruistically. The students will be in a space of knowledge production, construction, and deconstruction without walls, with Nature or a simulacrum of it adorning the surrounding with the technology used purposefully and sustainably and the “teachers”, are merely guides on the side and not sages on stage.

It’s a “Google Scholar-meets-Facebook-meets Elon Musk-meets-a Summerhill-tribal-green” type of school. Here are my thoughts on education, an excerpt from an article I once wrote in an online journal called Eurasia Review, based in Oregon, USA:

” … what is our problem with this gentle profession and enterprise called “education”? How must we act and feel as teachers — those “transmitters of culture and Grand Narratives” and at the same time “subverts of the human mind and promoters of Constructivism in thinking? How do we mediate these two roles; of the managers of virtue and cultivators of critical thinking?

Having been immersed in this “passion” called the “teaching profession” for more than 25 years now, teaching in the two cultures “East and West”. i.e. in Malaysia and in the US in both the secondary and at the tertiary levels both ways, I have this to say about what teachers ought to become and how the “Socratic ethos” need to be in synchrony with the mind of the millennial child that resides in the 21st Century.

The noble profession of teaching should only be reserved for the best and the brightest in society: the Socrates amongst us. It should be reserved for those who have the passion, dedication, and discipline to turn children into radical thinkers who will question everything and anything and who will create useful artefacts for society and dedicate one’s life to the improvements of the mind, body, and soul of fellow beings.

This is necessary so that society can constantly be renewed, refreshed and be brought to reach the height of periods of evolving renaissance. This will be our Socratic process of bringing humanity from darkness to light as in the Sanskrit term “guru”.

Having said this, many of those teaching in our classrooms today ought to leave the profession for many are there whose unintended goal is to destroy the minds of an entire generation.

A good teacher is one who is skilled in the art and science of planting doubts in the curious young minds and good at training minds to be scientists and philosophers. A Socratic teacher as such will leave each lesson with more questions than answers, to respect each and every child as if each one of them is a teacher one can learn from, and to shower each child with questions that will make him/her shake the foundation of the self, invigorate the critical sensibility in the self. This is done so that the child will grow up thinking as freely as how he/she ought to live and die and free as Nature wishes human beings to be.

Such notion of freedom is the creed of a free society, one that is free from the dictates of dogma and dictatorship of the few; those powerful few who themselves were trained to think as free as how oppressors and immoral aristocrats ought to be. ‘Man is born free and everywhere he is in chains, as the enlightenment thinker Jean Jacques-Rousseau said and we do not have anything to lose except of chains, the economic historian Karl Marx concluded.
Dare we build this new school order?

In the next part of this memo, I shall speak of how technology is changing schooling and how our educational system, in need of major overhaul, can best respond to the needs of our global village’s major and rapidised technological shifts.


**Part 2**

Today’s schools need to be cognitively architectured and grown anew, and made to start at year zero of a new education revolution. This revolution should rest on of the idea of singularity and complexity, and the multiplicity of knowledge that is fluid and evolving organically.

This philosophy of education is yet to be conceived and crafted, even as the nature of the human self and the mind is being reconstructed, leaving behind the legacy of the paradigms of industrialism, post-industrialism, and quantum physics.

Schools will one day respond to these mega changes and cease to exist in its current shape, form and purpose.

They will one day replace institutions of power and knowledge controlled form above, such as ashrams, madrasah, abbots, convents, and kibbutzim. These are prison-houses of mass indoctrination, of monocultural cognitive linearism for the state to mould children into citizens obedient enough to be slaves to the power elite, new global imperialists and newer mandarins.

Essentially, in this post-industrial social design called ‘instrumental education’, today’s schools are mere factories producing an unthinking citizenry living in a matrix of absurdities.

But what would be among the most compelling transformational uses of technology seen in schools of today, given that we are living in a deeply mediated technological world?

It would be an entire school using the philosophy of project-based learning – students beginning their day with ‘playlists’ as learning objectives, going to their collaborative stations; teachers as tech-gurus and chief researchers, utilising only primary sources; in a research-driven and stress-free school which is aimed at using technologies of the future purposefully, and to nurture scientific, artistic, philosophical, and global thinking.

It is a redesign of instruction that Socrates would have insisted upon and Elon Musk has shown, but informed by the wisdom of Howard Gardner. That would be my idea of a democratic academy, one that Henry David Thoreau would approve of.

**Using technology to transform**

I saw this idea of a digitally-driven, project-based learning concept in schools in New Jersey and in New York, through the School of One initiative.

National education leaders and ministers – once they become skilled in conceiving the relationship between human beings, technology, culture, and schooling – should explore cutting-edge ideas for using technology in more transformational ways.
This includes writing, reading, thinking, and creating. Virtual reality, big data historicising tools, GPS-type systems, and 3D printing technologies are emerging as potentially transformational tools of collaborative learning.

I grew up in a village in Johor Bahru, like Mowgli in *The Jungle Book*. I saw the first computer – perhaps an IBM 036 – in an office which 12 human beings had to share. That was in the early 1970s. I have used technologies of learning such as the ‘tablet’ (a green alphabet and numbers writing pad used with chalk), learned to use the ancient typewriter, then the need-to-boot floppy-disc computer, and other tools to work and learn with the progress of technology.

Today, I am fortunate to be able to even design an entire Master’s curriculum using collaborative technologies and smart tools. I know I will continue to evolve carefully with technologies, without the fear of being turned into a robot and thinking like one.

**Technological advances**

There are advances in technology I foresee in the near future. I see virtual and augmented reality as technologies of the future that will redesign schooling altogether, only if these are to be used purposefully and democratically, and made available to children in impoverished countries.

The underlying principle of learning is not to showcase gadgets and turn children into techno-zombies, but to develop minds to be more humane and emphatic – more *human* – and to understand and manage an increasingly complex world in which information has become a commodity, and where knowledge and understanding, let alone wisdom is absent.

We are at a critical juncture of perhaps a third digital revolution, after the computer and the internet. We are moving into a phase of transhumanism, with its attendant dangers and inherent contradictions.

I see global education, learning, and cross-cultural perspectives in urban-international education as the new frontiers for any education consulting company to be venturing into.

**‘Summerhill’ of love**

My passion about education could be traced as early as I started thinking what my ‘existence in school’ means. I wanted to know more about how my teachers and my principles thought. I read book on educational philosophy, at quite an early age.

One book that had a profound effect on the way I think about the world and my place in it was AS Neil’s *Summerhill: A Radical Approach to Child Rearing*, published in the ‘hippie’ 1960s. I read the entire book in 1975 when I was 14, in an ‘experimental American high school’ in Kuantan. I was chosen to be sent to the school based on my academic achievements and my parent’s poverty level.

Its model was based partly on the Bronx High School of Science in New York, as I found out while preparing my PhD proposal for the Stanford Graduate School of Education.

The Bronx High School of Science produced eight Nobel laureates in science and six Pulitzer Prize winners, two of the world’s most prestigious awards in those fields.

So, in that boarding school, I was bored. I read many things. Neil’s book was in my school library – meant for my teachers, I suppose.
I love the way the children were treated in the titular boarding school, Summerhill, in Neil’s book. They could come to school whenever they liked. Learning in that one-house school happened as democratically as it should be in the ‘Summer of Love’ sixties.

The best thing is that, according to Neill, the school’s founder, the children did not turn out to be criminals.

Maybe deep inside I was trying to understand why I was put in that boarding school in Kuantan, sent there at 13, hundreds of miles away from my village, and missing my mother every day.

It was an experimental American high school, and I was there as the government’s guinea pig, as we were constantly told, happily, by our teachers. I am writing my memoir on those days of schooling.

But back to my memo.

I want to suggest the new education minister read up on essential works by major authors on school reform, so that he/she could do the best job producing the best and brightest of our nation.

I recommend works both of the traditional and modern authors: Socrates, Gardner, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Maria Montessori, John Dewey, Paulo Freire, Peter McLaren, Carl Perkins, and even sci-fi writers talking about scenarios in education.

Let us help the Education Ministry conduct a total revamp: from philosophy to paradigm to practice and people, as well as products.

We have a set of pillars of a major shift to erect. It is a new beginning requiring careful and intelligent steps, in a world of alienation, unemployment, technological determinism, underrepresentation, and increasingly violent racism and religious intolerance – the excesses of predatory local, national and global capitalism.

But most of all, we must move forward gracefully, for the future of all the Malaysian children, hungry for knowledge, understanding and wisdom, to function as good and thinking citizens in a truly multicultural society.
SCRANTON — Established two years ago, the private, nonprofit Discovery Multiple Intelligences Preschool in East Mountain is expanding.

Scranton’s only public-private Montessori preschool and kindergarten, Discovery MI Preschool plans to buy the Irish Cultural Society building, 1301 Beech St., from where the preschool operates, said Discovery’s board president, Stacy Nivert.

The school will convert the existing gym into a third classroom and build an addition for a new gym, school events and an after-school care program in time for the start of the 2018-19 school year, she said.

“It’s a significant project,” Nivert said. “We hope to start demolition and construction on June 15. It’s got to be done by the end of August.”

Discovery’s first preschool classroom opened in September 2016, the result of parents coming together when the state forced the Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligence Charter School to close its preschool.
Discovery offers a Montessori curriculum using a multiple intelligence theory, similar to what was offered at the Gardner charter school. The state forced the charter school’s pre-kindergarten program to close because state law prohibits charter schools from operating pre-K programs.

A second preschool classroom opened in January 2017, followed later by a kindergarten one.

The preschool accommodates 40 preschool and kindergarten students and has 15 children on a waiting list.

A third classroom will accommodate 20 additional children, giving the 15 wait-listed students spots.

“The school has seen phenomenal growth since we’ve opened,” Nivert said.

In keeping with the school’s mission, at least 10 of the new spots in the classroom will be for children funded through Pre-K Counts, Head Start and pre-K tax scholarships administered through United Way and the Child Care Works Subsidized Child Care Program and managed by Child Care Information Services (CCIS).

“There is substantial research to show the human and economic benefits of early learning, and we are thrilled to be able to expand our programs to accommodate up to 60 students,” Nivert said. “Despite recent expansion in the sector, there is still a critical shortage of early childhood education within the Scranton area.”

Discovery is receiving a $70,000 grant from the city for the building purchase and expansion project.

On May 14, council introduced a resolution from Mayor Bill Court-right for the city to give a $70,000 “loan-to-grant” to Discovery for the expansion project. The loan, coming from the city Office of Economic and Community Development’s Business and Industry Loan/Grant Program, converts to a grant if the school creates two full-time equivalent jobs for low-to-moderate income people within six months. Council unanimously adopted the resolution Monday night.

“I’d like to congratulate the owners of the Discovery Preschool for being part of our city,” Councilman Wayne Evans said. “I’m very happy that this grant is going forward so they can continue to expand their great work.”

The preschool also recently received a $9,000 grant from the Scranton Area Community Foundation and a $4,000 grant from the PNC Foundation.

“These grants are valuable support for our expansion,” Nivert said.
The Scranton Area Community Foundation is a public charity whose mission is to enhance the quality of life for Lackawanna County residents through organized philanthropy. It acts as a grant-maker, catalyst, convener and steward.

“We’re proud to be able to grant funds in support of the growth and expansion of Discovery MI Preschool,” said Laura Duccheschi, president and CEO of the Scranton Area Community Foundation. “Through our many generous donors, it is a privilege to help support the school’s strong commitment to early childhood education in Scranton and their vision for the future in Lackawanna County.”

The PNC Foundation focuses its philanthropic mission on early childhood education and community and economic development.

“Extensive research indicates that the return on investment in high-quality early education and school readiness initiatives are significant and long-lasting,” said Pete Danchak, PNC regional president for Northeastern Pennsylvania. “They positively impact our children, our society and the health of our economy.”

The use of the Irish Cultural Society building as a school brings it back to its previous purpose, society President Jack McIntyre said.

“The Irish Cultural Society will live on but does not need a dedicated building to continue,” McIntyre said. “The building was once the John Bartram elementary school and we are pleased to see it come full circle and become a school again.”
Local Charter Narrows Achievement Gap, Individualizes Instruction

In a recent study through the Educational Leadership and Counseling Department at Florida Agriculture and Mechanical University, Riverview South Kid’s Community College K-8 (KCC) was one of only seven schools in the state able to reverse the science achievement gap, and African American students outpaced their white counterparts on the 2016-2017 state science assessment.

Established in 2003, KCC is a K-8 charter with the goal of providing an individualized education based on Howard Gardner’s Multiple Intelligence Theory to each of its students. KCC is committed to a more well-rounded approach to education that takes into account spatial, kinesthetic, musical, inter/intrapersonal, and naturalist intelligences. By recognizing and building upon the unique gifts each student brings and supplementing a student’s
challenge areas, professors tailor an instructional approach to scaffold all students to success. “At KCC, students develop strong academic, social and emotional characteristics,” explained KCC Servant Leader, Tim Kilpatrick.

Karen Seder, Campus Director, could not be more proud of her students’ success: “KCC is now and has always been dedicated to the well-being and educational success of every child.” These statistics affirm KCC’s conceptual framework, but it is the students’ excitement for learning that really drives Seder and her staff. Seeing the smiles on students’ faces when they brought back two 1st place and one 3rd place Elementary Science Fair awards and a 2nd place Middle School award is the real reward.

KCC is a free public charter for all students in Hillsborough County. With nine campuses to choose from, there is a KCC near you ready to meet your child’s needs. For more information, visit them online at mykidscc.org or email info@kidscc.org. KCC Riverview South K-8 is located at 10030 Mathog Rd. in Riverview.
Lightbridge Academy of Millburn Hosted Grand Opening Celebration on Saturday

By CATHY HARVEY | June 10, 2018

MILLBURN, NJ - Lightbridge Academy of Millburn, a child care and education center, hosted its grand opening and open house on Saturday to introduce the community to its new franchise located at 27 Bleeker Street. It was also a celebration of its two-month anniversary. A lively crowd of parents, grandparents and children joined the festivities which included a ribbon-cutting ceremony with Millburn Mayor Cheryl Burstein, a photo booth, a petting zoo, a bubble party with a DJ, balloon making, refreshments, a fire truck, and a tour of the center and information sessions.

Lightbridge Academy describes itself as “The Solution for Working Parents.” Established in 1997, Lightbridge Academy provides early education and childcare to children ages six weeks through kindergarten, as well as special programming for children up to 10 years old during school holidays, breaks and summer camp. It currently has centers throughout New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Ohio, and North Carolina. The company celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2017.
The franchise owners of Lightbridge Academy of Millburn are Michael and Katerina Kearney. In addition to working in Essex County schools for over ten years, they have three children of their own. Katerina Kearney has a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a master’s degree in early education. She has worked for 14 years in early childhood education with an emphasis on special education. Michael Kearney has a master’s degree in education and works as a school administrator. Katerina Kearney enthused that “here at Lightbridge Academy of Millburn, we hope to inspire our children to be creative, independent thinkers who will develop passions for learning, all in a loving, safe environment that welcomes fun and imagination.”

The center’s director, Elizabeth Freeman, has an educational background in early childhood education and psychology and has nearly 15 years of early childhood experience throughout New Jersey. Freeman was thrilled with the excellent attendance of enrolled and potential students. She called the curriculum “Seedlings” designed to “develop and nurture the whole child in different learning styles incorporating different learning theories, including Montessori, Howard Gardner, and Jean Piaget.”

The assistant director, Alycia Delesky, has both early childhood education and managerial experience. It is the founders’ goal to “create a nurturing center where we balance care, connection, and a create fun learning environment where everyone feels safe and inspired.”

The Millburn center has a staff of ten teachers and an early childhood educator, a child psychologist, and Child Development Specialists. The maximum number of students the facility can accommodate is 146. Assistant Director Delesky states that the center caters to children from six weeks to five years. It contains two classrooms for each age group that is broken down into infants, toddlers, preschool, and prekindergarten. The classrooms have different learning domains to accommodate the learning styles of each child. The toddler and preschool classes teach letter recognition. The program is described as “learning without tears” where the children learn to write letters and their names.

Sheena Chavez, a toddler teacher stated that “she loves to see the children’s growth and takes great pleasure in their progress throughout the school year. A child has good days and bad days and all make for a whole child.”

Laura Rodriguez, a pre-kindergarten teacher who is certified for teaching kindergarten through third grade, “loves that the Seedlings program is thematic and incorporates technology and is a very interactive way of learning.”

Katerina Freeman, the school’s director, explains that there are two camera views of each classroom and the multipurpose room and outdoor playground. The cameras’ views are projected into the school office and are accessible to the parents through Parentview internet monitoring which uses biometric fingerprint scanning. All doors to the facility are secure.

An engineering company formerly occupied the premises, but the space was reconfigured and designed into a light-filled school by architect company Jam Arch.
Endeavor Schools Expands in Texas with Carpe Diem Private Preschool in Austin

By nruiz | June 11, 2018

Endeavor Schools, a leading education management company, is pleased to announce it has opened Carpe Diem Private Preschool – Cedar Park in Austin, Texas. With a family of private and Montessori schools already established in Dallas and Houston, Endeavor Schools has expanded its presence in Texas to now include the state capital of Austin. Carpe Diem Private Preschool offers full-time, part-time, and summer camp programs for children from 3 months to 12 years old.

“Carpe Diem Private Preschool has been providing high-quality care and education for over 17 years in the Dallas Metroplex,” said Cheryl Partida, Regional Director of Operations. “We are so excited to open our first school in Cedar Park, Texas. This is a beautiful, state-of-the-art school providing exceptional programs for children, as well as strong partnerships with our families. We are honored to be a part of the Cedar Park community!”

The Cedar Park Chamber of Commerce welcomed the new Carpe Diem Private Preschool campus with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the end of May. Members of the community, students, parents, and Carpe Diem staff all attended the event to celebrate the school’s grand opening.

“Educating children is a partnership between educators, families, and their community, and we are honored to be partnering with the thriving community of Cedar Park,” said CEO of Endeavor Schools, Ricardo Campo.

Since 2001, Carpe Diem Private Preschool has provided a dynamic and experiential learning environment at four other locations in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Each campus, now including Cedar Park in Austin, has put careful thought and time into creating the ideal learning
atmosphere for their students. To strengthen the interactive process between teaching and learning, the Cedar Park campus emphasizes low student-teacher ratios and hires degreed and experienced educators who are encouraged to mold the learning experience based on their students’ interests.

“This new school is aesthetically stunning, with state of the art facilities and wonderful indoor and outdoor learning environments,” Campo said. “More importantly, I am grateful for the team of seasoned and passionate educators that have joined us to help unleash the potential of the children of Cedar Park. Carpe Diem’s child-centered program is designed to instill a lifelong love of learning in its students, and we are thrilled with the opportunity to grow it.”

Carpe Diem Private Preschool provides rigorous curriculum based on accepted theories of child development and highly effective instructional approaches, influenced by the acclaimed Harvard University early childhood expert Dr. Howard Gardner’s theory of “Multiple Intelligences.” The schools also emphasize personal development through on-going assessment of individual students and provide special enrichment programs including music, Spanish lessons, American Sign Language, computers, drama, and gymnastics. Carpe Diem has recently adopted the Connect 4 Learning curriculum which builds robust language, literacy, social, emotional and critical thinking skills through STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) projects and investigations.
TWO DECADES LATER, FOCUS REMAINS A STAPLE OF DUKE'S FIRST-YEAR PROGRAM

Students respond to combination of multi-disciplinary seminars, residential learning and field trips

BY GEOFFREY MOCK | SEPTEMBER 28, 2017

Before DukeEngage, before Duke Immerse, before Bass Connections and other programs of the past decade that have built the university’s reputation for innovative undergraduate education, there was FOCUS.

After 25 years, the multi-course seminar curriculum for first-year students is the “old man” of Duke interdisciplinary undergraduate programs. It’s going strong this fall with 360 students enrolled in 13 clusters.

This year, the university’s strategic plan, “Together Duke: Advancing Excellence Through Community,” pledged to expand the program and praised it for “engaging the intellectual interests of first-year students and for forging deep and lasting relationships among students and faculty.”

“The formula that makes FOCUS successful today is the same formula that first made it popular two decades ago,” said FOCUS director Edna Andrews. “It’s the combination of seminar setting, first-year students doing original research using original documents, a multidisciplinary approach to important, challenging topics, residential learning and
learning outside classroom. FOCUS classes can do what nobody else does with first-year students, not just at Duke, but in the country.”

FOCUS’ distinctive formula is attracting attention from educators around the country, including noted Harvard education professor Howard Gardner. Each FOCUS cluster offers a combination of three to four classes linked by a theme, taught by professors in a variety of disciplines. The students meet in seminars but also hold weekly dinners with faculty members. All students in a cluster live in the same residential hall.

The residential learning element is crucial, said Andrews, the Nancy & Jeffrey Marcus Professor. In addition to directing the program, Andrews teaches a course in the Cognitive Neuroscience and Law cluster.

“For one, it’s a luxury for a faculty member to be able to go to a single commons room for a mid-term study session and have everyone right there,” Andrews said. “Our vision isn’t to wall off FOCUS students. They get to be with friends not in FOCUS, but their FOCUS classmates are always nearby for continuing discussions.”

Program growth has been limited by costs -- the multiple-seminar clusters are expensive -- and time challenges for faculty members. The strategic plan recommended additional university resources be used to overcome space and cost restrictions that currently limit enrollment. Andrews said she hopes the clusters can grow to 18-20 in the coming years, including more involvement from professional schools.

“I think it’s the best undergraduate education program in the country,” said political science professor Michael Gillespie, who has taught in the Visions of Freedom cluster since 1998. He currently teaches a political philosophy seminar on freedom and responsibility.

“It’s just so much fun teaching students this way,” he said. “These are freshmen, and they haven’t decided their major and their careers. They’re coming simply out of intellectual enthusiasm.”

The immediate close connection made between first-year students and teachers has benefits that continue past the semester, Gillespie added.

“Everything we know about higher education shows that it’s important for students to find a mentor to guide them through college and maintain their enthusiasm. With FOCUS, they have two or more mentors right off, faculty members that they’re seeing outside of the classroom at dinner every week and on field trips. I end up writing way more letters of recommendation than I would otherwise.”

For math professor Anita Layton, teaching in the “What If? Explaining the Past/Predicting the Future” cluster not only gets her more engaged with student life, but it helps attract students to math who might otherwise avoid it.

“For years I’ve been concerned about the lack of women among the math majors,” said Layton, who teaches a seminar on mathematical modeling in biology. “And I realized
that introductory math courses can be interesting but dry. You learn the steps, but not
the ‘why’ of the process. My unscientific experience is women want to know the ‘why.’

“With this FOCUS cluster, we built a new type of applied math course, one that showed
the math and why we do it.”

The thread connecting all FOCUS courses is they demand a lot of the students. Layton’s
class takes students of differing levels of mathematical understanding and challenges
them with high-level problems, albeit presented in unusual ways. One questions
students face is in a world filled with vampires, would human beings survive?

“It’s a way of looking at how competing species survive,” she said. “And it involves
difficult math, but in part because they understand the application of it, the students are
up to the challenge. I want them to learn math skills, take a real problem, learn how to
ask precise questions in a scientific way, translate the answers into math and then
translate the answers into real world solutions.”

The same holds true in humanities and social sciences classes. Gillespie’s students –
which includes a number of foreign students from authoritarian regimes – bring fresh
perspectives to classic political texts, and their differing experiences add to the
discussions.

Historian Thomas Robisheaux has taught in FOCUS for more than a decade. In the
“Scientists, Artists and Merchants in Renaissance Europe” cluster, Robisheaux presents
students with original documents from the period housed in the Rubenstein Library. In
the presence of Da Vinci’s notebooks or the drawings of pioneering ecologist/artist
Maria Sibylla Meriam, the students launch into the same questions about the origins of
modern science that Robisheaux and his professional colleagues debate.

It’s the best kind of teaching experience, Robisheaux said. Every year, as the semester
progresses, he says the classroom discussion deepens as the students pick up more
concepts and analytical abilities.

“I realized that I wasn’t expecting enough of students,” Robisheaux said. “I was selling
them short. If you give them the materials and basic instruction in how you do research,
and then encourage them, the students are capable of allowing a Da Vinci notebook
speak to them and turn it into a research essay grounded in primary materials and
original thinking.”

His class is part of the library’s Archives Alive program designed to bring primary
materials from the library collections into the classroom. “Medieval and Renaissance
Studies is such an abstraction to students,” he said. “Having a book printed in DaVinci’s
lifetime that he may have known about, however, and may have even read is exciting to
them. It helps them relate to the period, and the period becomes less remote.”

There’s evidence the seminars affect the students’ academic pathways. While some take
courses in pre-existing interests, some are put on new, unexpected directions.
“The program is transformative,” Andrews said. “We have quantifiable evidence that the program shapes many students’ major decision, or leads to them adding a second major or a minor. Sometimes it sends them on a brand new intellectual trajectory; other times it takes them on an additional one.”

That spirit is what brings Andrews and other instructors back to the program.

“It’s a lot of work running the seminar, adding in the dinners and field trips,” Andrews said. “Every year, I know a lot of faculty think, ‘I don’t want to do it again,’ but the students are so wonderful and the learning environment is so exciting, nobody wants to walk away.”
It is only in a song, after all, that ‘G’, ‘C’ and ‘F’ make sense. It is only as a name that ‘A’, ‘B’, and ‘C’ are fully functional.

by BENJAMIN D. SENZER | Sep 28, 2017

“B B B B B...”

I’d really like to play ‘Happy Birthday’ on this xylophone. I can always play the song in the key of C, but the song starts on C... B... A... G. The song starts on a G and the lowest note on the xylophone is a C, so I would have to start the song A... B... C... D... E... F... G... eight notes above where the G usually lies. But skipping around like that is too tricky and it wouldn’t sound quite right. The only solution is to play the song starting on the lowest note on the xylophone, C, which would make the song in the key of C... D... E... F. But the key of F has a B-flat in it. And this xylophone—this slobbered-all-over, rainbow-colored, banged-up-plastic, mallet-attached-on-a-string staple of any kindergarten classroom—does not. Just my luck.

“F F F F F...”

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“This is your child’s handwriting homework booklet. We will be following a program called ‘Handwriting Without Tears’ in class and the children will be asked to complete a
Page at home that corresponds to the work we cover in class.” Sincerely, The Kindergarten Teachers.

Page after page of “My Alphabet Book” contains just that—line upon line replete with meticulous strings of letters, each one expertly chosen in a specific sequence like a well-thought-out 10-course meal. ‘L’, ‘F’, and ‘E’ were learned first, for example, because “they all start at the top and are easier to recognize.” At least according to The Kindergarten Teachers.

“L L L L L…”

Each letter is crafted in spidery, arthritic strokes that must have taken the author seconds each to draw. Beneath the wavering, penciled-in tracings of the more “difficult” letters, it is not uncommon to see the page streaked with pink-and-gray erasures where the upstroke of an ‘N’ had wandered too far to the right or one ‘W’ had thoughtlessly conjoined with another. For the direst transgressions—an ‘F’ that had failed to span completely the width of the paper’s dotted guidelines, just to name one—a dictatorial red pen smothers the pencil with ‘X’s that the teacher seems to have plagiarized from the ‘X’ page found only later in the book.

“D D D D D…”

The more exemplary pages—ones in which the ‘O’s go all the way around and the ‘U’s not quite so—have red stamps instead. “You’re a STAR!” shouts a particularly enthusiastic anthropomorphic star. “Good Job!” reads an apple with a face mysteriously similar to that of the star. “Good Writing,” however, appears most often.

“My Alphabet Book” is not “Good Writing.” It’s not “writing,” even. Each letter is written by a five-year-old who knows no better than to follow a well-worn template. Each letter is a literal carbon copy of the letter directly preceding it, and the letter before that one is printed as a template in the book. There is absolutely nothing in this book that gives even the faintest nod in the direction of how the “writer” is feeling that day, or whether or not he enjoyed his lunch, or how much he loves (or hates) practicing his handwriting.

 Appropriately, the cover of “My Alphabet Book” contains a printed image of a scattered array of random letters vomited from between the front and back cover of a book.

“M M M M M…”

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Howard E. Gardner ’65, cognitive psychologist and professor at the Graduate School of Education, agrees. “In kindergarten, unless you’re very precocious, you’re not going to be creating sonnets,” Gardner says as he flips through “My Alphabet Book.” “You understand that when people make marks on a page, the point is to either create meaning that you have or create meaning that you want to convey to somebody else.”
The only vestige of the creative mind that birthed “My Alphabet Book” into the world, no more frustrating and mysterious than a bunch of cave drawings, is a worthless set of virtual hieroglyphs. Indeed, Gardner says that “reading and writing are new human inventions, and it could easily be the case that 5,000 years ago, it didn’t exist. People made drawings, but it’s different from writing.”

I can’t help but fear that what I write today—this article included—will share its fate with “My Alphabet Book.” Perhaps someday some chrome-clad critic will squint her beady eyes over my articles and find them to be complete gibberish. Perhaps someday someone will write a new article about this one, questioning its inclusion under the term “writing” almost as much as my editors do at present. But unlike the lucky author of “My Alphabet Book,” I won’t be able to fall back on my being five years young as an excuse.

“Your own understanding is guiding what you’re doing from some kind of a model,” says Gardner, pointing at the templates provided on the page. “You do your best to write it in such a way that at least you can decode it. But optimally, it shouldn’t be just you.”

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I will admit that there is one element of “My Alphabet Book” that contains some morsel of meaning. On the cover reads the author’s name written in clean, quick, deliberate snaps of a pencil.

What astonishes me is how smooth and practiced the letters in the name look compared to the rest of the letters in my alphabet book. How strange, that letters drawn individually with the sole purpose of perfecting and refining them pale in quality to those the author knew to be part of his name. It is only in a song, after all, that ‘G’, ‘C’ and ‘F’ make sense. It is only as a name that ‘A’, ‘B’, and ‘C’ are fully functional.

“by BeNJAMiN SENZER”

It is only in my name that the letters are truly “written.” But I guess I knew that fifteen years ago, too:

“This year in school, I would like to learn: How TO WRiTE.”
Eliminating the Grading System in College: The Pros and Cons

By David A. Tomar | October, 2017

Education is complex and nuanced. Grades are simple and arbitrary. So how did we come to rely on this simple five-point scale for something as important as evaluating academic aptitude? And can we do better?

In school, all things are subservient to the almighty grade. It is the educator’s most powerful bargaining chip, at once prized and feared by students, the unyielding hammer of judge, jury, and executioner compressed into a single unflinching letter.

But the reality is, our five-letter grading system isn’t necessarily that informative, it generally isn’t very effective, and it certainly isn’t educational. Bad grades can stigmatize and discourage those who need help. Good grades tend to reward and elevate those who already have all the intellectual and cognitive advantages. And ultimately, grades are a gross oversimplification of what students are capable of learning and doing.

The grading system is inherently subjective. It’s inherently punitive. And it’s inherently reductive. But it’s also deeply entrenched. The strongest argument in favor of keeping grades around is the fact that it would take an absolutely enormous amount of
infrastructural and systemic change in American education to come up with, let alone implement, something new. So much of the way we understand and approach education hinges on grading. So even if the rebellious teen in me would probably say something like “grades are stupid and we don’t need ‘em,” the adult in me can see the enormous practical challenges that would come with trashing the whole system.

But I think if we’re all being honest with one another, we can acknowledge grades aren’t exactly driving us to greater heights of educational enlightenment. They sure do cause a lot of stress though. It’s not entirely clear this is the best tradeoff, particularly at the college level.

Grades aren’t exactly driving us to greater heights of educational enlightenment. They sure do cause a lot of stress though. College is, by its nature, intended to inspire students to a higher level of discourse, knowledge, and personal growth. Shouldn’t it be incumbent upon us to be equally as imaginative, effective, and inspiring in the way we evaluate these endeavors? If there is to be a rational consideration of moving away from the grading system, college is probably the place to incubate such an experiment.

We don’t intend to propose abolishing the grading system, at least not yet. But we think it’s a conversation worth having. The grading system and its unchecked authority are both long overdue for reconsideration. While we aren’t at the stage of proposing an alternative, this is a good point in the conversation to at least weigh the Pros and Cons of eliminating the grading system in college.

Once we weigh the benefits against the practical considerations, we may have a better sense of how to proceed. And if not, we can at least provide you, the student, with the semantical tools to lobby for a better grade from your professor.

**Con: We Actually Don’t Know How To Learn Without Grades**

We’re deeply conditioned by grades, and perhaps we don’t even know it. Sure, grades cause stress and anxiety. But you know what else causes stress and anxiety? Not getting grades.

Check out the results of Starr Sackstein’s fascinating three-month experiment: a classroom without grades. High school senior Markella Giannakopoulos offered a telling assessment of the experience, explaining that “It feels really weird. I am used to finishing an assignment and then getting a grade so that I know how well or bad I did on the assignment. Without the grades, I don’t have that ability to get the grade but I believe I get better feedback.”
One of the best things you can say about grades is that students and teachers are used to them. We know what they mean. Giannakopoulos and many of her classmates conceded that they were conditioned to expect grades and that without them, they were left with a feeling that one might call academic emptiness. One of the best things you can say about grades is that students and teachers are used to them. We know what they mean, even if that meaning lacks nuance. Students can use grades to gauge where they are on the continuum between Excellence and Failure.

And as Sackstein writes in *Education Week* about her grade-free experiment, some students were simply too uncomfortable with an arrangement that did not result in an easily digestible evaluative metric. At this point in their formal education, grading had simply become too ingrained for the experimental student group. One of Sackstein’s students probably best articulated the problem, pointing out that as a senior in high school, she was far too deep into her education to adapt to the new model.

This means that if we ever do want to move students beyond letter grades, we have to start young. By the time we get to college, we’re basically Pavlov’s Dogs, salivating for formal evaluation.

**Pro: We Could Learn for Learning’s Sake**

In spite of their initial discomfort, some of Sackstein’s student’s begrudgingly acknowledged that this new strategy had required them to think about their school work in a different way. The intrinsic merit of learning for its own sake began to take precedence among Sackstein’s students.

As they adjusted, students were forced to find motivation in something beyond a readily quantifiable score. In the absence of either this score, or the closure it provides, the motive for completing assignments, contributing to discussions, and mastering subjects became the assignment, discussion or subject itself.

Students are in the best position to evaluate their own comprehension, growth and progress… Sackstein’s experiment demonstrates that there are other, possibly more effective ways to evaluate student comprehension, progress and aptitude. Her approach favored self-regulation, self-assessment, and self-advocacy. This strategy proceeds from the idea that students are in the best position to evaluate their own comprehension, growth and progress, and that without the stressor of grades, they have the freedom to make these evaluations honestly and objectively.

In this regard, Sackstein’s experiment suggested that grades have had the effect of preventing students from learning for the sake of enrichment. By removing the grading
goal-line from the end of every project, we have the ability to place learning on an unending continuum, and possibly one that the student will remain on for a lifetime.

Con: Grades Carry a Lot of Weight in the Outside World

The concept of ranking by grade actually originated at the university level. Indeed, until Yale University came up with the idea of grading its students way back in 1785, the class valedictorian was actually elected by classmates. In 1897, Mount Holyoke College became the first school to correlate letter grades with percentage points. This was the root of the modern grading system. By 1940, the five-letter grading system had become the de facto mode of student evaluation at the elementary and high school levels, according to The American Society for Cell Biology.

College administrators, politicians, and job-makers all hold grades as sacred. In other words, the grading system is conceptually ingrained in our educational system, which means it’s also conceptually ingrained in all the other systems that correlate to education. College administrators, politicians, and job-makers all hold grades as sacred. According to USA Today, large corporate employers still rely heavily on GPAs to sort out the cream of the crop.

We are all subject to a nearly religious acceptance of this system, a condition which leaves employers with few other reliable measures of academic aptitude, which leaves policy-makers with few really illustrative indicators of school performance, and which provides administrators with a simple way of quantifying the capabilities of a student body.

The authority which has been conferred upon grades is deeply consequential when it comes to applying for graduate school or filling out job applications. It’s equally important when it comes to college fundraising, solicitation of endowments, and courtship of prominent professors, researchers, and administrators.

Student GPA — both for individuals and across whole college communities — can be treated as short-hand for a sense of qualification and potential. This means that it isn’t just the educational system that would be forced to adjust to the abolition of grades. Businesses, public policy-makers, and a wide swathe of relevant stakeholders would also be impacted by such a sweeping change. There would be considerable growing pains.

Pro: We Don’t Need Grades To Train In Practical Skills
With that said, education at the college level — particularly in technical or practical disciplines — should mature beyond using the grading system alone. Its rating and ranking imperatives are a vestige of American’s industrial era.

But today’s post-industrial America is built on ideas, ingenuity, information, and knowledge. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* points to a rising emphasis in some circles on “competency-based education,” an approach which inherently requires more nuanced assessment than grades can provide.

Certain subject areas may lend themselves more readily to non-punitive evaluation. Some online models of education are demonstrating the particular value of this approach. *The Chronicle* points to Southern New Hampshire University and Western Governors University, two colleges that have restructured their academic approach with a focus on competence-based assessment. Enrolled students engage in pass-fail online courses, working at their own pace. Only when a student demonstrates mastery of a particular set of skills will he or she be allowed to move on to the next lesson.

Other liberal arts colleges that don’t issue grades include Alverno College, Antioch College, Bennington College, The Evergreen State College, New College of Florida, and Hampshire College.

This model offers evidence that certain subject areas may lend themselves more readily to non-punitive evaluation. It also suggests that educators can motivate students without the controlling mechanism of grading.

**Pro: Removing the “Facade of Coherence”**

In the years since their inception, we’ve come to assign grades so much more meaning than they deserve. The *American Society for Cell Biology* article quotes one professor who refers to the grading system as an effort to “create a facade of coherence.”

[Grades] fail to evaluate students in their nearly infinite qualitative variations. That is, grades have been given the impossible task of neatly quantifying the abilities of all students. But in attempting to reduce all students to quantifiable units on a five point scale, we fail to evaluate students in their nearly infinite qualitative variations. Grades are a symptom of an educational philosophy that treats intellectual and artistic diversity as inconveniences to be classified rather than as virtues to be cultivated.

In most public school and college settings, grading uses a 100-point scale. This scale correlates letter grades (A, B, C, and D) with ten-point ranges on this scale. An “F” (or “E” depending on the language used at your particular institution) is conferred for a score anywhere between 0 and 59%.
While letter grades present the illusion of qualitative assessment, they are merely a quantification of abilities. Without getting too emotionally humanist about the whole thing, the idea of quantifying knowledge or ability is a dubious premise at best. The passage of time has normalized this way of assessment, but just a quick reflection on the idea of human diversity suggests this approach is actually pretty irrational.

We’ve placed a singular level of faith in the ability of grades to tell us everything, a habit that allows them to conceal much about students and what they might actually be capable of achieving. At their worst, they don’t just conceal what might be achieved, but they stand directly in the way of it.

**Con: Professor’s Would Lose Authority**

At their core, grades were designed to control students. An article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* sums it up perfectly, noting that while most college professors aren’t particularly enamored of the grading system, most recognize the capacity of punitive evaluation to motivate. Without grades, goes the argument, students would be less likely to complete homework assignments, would exert less effort, and would decline to study for their exams.

Grades are the easy answer to the complex question of how to push students into action.

So the grading system’s capacity to dole out punishment is probably its strongest feature. Granted, that’s not a good thing where the quality of our education is concerned. But speaking practically, grades are the easy answer to the complex question of how to push students into action. It may not be the best answer, but it’s the easy answer.

Your professor draws a significant amount of institutional power from the ability to assign your grade. Few things impact a classroom like the threat of failure. Whether addressing disciplinary matters, poor study habits, or low attendance, the educator’s last line of defense against insolence or indolence is that very threat.

Equally so, the ability of an educator to command the attention of a classroom, to invoke participation, and to create a studious environment can hinge on the promise of an excellent grade. This arms the professor with a degree of authority that is completely separate from his or her ability to engage, enrich, excite, enlighten, etc.

Of course, an educator who can engage, enrich, excite, and enlighten will command an authority that isn’t propped up by the power to grade.

**Pro: Grades are Inevitably Subjective**
Besides, the authority to grade may not always be well placed. Or perhaps it’s fair to say that the inherent variance in grading approaches makes grades necessarily unreliable. There is an inherent subjectivity that comes with professorial grading. Grading is not an exact science, even if it pretends to be. And we’re staking a lot on this subjective measure.

Grading is not an exact science, even if it pretends to be.

Laura Rediehs, an Assistant Professor of Philosophy at St. Lawrence University — a school that de-emphasizes letter grading — says that “Students themselves are in a better position to judge many of the qualitative dimensions of their learning, as well as some quantitative dimensions, such as their sense of improvement, the intensity of their effort and engagement, whether they did all of the reading, how well they paid attention in class, and how significant their learning was for them. But traditional grading can discourage the development and refinement of students’ abilities in these respects, because strong self-motivation and keen self-awareness of one’s own learning can bring a student into conflict with professors’ judgments.”

Naturally, a percentage of correctness on a mathematics or physics exam is a pretty concrete measurement of one’s subject mastery. But what about the vast majority of university-level subjects that require complex analysis, creative problem-solving, personal insights, or lucid discourse on controversial matters?

How could a professor’s experiences and expectations not factor into the process of assigning letter grades?

To diverge into anecdotal territory for just a moment, I can remember receiving a less-than-stellar grade in college on a fully coherent assessment of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This was a subject I understood well and on which I had fairly well-developed set of positions. Over the course of the semester, it was clear that my professor and I had difference positions on the matter, though we never clashed in open discussion.

When I asked my professor why I received a “C,” particularly in light of the complete absence of notations or feedback anywhere on my eight-page “blue book” essay, she quickly made it clear that our differing political sensibilities were at the root of my grade.

My professor’s ideological prejudices played a strong role in her perception of my work. In spite of the quantitative illusion that comes from connecting percentages and letter grades, the variation of possible grading outcomes is as infinite as the number of professors out there with red pens.

**Pro: Grades Are Easy to Fudge**
It’s not just that grades are subjective. There’s also evidence that in some cases, they are being awarded under false pretenses.

In 2013, *The Harvard Crimson* reported that the median grade at Harvard College was an “A−” and that “A” was the most frequently assigned letter grade at the venerable institution. Dean of Undergraduate Education, Jay M. Harris confirmed the fact.

According to *The Washington Post*, grade inflation has been a part of the Harvard tradition for decades now. In 2001, 49% of undergraduate grades were “As,” up from 23% in 1986. And it’s not just at Harvard. A study in the *Teachers College Record* notes that in 2012, 43% of college letter grades were “A’s,” up from 31% in 1988 and 15% in 1960.

Grade inflation is actually rampant at the college level. I have a sneaking suspicion it’s not because we’re getting smarter. Indeed, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* says that grade inflation is actually rampant at the college level. One reason is the direct impact that student evaluations can have on the job stability of those grading them. Professors are under intense pressure — and a pretty bright spotlight thanks to websites like RateMyProfessors.com — to avoid displeasing their students.

But this is not the only dynamic driving grade inflation. College is a trillion dollar industry. Competition between universities is fierce, as is the competition for post-graduate job placement. Inflated grades lead to inflated rankings, contribute to better employment rates, and generally promote the illusion of academic rigor while achieving exactly the opposite effect.

More than anything, the very real trend of grade inflation dashes to pieces the notion that each letter grade carries a clear and useful meaning. If at an institution such as Harvard, no less, the meaning of a letter grade must be cast into doubt, what reason do we have for confidence in the wholesale ability of educators to assign grades without conflicts of interest?

**Con: We Can Make Improvements Without Throwing Away Grades**

There’s a case to be made that grades can be de-emphasized without being dumped. To this point, we can probably agree that grades are deeply imperfect. But does that mean we should trash them altogether? There’s a case to be made that grades can be de-emphasized without being dumped.

If you read at all about the international education scene, you’ll probably get really sick of hearing how awesome Finland is all the time. It routinely ranks at or near the top of
the OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment and was used as a positive point of comparison against America’s failing education system in the noted 2010 documentary Waiting for Superman.

Harvard professor Howard Gardner once advised American educators to “Learn from Finland, which has the most effective schools and which does just about the opposite of what we are doing in the United States.”

Finland’s system is noted for its dedication to equality, its progressive curricular versatility, the complete absence of nationally administered standardized tests, its elevation of vocational pathways, its provision of free higher education and, where we’re concerned, the fact that a nation which prides itself on not promoting competition is roundly kicking the ever-loving Dickens out of the US in math, science, and reading.

And they’re doing it with such a bare minimum emphasis on grades that you have to wonder. An article in Open Education noted that in many schools, teachers don’t even begin to assign grades until the 9th grade. Before then, learning is experiential, driven by activities and hands-on opportunities. Evaluation is qualitative, feedback is dialogic, and education need not be pursued under the pale of punitive consequences. Where grades are used, it really is to provide a metric for understanding growth and progress, not as a punitive device around which completion of all tasks revolves.

In other words, grades are there. They just aren’t everything. The emphasis is on learning, a novel idea to be sure.

But it’s not just the Finns. A few notable colleges and universities in the U.S. have at least partially moved away from the unilateral tyranny of grades. Most notably, Brown University did away with Grade Point Averages [PDF] in 1969. As part of its New Curriculum, Brown said that the University would instead promote “the use of criteria for assessment and evaluation that go beyond grades and GPA. These include portfolios of a student’s work, Course Performance Reports, and letters of recommendation.”

The University would go on to observe that while its unique grading system makes it difficult to compare Brown transcripts to those from other schools, employers tended nonetheless to seek out Brown grads for their analytical ability, independence, creativity, communication, and leadership skills.

Reduced to a less unilateral role, grades could be useful without overstepping their real-world value. Naturally, it’s easier to argue that your students boast these qualities when you are a vaunted school like Brown. But even schools without Brown’s sterling reputation are capable of offering communicable qualitative evaluation of their students. Even employers that don’t mine the Ivy Leagues for talent should be capable of making decisions based on more detailed and nuanced methods of academic evaluation.
In addition to Brown, schools like St. John’s College, Reed College, Sarah Lawrence College, Prescott College, and the College of the Atlantic use grades, but in a largely de-emphasized manner. Proceeding from the belief that grades alone cannot offer a clear picture of academic aptitude, these schools pair traditional grades with narrative reports, perhaps a far more telling indicator of who students are and what they may be capable of.

All this amounts to the conclusion that grades could still be used to satisfy the most rudimentary imperatives of ranking and evaluation, that they need not be abolished, that they simply must be supplemented with more useful and nuanced ways of making evaluations. Reduced to a less unilateral role, grades could be useful without overstepping their real-world value.

**Conclusion: We’re Better Than This**

This final point, that we actually have the power to improve student evaluation without trashing grades altogether, is probably the best way forward…for now.

It’s clear why grades are preferable. They offer clean lines of demarcation between types of performance, types of student, types of future. They point us in a few clear directions. They tell us that a student needs help. They tell us a student has talent. They tell us a student is just skating by.

Grades don’t tell us how to help, how to cultivate talent, how to push students beyond the bare minimum. But they don’t tell us how to help, how to cultivate talent, how to push students beyond the bare minimum. All we know is who to reward and who to punish. But punishment should have no place in college. College is meant to challenge students, to help them look for deeper meaning. Educators should take up the same gauntlet and accept the challenge of providing richer and more meaningful evaluative feedback.

And of course, if you have better ideas than grading — and we suspect you do — share them with us below.

This is something that we can start doing right now.
Most of what is considered innovative today has a long sordid history behind it. American education reform over the last hundred years has been driven by some recurring themes: early learning, school models, standards-based reform, talent, school autonomy, student engagement, career preparation and new personalized learning.

Following is a short history of modern reforms in U.S. education. Some of you know parts of this story well; some of you have studied the history and have a long view. I’d welcome your comments and additions.

**Early Childhood Care and Education**

**Maria Montessori**, the first woman in Italy to receive a medical degree, believed that every child was born with potential and that children should be allowed to be free to explore and play within their environment. In the early 1900s, Montessori visited the United States to share her child-centered approach to teaching—a method now used by many preschools around the world.

After World War II in the Italian city of Reggio Emilia, a preschool teaching method was developed based on children’s symbolic language and a project-oriented curriculum. The environment was considered to be an important aspect of the child’s development and often considered as the “third teacher.” The Reggio Emilia Approach assumes the child to be interested in learning and experimenting through inner motivation.

The first years of life lay the foundation for future skills development, well-being and learning. Early childhood education and care (ECEC) can improve cognitive abilities and social and emotional development, reduce poverty and improve social mobility. Over half of the OECD countries have organized systems of early childhood care and education with big differences in access for high and low incomes in the US.
**Engagement**

At the turn of the last century, John Dewey launched a lab school at the University of Chicago Laboratory Schools and wrote his first major work, *The School and Society*. In civil society, school and psychology, he preached action and application. He's the father of applied and project-based learning. He argued for a balance of student-centered and content-rich learning. He led the professionalization of teaching.

After a century of underground activity (e.g., Seymour Fliegel as the Director of Alternative Schools in New York in the 1970s), Dewey reappeared in the form of 1990s school networks including Big Picture Learning, Expedition Learning (now EL Education), High Tech High and New Tech High.

**Career Education**

A hundred years ago, factories were facing a shortage of skilled labor and public schools were seeing an influx of immigrants and farm kids. The Smith-Hughes Act of 1917 was the law that first authorized federal funding for vocational education in American schools—and the beginning of tracking affluent and well-supported students into a college preparatory track and other students into a vocational track.

Vocational education became career and technical education with the passage of the *Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act* passed in 1984. In 1994, President Clinton signed the *School-to-Work Opportunities Act* which promoted on-the-job experience combined with classroom instruction, leading to certification in marketable skills.

With a similar history of tracking vocational and college preparatory studies, Scandinavian and European schools began upgrading career education making it easier to move from careers to further and higher education. More recently in the US career education focused on *robotics* and *advanced manufacturing* has opened up lucrative learn and earn career ladders.
An increasing number of high schools are seeking work-based learning including schools in the CAPS Network. Ptech schools combine technical work experience, dual enrollment, and employment opportunities with corporate sponsors.

**Standards-Based Reforms**

Standards-based reform: high expectations for all students, annual standardized tests and school accountability. By the mid-1990s almost every one of the states had adopted standards and tests. This momentum for higher standards was launched (in part) by A Nation at Risk in 1983 and championed by corporate chiefs like IBM’s Lou Gerstner and State Farm’s Ed Rust and by southern governors like George Bush, Bill Clinton, Dick Riley and Jim Hunt.

By the mid-90s nearly all states had standards that described what grads should know and be able to do (at least in core subjects). States added end-of-year tests linked to these standards to measure progress and to begin to address gaps.

This frame of standards and accountability, and a bipartisan commitment to more equitable education, resulted in a reauthorization of the federal elementary and secondary education act known as No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2002 when Rod Paige was secretary.

A dysfunctional Congress never fixed the flaws in NCLB or engaged in iterative development on its well-intentioned frame (like balancing the focus on proficiency with measures of growth). It was out of date in four years and by the time Duncan took office in 2009 it was seriously flawed.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) was a massive ($831 billion) attempt to address the Great Recession. It was passed a month after Obama and Duncan took office and included $45 billion for education to partially restore big 2008 cuts in state education. Duncan was successful in incorporating about $4.4 billion of incentive funding called Race to the Top. Three-quarters of states applied for the grant and made improvements in their plans, policies and laws in an effort to win a grant.
The bipartisan push for better and more equitable outcomes was well-intentioned, even inspiring. With weak execution, results never lived up to the hype but some residual benefits include higher standards, a commitment to equity, practice informed by data, and a recognition of the importance of good teaching.

However, the unintended consequences of the standards movement were numerous—a narrowing of the curriculum, a focus on test preparation, and a scripted approach to school that drove many talented educators out of the sector. The narrow focus on testing in compliance-oriented systems drove out creativity and collaboration rather than encouraging them.

**School Models**

In 1984, while chair of the education department at Brown, Ted Sizer published Horace’s Compromise and launched the Coalition of Essential Schools, a whole-school reform based on 10 design principles. From 14 founding schools, it quickly grew to over 600 member schools.

Launched in 1991, the nonprofit New American Schools Development Corporation funded 11 "break-the-mold" school models and help schools implement those designs. The competition launched what became the project-based EL Schools and America’s Choice, school improvement network.

The following year Chris Whittle launched Edison Schools and by the late 1990s, there were many voluntary and managed school networks-- including New Tech Network, High Tech High, Big Picture Learning—that leveraged the benefits of personal technology to create high engagement learning environments.

Beginning in 1999, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation backed many successful school networks and sponsored the formation of many new ones leading to more than 1200 new secondary schools in the next decade.
Talent

Based on her 1989 Princeton University thesis, Wendy Kopp formed Teach for America to enlist talented undergraduates to teach in low-income schools. This bet on talent as the key to quality extended to other US nonprofits including New Leaders, TNTP and NCTQ. In 2009, the Gates Foundation made big investments in school districts around talent development--and six years later the districts were in disarray.

School Autonomy

First authorized in Minnesota in 1992, charter schools are independently operated public schools--a bet on appointed boards rather than the political leadership of school districts.

There are over 7,000 charter schools in the U.S. They have mixed performance, but those belonging to strong networks show substantially better than average performance. Most western countries have a form of charter schools and allow independent operators to provide public education services.

In the late 1990s, several urban superintendents in the US attempted decentralization but often found principals unprepared to handle the staffing and budget autonomy. Stephen Adamowski in Cincinnati and Tom Payzant in Boston developed a system of earned autonomy where high-performing schools won autonomy.

In 2002, Joel Klein became chancellor in New York City. He decentralized budgets and pushed decision-making to schools. Low-performing schools were closed and replaced with hundreds of new small schools. Around the same time, Sir Michael Barber helped Prime Minister Tony Blair create governance reforms that pushed U.K. education budgets to the school level. While promising, school autonomy efforts produced mixed results.

Personalized Learning

Personalized learning is the current dominant meme in education. The term has been used since the 1960s but, building on developments in online and blended learning, became prevalent in the last five years. Stepping stones include Howard Gardner’s

The leading advocate, iNACOL, says, “Personalized learning is tailoring learning for each student’s strengths, needs and interests—including enabling student voice and choice in what, how, when and where they learn—to provide flexibility and supports to ensure mastery of the highest standards possible. Students have flexible learning environments, embedded within their communities, using a variety of modes, resources and modalities to accelerate learning. Personalized learning is about equity—ensuring every student has the same opportunities to succeed with differentiated resources and instruction that meet them where they are.”

In the broadest sense, personalized learning includes student moving at their own pace as they demonstrate mastery--this is often called competency-based or mastery-based learning. CompetencyWorks, a project of iNACOL, is the leading advocate.

The new school grant network Next generation Learning Challenges calls blended, personalized and competency-based (not surprisingly) next-gen learning. Powerful learning is also flexible, engaging and relevant, challenging and supportive, informed and organized by progress. Next-gen learning embraces broader aims expressed by the MyWays outcome framework

Next-gen learning embraces the best elements of prior reforms-- student engagement, career and college readiness, coherent school models, and well prepared and supported teaching.

As Tyack and Cuban note, “It’s easy to get caught up in our enthusiasms of the moment. But it’s worth recognizing that much of what we think of as “reform” (of whatever stripe) has plenty of backstory. After all, many of our frustrations are less novel and more familiar than we sometimes imagine.”
Create immersive environment for learning English

MUHAMAD SOLAHUDIN RAMLI | 16 Oct 2017

THE concern expressed by the Permaisuri of Johor, Raja Zarith Sofiah, a few weeks ago on the need to enhance English language skills among Malaysians who lack proficiency in this language should be taken seriously.

But how do we ameliorate this situation and help Malaysians improve their English?

Education starts at home. Parents are their children’s first educators, teaching them basic life skills, manners and languages. In the case of helping children to learn and love English, it is best for parents to familiarise them with English words and nurture language skills early by creating an immersive learning environment at home.

It may sound a little old-fashioned to read English bedtime stories to children but this classic and adorable way of bonding before sleeping may rewire their brains to master the language early.

As a result, children would develop the love for reading and knowledge.

When parents play their part well, children would be able to engage in learning sessions in schools effectively. Their motivation to learn English would make them eager beavers in class activities.

As teachers focus on the 4Cs – collaboration, critical thinking, creativity and communication – students would be able to think deeply and flexibly, communicate effectively, and draw conclusions, resulting in a successful lesson.

In order to develop a feeling of euphoria in learning English, teachers should apply brain-based teaching strategies as they deal with 21st-century learners who enjoy different learning styles.
Based on the theory of multiple intelligences by Howard Gardner, children possess multiple intelligences. However, teachers need to help learners activate their intelligences by varying instructional strategies.

Students should be encouraged to showcase their talents by singing English songs or reciting poems during school events, including parent-teacher meetings and Teachers Day.

While teachers feel accomplished in training and producing eloquent speakers and talented performers, parents would feel proud of their offspring, and other students would gain interest in joining future English programmes.

Making movies about the importance of English is another way to create interest in the language among children. Hats off to the production team of Adiwiraku for producing an educational and inspirational movie about a determined English teacher struggling to teach her weak students to read, write and speak English.

All of these efforts will eventually make children feel comfortable and confident to use English correctly in their examinations, online and face-to-face conversations, class presentations and during interview sessions.

Using English to communicate will not make us any less patriotic. In fact, our willingness to continue learning while helping others to improve will make us unsung heroes who help the country produce world-class leaders, thinkers, workers and students.
PRINCETON ALUMNI WEEKLY

Mitchel Resnick ’78 thinks coding is child’s play

Scratch inventor Mitchel Resnick ’78 with the program’s mascot in his lab, part of MIT’s Media Lab.

By David Walter | October 25, 2017

When is a toy more than a toy? When it’s 2017, and you’ve got half an hour on your lunch break to run to the store and buy a birthday present for your niece Emma ... and Emma, meanwhile, has only 10 short years to ready her application to Princeton ... and Emma’s parents have hinted that she can use all the help she can get. (Her best friend at Sunday school already speaks three languages, while Emma occasionally sings along to the Spanish parts of “Despacito.”) It’s not enough, in other words, that the toys you buy avoid polluting Emma’s imagination with lazy stereotypes and corporate branding. You’re looking for a toy that makes your niece smarter, kinder, and — ideally — proficient in Mandarin. A toy that gives her that ineffable EDGE ... but in a fun way! You’re looking, you think — because it’s lunchtime, and you’re hungry — for the BEETS of children’s toys: a toy that’s sweet like candy, nourishing like a vegetable, and largely guilt-free, give or take a few clothing stains.

Mitchel Resnick ’78 can help. Resnick is MIT’s Lego Papert Professor of Learning Research — yes, Lego as in the toy blocks — and directs that university’s Lifelong Kindergarten research group, which, according to its website, seeks to evoke “the spirit of the blocks and finger paint of kindergarten.” Resnick has spent the last three decades working with Lego to come up with toys that support creative learning, most notably
helping to develop the company’s Mindstorms range of robotic building blocks. Ten years ago, he and his team invented a computer coding platform called Scratch, which has transcended mere toydom and has become an entirely new language for thinking, playing, and creating for millions of kids worldwide. That you probably haven’t heard of Scratch (or Resnick) is in a way a testament to Scratch’s (and Resnick’s) humble, resolutely kid-centric ethos. Scratch has never advertised itself commercially, relying instead on word-of-mouth from parents, teachers, and above all, enthusiastic youngsters. Resnick is like the kindly uncle — in temperament, more Mister Rogers than Willy Wonka — working in the background so kids can have fun.

Last year, nearly 200 million people used Scratch — a simplified, visually based coding language — to create their own video games, serialized television shows, and dancing cat cartoons. About 20 million were active participants in Scratch’s online community of makers. Forty-five percent of the users are girls. For kids, the appeal of Scratch is simple: It lets them invent their own stories, games, and animations and share them with an audience of their peers. But Scratch is also a bona fide programming language — one that’s as theoretically consistent with the principles of computer science as heavy-hitters like Java or C++. It’s fun, it’s free (you can try it out at scratch.mit.edu), and it’s globally minded: Its user interface has been translated into 50 languages. As of August 2017, Scratch was ranked as the 19th most popular coding language in the world — and the only one with a core user base of 8- to 16-year-old kids.

Ten years after its inception, Scratch accounts for 25 percent of MIT’s web traffic and employs a small army of moderators, engineers, and researchers. And that’s just the beginning: The upcoming release of Scratch 3.0, combined with a push by Scratch’s philanthropic arm to promote the toy in the developing world, could send those numbers into the stratosphere.

But more on all that in a minute! First, let’s get back to your toy-selection dilemma.

**From his primary-colored, toy-strewn lab at MIT** — picture pipe cleaners and Play-Doh, not protein sequencers or particle colliders — Resnick offers some guidelines for toy purchasing:

The first question adults should ask, he says, is: “What kind of thinking does a toy promote?” The hierarchy of thinking you might picture — mindless fun on the bottom of the pyramid, “critical thinking” at the top — doesn’t jibe with current research on the science of play. Free play that engages the imagination is often more valuable than “educational” games that walk kids through a set of pre-planned puzzles.

Resnick compares many “educational” toys to the outdated learning methods he was exposed to back in the 1970s. In Resnick’s grade-school days, for instance, writing lessons focused heavily on grammar — diagramming parts of speech, fixing ungrammatical sentences, and so on, to the exclusion of much else. “That type of analytical thinking is valuable to learn, but if that’s all we teach kids, there’s a limit to how they can express themselves with language,” he says. “If all that kids look at is what words they spelled wrong and how they got their grammar wrong, they’re not going to be excited about writing.”
To Resnick’s mind, toys and games that focus on problem-solving to the exclusion of creative thinking commit the same sin. “There’s nothing wrong with systematic thinking, but we shouldn’t stop there,” he says. Instead, he tells me, adults should “look for more activities that allow kids to exert more control over the process, that allow them to create and share their own ideas with others, as opposed to just solving someone else’s problem.” For Resnick, the ideal scenario is one that places analytical thinking in the service of creative design. Picture a kid who in the process of building a Lego castle can draw on skills like geometry and multiplication.

The second question adults should ask when buying educational toys is: What kind of learner is my child? Again, the categories you might expect — visual learner, kinetic learner, etc. — aren’t the ones that Resnick favors. Instead, he uses terms like tinkerers, planners, patterners, and dramatists. The latter two terms were coined by education researchers Dennie Wolf and Howard Gardner in the 1970s; Resnick features the categories in Lifelong Kindergarten, his recently released book on creative play.

“Patterners,” Resnick writes, “are fascinated by structures and patterns, and they typically enjoy playing with blocks and puzzles. Dramatists are more interested in stories and social interaction, and they often play with dolls and stuffed animals.”

A single set of toys can be designed to serve both groups, Resnick says, but play scenarios should be framed differently depending on the intended audience.

In his book, Resnick recalls a robotics workshop he ran a few years back in which children were divided into two groups: one that happened to include mostly patterners; the other, mostly dramatists. The goal of the workshop was to build an amusement-park ride out of building blocks, motorized parts, and robotics software.

The group made up of patterners immediately began working on a merry-go-round: “They carefully drew up plans, then used Lego bricks, beams, and gears to build the structure and mechanisms. After they finished building the merry-go-round, they wrote a computer program to make it spin around, then added a touch sensor to control it. ... The whole project, from initial idea to final implementation, took just a couple of hours.”

The dramatists, meanwhile, decided to build a Ferris wheel. Resnick recalls that “after working for 30 minutes on the basic structure for the Ferris wheel, they put it aside and started building a refreshment stand next to the Ferris wheel. At first I was concerned. Part of the purpose of the activity was for students to learn about gearing mechanisms and computer programming. After finishing the refreshment stand, the students built a wall around the entire amusement park. Then, they created a parking lot, and added lots of miniature Lego people walking into the park. They developed an elaborate story about several families coming from different parts of the city to spend a day at the amusement park. Only then, after the whole amusement-park scene was complete, did the students go back and finish building and programming their Ferris wheel. To them, building the Ferris wheel wasn’t interesting until they had imagined a story around it.” It took the dramatists several hours longer to finish the exercise, but the result was no less technically impressive.
To Resnick, the lessons of workshops like these were profound — and troubling. “What if the amusement-park workshop had ended after an hour?” he wondered. It would have seemed that the patterners had an aptitude for robotics and programming, while the dramatists were doomed to lag behind. In reality, though, both groups of kids were capable of creating a sophisticated design.

These divisions in play style have implications beyond the toy chest. “Math and science courses, from elementary school through college, have traditionally been designed in ways that favor patterners over dramatists,” Resnick writes. “That’s a big reason why many kids get turned off by math and science.”

Resnick developed Scratch to provide children with an alternate path to creative learning. For a computer scientist — and MIT professor — Resnick is surprisingly platform-agnostic: He’d be equally happy if kids learned to create by writing, painting, or building in the real world. That said, he does not fear the perils of too much “screen time.” Spending hours in front of a computer is fine, he says, as long as the child is an active builder of what’s happening on screen, rather than a passive consumer. Do we worry about “page time” if a kid spends hours after school writing a story? he asks. No — we’re just happy that the child is flexing those creative muscles.

Computer coding happens to be the medium Resnick chose for Scratch, but not because it’s “better” than more traditional creative pursuits. For one thing, it’s easier — and cheaper — to distribute a program like Scratch across the internet than it would be to, say, send painting supplies to tens of millions of kids across the world. (And unlike paint, Scratch enables kids to create dynamic, interactive projects.) What’s more, Scratch makes it easier for users to rapidly make and undo mistakes in pursuit of perfection — the sort of “tinkering” mindset Resnick believes is key to design-based learning.

Ultimately, Resnick’s goal with Scratch isn’t to create a new generation of super-coders. Instead, Scratch is geared simply toward getting kids excited about creative self-expression. “So much of the education system is top-down. We need to give kids greater leeway to find their own path.”

_**Resnick’s own path through grade school and adolescence**_ was more or less a conventional one. He grew up in the Philadelphia suburbs, the middle child of three in a family where “being able to succeed and achieve was seen as important.” He always took school seriously. Maybe too seriously, sometimes: Resnick’s teachers would observe that he was “too tense” when working on school projects. “I was someone who was following the rules and wanted to succeed within the system. I was good at the things schools value: certain types of intelligence, certain types of achievement,” he recalls. At Princeton, he majored in physics and wrote for _The Daily Princetonian_.

Along the way, however, Resnick realized that the rules he’d played by didn’t work for every (or even most) children. So he decided to work to change those rules. Resnick, who has no children of his own, had always been drawn to helping young people: from tutoring classmates in high school, to coaching a youth basketball team in Princeton, to working as a counselor at a summer camp. After a postgrad stint as a technology
reporter at *BusinessWeek*, he began to chase a career at the crossroads of education and computer science, earning a master’s degree and then a Ph.D. in the latter discipline at MIT.

At MIT, Resnick found a mentor in Seymour Papert, a legendary professor who in his earlier days had done pioneering work in artificial intelligence. In his later years, Papert pioneered a “constructionist” theory of education that emphasized hands-on, experiential learning rather than rote drills and memorization. Today, Scratch represents a living lab for Papert’s hands-on ideals.

“It’s both a positive space but also an open space,” Resnick explains of his creation. Most online communities for children limit participants to a narrow set of responses and actions. Scratch offers its coders near-total freedom to be as serious or silly as they want to be. Kids have used Scratch to code Trump-themed “Build that wall!” video games, songs espousing LGBT pride, and animated simulations of violent flatulence. Paid adult moderators filter out anything that’s directly insulting to groups or individuals; in general, though, the Scratch community is kept in check by its population of eager underage coders — most of whom take the time to comment on, collaborate with, and “remix” the projects of their fellow Scratchers. There’s just not much incentive on Scratch for trollery: Coding projects can take hours to make using the language’s step-by-step command blocks (MOVE 10 STEPS FORWARD; WAIT 3 SECONDS, PLAY “ATOMIC FART” SOUND). Why would anyone spend hours building a nasty insult that will only be deleted post-haste?

The result of this kid-first ethos is a rarity on the internet: a genuinely popular, yet non-hateful, social network. One Scratch staffer refers to the site as “a magical unicorn place.”

Equally heartening is the Scratch team’s focus on kids who aren’t typically drawn to activities like coding — whether because of lack of exposure, lack of confidence, or a dramatist-type play style. “We’ve tried to put special focus on kids who haven’t had educational opportunities,” Resnick says. “We’re not just picking off the ones that are already succeeding.” While some patterner-type players might be drawn to Scratch solely to learn how to code, many new users are hooked by the chance to explore their existing passions. To this end, Scratch greets novices with a number of tutorials and sub-communities geared toward subjects that have nothing (explicitly) to do with computer tech. Within a few hours on the site, for instance, they can learn how to make a basic hip-hop dance, design and sketch a prom dress, or create a “pong-style” sports-video game.

**Scratch 3.0, which Resnick and his MIT team are prepping for release in 2018,** should extend the platform’s reach even further. The release will be the first designed for use on smartphones and tablets, and will include new ways to link Scratch coding to the real world with robotics and sensors.

Supporting this effort is the Scratch Foundation, which was started by Resnick and David Siegel ’83 to spread the gospel of coding for all. The two men first met as graduate students in the computer science department at MIT. Resnick continued on to a career
in academia, while Siegel founded Two Sigma Investments. Their paths crossed again earlier this decade after Siegel’s son got hooked on Scratch. “My son was able to write cool little programs,” Siegel recalls, “but what I most picked up on was that my son was starting to look at the world differently. He was starting to think about the world more as a series of processes, like algorithms working together.” The foundation’s support has allowed Scratch to remain free and not-for-profit and to employ the team of moderators and developers that keep the community vibrant at a time of rapid growth.

Beyond pouring millions into the Scratch Foundation, Siegel is eager to speak out on the need for the Scratch program. It’s not just about teaching children to code, he says, or even about helping them to land better jobs in an increasingly digital economy. What’s at stake is more fundamental, he says: determining how our youngest generation engages — or doesn’t — with the tech-saturated world around it. (I’ll quote Siegel at length here because when he explained it all to me, I felt an exquisite shiver of doom that I’d like to pass on to you, my reader.)

“Whether or not you are going to be a software engineer some day, for sure every person on this planet is going to be dependent on computers,” Siegel begins. “The big problem is, most people in the world have no idea what’s going on inside of a computer. They don’t know what software is. They look at their phone and they see an incredible black box. When you go to your computer and you’re typing into Microsoft Word, you have no idea what’s going on. When you go to a web browser and you search for something, you have no idea what’s going on behind the scenes.” (I nod.)

“So is that OK?” he asks.

(I shake my head no, then look down at my phone with a newfound shame.)

“Well, I think that’s not OK, and I’ll tell you why.

“I think it’s not OK because it destroys curiosity. If you have no clue how the most important things you’re interacting with every day work, you begin to tune out from the world. Because it’s sort of like this world is too complicated for me to understand. It’s too complicated, it’s magic, I’m just basically going to ignore it and be oblivious to what is happening around me. I think [coding illiteracy] causes people in general to tune out and to become somewhat despondent. Because if you’re living in a world where you don’t know how it works, then that’s not a very good feeling, is it? That will cause you to feel like you don’t even have any opportunity.”

Another big problem, Siegel says, is that many parents and teachers also don’t know how technology works. If your kid asks why the sky is blue, Siegel offers, you’d tell him. If he asks how airplanes work, you’d tell him. But if he asks how software works ... chances are you wouldn’t know what to say. (My shame intensifies.) That’s where Siegel sees the Scratch Foundation coming in: “It’s critical that we rise to the challenge of demystifying computer technology. Whether or not you’re going to be a programmer, you need this form of education. And Scratch is providing this foundation to tens of millions of kids around the world every day.”
This is a bold, world-sweeping mission for a toy with a cartoon cat as its mascot. But it’s a vision that Mitchel Resnick, for all his professorial modesty, shares with his partner. At the end of last year’s Scratch conference at MIT, Resnick led the crowd through a round of Scratch’s official theme song. Written by Resnick, and recorded with the help of Scratchers worldwide, it’s set to the tune of Coke’s utopian ’70s jingle “I’d Like to Teach the World to Sing (In Perfect Harmony).” It’s a song, it’s a manifesto, it’s a prayer. (When is a toy more than just a toy? When it’s 2017, and we all need deliverance from the techno-illiteracy that enshrouds us.) And so the people sing:

I’d like to teach the world to code
And think creatively
Make art and stories come alive
While learning joyfully

I’d like to teach the world to code
It’s everybody’s right
It helps you think and share your thoughts
Like learning how to write

It’s time to code
SCRATCH! ON!
It’s time to code
SCRATCH! ON!
Design, debug, remix with friends
The learning never ends ...
How Student Concentrations Are Changing at Harvard

With the deadline for sophomores to declare their fields of study fast approaching, The Crimson analyzed nine years of data to find out which concentrations are growing, which are shrinking, and which are holding steady.

BY EDITH M. HERWITZ AND DIANNE LEE | NOVEMBER 6, 2017

With the deadline for sophomores to declare their fields of study fast approaching, The Crimson analyzed nine years of data to find out which concentrations are growing, which are shrinking, and which are holding steady.

Four major trends emerged. The number of students studying applied science, technology, engineering, and mathematics has mushroomed in recent years, while humanities concentrators are winnowing. The traditionally-large social science concentrations—Economics, Government, and Psychology—have fluctuated somewhat, but overall remained relatively stable over the years. So have the Pure Science concentrations, which include chemistry and physics.

For this article, The Crimson analyzed the enrollment statistics for each concentration—excluding joint concentrations—listed in the 2017-2018 Harvard College Handbook. Data on the number of concentrators as of December of the academic year from 2008 to 2016 is publicly available through the handbook website.

Applied STEM
The rise of STEM is clear: Many applied STEM concentrations have experienced significant and consistent growth over the past eight years. Most dramatically, Statistics blossomed from just 17 concentrators in 2008 to 163 in 2016. Computer Science now counts 363 concentrators, up from 86 in 2008, and Applied Mathematics more than doubled in size over that time frame—from 101 to 279 students.

Kevin A. Rader, assistant director of undergraduate studies in Statistics, attributes some of this explosive growth to the fact that Statistics along with other applied STEM concentrations like Computer Science—are a “hot field, and hot job opportunity-wise” right now.

Rader also said that he thought the Statistics department was getting better at attracting concentrators through its introductory classes.

“We’ve been doing a pretty good job getting students interested through introductory courses like Stat 110, Stat 104, things like that,” he said.

Computer Science 50: “Introduction to Computer Science I,” the College’s flagship CS course, regularly competes with the introductory economics course to enroll the most undergraduate concentrators.

**Humanities**

Meanwhile, traditional humanities concentrations like English and Comparative Literature have experienced marked declines in the number of concentrators. English counted 236 concentrators in 2008, and saw decreases in the past seven out of eight years, enrolling 144 concentrators in 2016. Comparative Literature, likewise, shrank from its 2008 size of 48 students to its 2016 size of 16.

Andrew Warren, director of undergraduate studies for the English Department, said that he thought the trend aligns with broader national trends, especially those experienced by peer institutions.

Howard E. Gardner, a professor at the Graduate School of Education, said that the decrease in humanities concentrators is due to undergraduates’ increased emphasis on career training.

“The humanities are going down because people are very job-oriented, either themselves or their parents, so they lack the will or the strength to say, ‘this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to expand and try things out, even if they don’t lead to an immediate return on investment,’” Gardner said.

Warren said the decrease in concentrators may be connected to the economic downturn in 2008, which he speculated may have led students to seek more remunerative careers.

“The common wisdom is that the decline in majors in English across the country is associated with economic trends,” Warren said.

Warren also said that part of the decline in English concentrators may be due to the decreasing societal salience of literature. “I think literature has less cultural capital than it had 40 or 50 years ago, or certainly 200 years ago,” Warren said.
Warren noted that although there may be a decrease in the number of those concentrating in English, many still take courses in the field: he said that last year, the English Department saw the most students enrolled in its classes since 2009.

Social Sciences

The stalwart social science concentrations—Economics, Government and Psychology—saw some fluctuations over the past eight years, but generally decreased slightly in size. Economics, the largest concentration in the College, saw its peak of concentrators 2008 with 742, and its nadir in 2012 with 568. Since 2012, though, Economics has been steadily growing, counting 662 concentrators in 2016.

The number of Psychology concentrators has remained relatively stable in the time period, with its lows and highs of 255 and 296 concentrators in 2016 and 2014, respectively.

Thomas H. Baranga, Economics concentration advisor, said that Economics may consistently remain such a popular concentration because the College does not offer a formal business degree.

“I’m sure there’s a large section of the population that if they could do a business undergraduate concentration would do that and in the absence of that do Economics,” Baranga said.

He also added that students’ preliminary interest in Economics may arise from how commonly its principles are invoked in political discussions.

“Because both sides of the argument claim to find economic evidence to support their point of view, I’m sure that piques students interest to think, ‘they both can’t be right,’” Baranga said.

The Government Department has had a more pronounced decline in concentrators, decreasing almost every year from its 2008 rate of 477 concentrators to its 2016 rate of 333 concentrators.

Although the number of concentrators have decreased, Gardner said that the social science departments still have a healthy “baseline” pool of concentrators.

“When Economics goes from 700 to 600 that’s noticeable, but when Art History goes from 100 to 30, that’s a headline,” Gardner said.

Pure Sciences

The pure science concentrations, such as Chemistry and Physics, have attracted relatively stable numbers of concentrators since 2008: Chemistry went from 90 concentrators in 2008 to 80 in 2016, while Physics decreased from 79 concentrators to 61 in the same time frame.

Gardner said this could be attributed in part to the link between students who concentrate in pure sciences and those who plan to apply to medical school.

“The sciences are complicated because of medicine—if people want to go into medicine they have to go into some kind of science, probably biology or chemistry,” he said. Harvard does not have a pure Biology concentration, but does have Molecular and Cellular Biology, which has overall has averaged a relatively constant number of students. It attracted 162 students in 2008 and 158 in 2016.
Fancy being the next Rafael Nadal or Tiger Woods? Golf and tennis enthusiasts know there is no shortage of training grounds in the city, but those seeking to take their skills to the next level without sacrificing on luxury should plan a visit to the Hong Kong Golf and Tennis Academy, the newly-minted brainchild of cultural entrepreneur Adrian Cheng.

It’s not every day that an academy can boast programmes of the prestigious Jack Nicklaus Academy of Golf and the Bruguera Tennis Academy under one roof. But the sports and wellness destination, perched across 19 sprawling acres of Sai Kun’s countryside, has risen above the crop of sports academies in the city.

Golf clubs and tennis rackets in tow, we toured the academy to find out why you need to check it out now:

1. **Jack Nicklaus Academy of Golf**

Inspired by the winning philosophy of legendary hall-of-famer golfer Jack Nicklaus, the Nicklaus Academy of Golf programme focuses on mastering the fundamentals while enjoying a passion for the game. At the academy, a range of bespoke programmes take the uninitiated
through the fundamentals of the game through a series of 12-week courses, addressing all aspects of the game from rules and etiquette to mental preparation.

With state-of-the-art facilities that include 75 hitting stations with auto-feed golf ball system over three levels and a Nicklaus Design 6-hole short course, as well as high-speed video cameras K-vest 7 + K-Player sensor technology that expertly analyses your golf swing in great detail through an advanced computer system, aspiring golfers will master that elusive perfect swing in no time.

2 Bruguera Tennis Academy
Tennis enthusiasts will delight in training with the renowned Bruguera Tennis Academy programmes founded by internationally acclaimed coach Lluis Bruguera who has tapped Hong Kong to launch his first training academy in Asia. Lluis’ original technique earned him widespread respect as the founding father of modern tennis in Spain, led by a holistic and balanced training methodology incorporating technical, strategic, physical and mental development.

The academy is home to seven outdoor courts, one International Tennis Federation-standard indoor court, two mini-tennis courts for children and the first and only padel tennis offering in Hong Kong. Advanced video analysis ensures students and aspiring professionals get the most out of their training.

3 Fivelements wellness centre
Any athlete knows that physical and mental prowess go hand in hand—that sometimes a victorious match all hinges on how mentally-prepared you are on the day. Knowing this, the HKGTA offers the spectacular Fivelements wellness centre hailing from Bali, Indonesia to offer athletes a perfect urban retreat for rejuvenation and relaxation after an intense training session.

Set within a 2,000-square-metered landscaped gardens and consisting of 12 wellness suites, a sacred arts yoga and meditation studio, Fivelements offers a range of Balinese-inspired wellness rituals specifically designed for intensive athletic training, from deep bodywork and relaxing massage therapies to rejuvenating therapies, osteopathy, water healing, mindfulness and yoga.

4 Sakti Dining Room
The academy’s dedication to high-quality nourishment extends to its dining offering housed at the award-winning Sakti Dining Room. The fine-dining eco-friendly restaurant is sure to impress even the most discerning gourmand with a wide array of innovative plant-based, raw vegan dishes curated by Chef Arnaud Hauchon, including the popular three, five and seven-course chef’s tasting menus crafted from seasonal organic ingredients and designed to give optimal plant-based nutrition and high energy.
To end your meal on a soothing note, head over to the Royal Tea Lounge decked in Balinese palace-inspired design for a sip of the handcrafted artisanal teas.

**5 Kids Academy**

Despite its premier training programmes and facilities, it's much more than just tennis and golf at the academy: Young learners seeking the same development, fun and creativity will find games and activities galore at the Kids Academy designed to promote holistic learning and growth.

Believing that good development is nurtured through structured and unstructured play, the activities cover eight learning styles developed by Dr. Howard Gardner including visual-spatial, interpersonal, verbal-linguistic intelligences and more. Games rooms with slides and ball pits, indoor and outdoor adventure play spaces and an outdoor recreational pool provide kids and their families with a stimulating environment for learning.

Seeking a little popcorn entertainment after a day of play? Retreat to the nearby mini movie theatre, which can be rented out for private parties, to catch the latest flick with the whole family.

**6 Plush accommodations**

The last things a player needs before a game are unwanted distractions. Thankfully, a host of fully-equipped, lavishly contemporary accommodation options are available right on the academy’s grounds to offer the perfect sanctuary for athletes to get their full-night shut eye and rest.

With a plethora of accommodation types on offer including one- to three-bedroom suites, duplexes, villas, row houses and even kids’ dormitories, there will be plenty of room for your support crews—whether they be intimate family members or your entire entourage.
Opening this month, it welcomes all children — regardless of their abilities and needs. When the Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF) first unveiled the Inclusive Preschool model in 2017, it was a move that brought about positive responses from parents and educators.

In line with this new initiative, SAIL Playhouse will open its doors to all children this month. SAIL, which stands for Strengthening Abilities, Inclusive Learning, is an inclusive preschool that aims to cater to the individual needs of each child. It provides aptly designed learning environments and implements support systems that allow every child to learn successfully.

The model allows children with special needs to develop social and communication skills in a mainstream preschool setting. Meanwhile, children with typical needs can learn to understand and accept differences between themselves and their peers.
It was set up by a team of early childhood educators and therapists, accepting children aged 18 months to six years old — whether they have typical or special needs.

At the preschool, toddlers, preschoolers and kindergarteners alike can learn to work and play with peers who are different from them.

**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION MODEL**

SAIL Playhouse adopts an education model that embraces inclusivity and includes four key components: holistic curriculum, universally designed environment, strong support systems, and having parents as important partners.

Based on Howard Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences, the school’s curriculum is designed to offer individual learning experiences for each child.

“When we develop our curriculum, we consider the potential barriers that children of diverse abilities may have and address them through differentiated instructions. We then think about who may fall through the gaps, and adaptations are put in place to make learning accessible to these children,” says Ms Chua Pei Lin, 30, centre director for SAIL Playhouse.

For holistic learning, SAIL Playhouse implements STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) and literacy into its daily programme.

On its premises are spaces that are conducive for learning, allowing children to be curious explorers.

Children can visit designated interest centres, such as a cooking studio, dramatic play area, and a light and shadow exploration room. There are also wide pathways and rails, making the centre accessible to children regardless of their mobility.

One special feature of the school is a sanctuary-like alcove included in every classroom. Children can enter the alcove whenever they feel overwhelmed and require quiet time to calm down. This allows them to cope with difficult emotions and become more resilient.

**WORKING WITH EDUCATORS AND PARENTS**

By providing ongoing training and support for its educators, SAIL Playhouse supports diverse learning needs in the classroom.

Educators at SAIL Playhouse are required to go through a Preparatory Training Course to strengthen their competence and confidence in teaching children with diverse needs.

Early intervention specialists and allied health professionals aid the educators in facilitating meaningful interactions with the children and help them to engage in fruitful learning experiences.
To build stronger relationships with parents, SAIL Playhouse has put various programmes in place to foster parent involvement.

One such initiative is the “Breakfast with Me” day, a weekly initiative where parents are invited to have breakfast with their children at the centre.

Apart from spending quality time with their children, this allows parents to connect and offer support to one another.

SAIL Playhouse hopes that its high-quality inclusive early education model will encourage more private preschools, anchor operators and the Government to move towards an inclusive education system — even as Singapore strives to become a more inclusive, diverse and accepting nation.
III

Leaders
Years ago, the distinguished Harvard social scientist Howard Gardner wanted to discover what highly successful leaders have in common. After reviewing the lives of eleven luminaries, from Margaret Thatcher to Martin Luther King Jr., Gardner concluded that their success depended to a great deal on their ability to communicate a compelling story, “narratives that help individuals think about and feel who they are, where they come from, and where they are headed.” These stories, he found, “constitute the single most powerful weapon in the leader’s literary arsenal.” And what did these stories in turn often share? A five-year-old’s binary view of the world as a place of lightness and darkness. Why was that critical? Because, Gardner reported, “Adults never lose their sensitivity to these basic narratives.”

It was no coincidence, Gardner suggested, that Reagan’s Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), a missile defense system, instantly came to be known as Star Wars. While his
critics hoped to discredit SDI by associating it with a movie featuring a simple good-versus-evil formula, the imagery brilliantly worked in SDI’s favor. Reagan, like Luke Skywalker, was fighting the good fight.

The reason stories are particularly attractive to leaders is that they are easily understood. Politics is about finding issues susceptible to public debate, issues that don’t require a college education, which most voters lack. By using stories, especially children’s stories that feature good guys and bad guys, politicians can reach 100 percent of the audience. How does a voter feel in the presence of a politician who bases his appeal on stories? Smart. For everybody understands stories. And as we learned earlier, what’s important in politics is not what politicians look like or sound like, but how they make voters feel.

Stories are important in another way that’s worth noting. Like myths they help us adapt and change. The historian Yuval Noah Harari asks us to imagine a woman born in Germany in 1900 who lives to 100. In the course of her single lifetime, she would have lived through the Hohenzollern Empire, the Weimar Republic, the Nazi Third Reich, the division of Germany into East and West Germany, and the unification of Germany. Despite living through “very different sociopolitical systems,” her DNA would have “remained exactly the same.” What changed each time was not her or anybody’s DNA, but the story citizens living under those systems believed about themselves. Change the story, and our behavior changes. Germans living under Hitler behaved differently than they do today.

One of our chief advantages over animals has to do with our storytelling (and story-believing) ability. Animals by and large do not change their behavior, and they certainly cannot do so quickly. They need thousands of years to evolve. We don’t—and it’s because of stories. We don’t need to evolve to change. We can just tell ourselves a new story.

Politicians avail themselves of our susceptibility to stories by changing their own stories to suit our desires. If one election year what we seem to want is an outsider, they’ll emphasize milestones in their life story that suggest they’re outsiders. If four years later
it seems more opportune for them to present themselves as experienced insiders, they’ll simply rebrand themselves by changing their story.

Who wins elections? Well, that’s a complicated question, to be sure. But one of the central factors that is often critical is the ability of a politician to tell a convincing story. The reason for this is that stories unify us. A politician with a compelling story can unite people behind them.
Corporate Training Program Focuses On How Vulnerability Has Genius, Power And Magic In It

February 12, 2018

The Strategic Edge, www.strategic-edge.com, is a business set up by Meredith Gardener, Ph.D. in New York, NY. She develops in house corporate training programs that improve communication, emotional intelligence, leadership skills and more. In a new training program, she focuses on the concept that vulnerability has genius, power, and magic in it.

Meredith Gardner points out that almost everyone seems to think that being vulnerable is a bad thing. This is because people believe that it implies defenselessness and weakness. In reality, however, admitting to vulnerability encourages trust and respect in others. This is why she feels that great leaders understand how important it is to show their vulnerability. Ultimately, it is a recipe for success because it encourages open communication.

That said, showing vulnerability is not something that comes naturally to everybody. Gardner has developed methods that focus on key three elements in order to help businesses have open and honest communication, and on leaders showing their vulnerability. Gardner explains: "First, you have to change your view on vulnerability. Sometimes, you have to be the one who just sits and listens, rather than the one taking charge. Secondly, you have to accept vulnerability as a strength, understanding that it is not really a weakness. Finally, you must practice and be a student of vulnerability. It is hard work to change a mindset, after all."

Through her training which is also provided to people in the IT industry, as shown at www.strategic-cio-solutions.com, Gardner can help leaders become better at motivating, encouraging their people to bring new ideas to life as a team. She also believes that leaders must learn to become more empathic by entering the stories of others, something described by author Brandon Sanderson and Harvard's Dr. Howard Gardner.

"Effective leadership is down to two unbreakable laws," adds Meredith. "The first is that who you are is more important than what you do. The second is that vulnerability beats bravado every single time. Indeed, it was Maya Angelou who said "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."
A clarion calls for leaders to action!

S Pahrii Sapa | April 24, 2018

The topic of leadership is immensely important in our society today. Many want to be a leader but only few want to lead. I consider leader and leading two entities. George Barna once said “A Christian leader is someone who is called by God to lead; leads with and through Christ-like character; and demonstrates the functional competencies that permit effective leadership to take place.” The original concept of leadership is service. Leadership is not position but it’s about presence.

BNET Business Dictionary defines leadership as: “Leadership is the capacity to establish direction and to influence and align others toward a common goal, motivating and committing them to action and making them responsible for their performance.”

Howard Gardner an American Psychologist’s definition for leadership is “… persons who, by word and/or personal example, markedly influence the behaviors, thoughts and feelings of a significant number of their fellow human beings.” Thus, taking into mind

*Leaders are the banners that display the society.*
*Leadership involves establishing direction, vision and purpose.
*Leadership involves exciting others with regard to that vision and purpose.

The primary reason why our societies are degrading is leaders not leading. Most of us are not in front pulling but pushing from behind. The societies are where leaders are. My greatest challenge as a pastor is doing my preaching. I have Bibles, books, internet, friends and mentors to prepare my sermon. But the question is do I live what I’m about to preach? Leading congregation in the path where I have never trodden would be a dangerous journey.

The Bible in proverbs 29:2 “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn.” Again in John 20:21 “Peace be unto you: as my Father sent me, even so send I you.” Also Jesus called Christians “The salt and Light of the World. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 5:13-16) “We are ambassadors of Christ.” 2 Corinthians 5:20.

The word of God emplaced us a mission for Him. We (leaders) are really important before God to the world. As an ambassador is sent by the country to represent the country to foreign nation so are we to the world. We Christian Leaders must be an agent of change unto good. Today we have lots of spectators but only few players who are willing to take risks for the cause of our decaying society.
Jesus the greatest leader the world ever produced taught us the danger of workless leaders. So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. Matt.23:3 (NIV). Here Jesus emphasizes the danger of Workless words who take the role of leadership. In our community we have many who want to be a leader. Many Christian leaders today become talking leaders, not walking the talking leaders. I was told once by a friend about a reverend. A man has an uncle Rev. who preached nice. The man once told his friend, if my uncle preached and hide inside almirah, he will be very good. He meant the Reverend was not living good life though he preached great, great words. Theologically trained or holding high degree does not make a great leader.

Here are few questions to test ourselves as we lead or are planning to lead!

• Have we ever broken a bad habit? To lead others, you must master your appetites.
• Do we keep self- control when things go wrong? The leader who loses control under adversity forfeits respect and influence.
• Are we a peace maker? A leader must be part of solution not problem. “The winner has a solution for every problem; the loser has a problem for every solution.” Leader must always be a part of solution.
• Can we forgive? To lead others we must a heart of forget and forgive instead of nursing resentments and ill feelings.
• Are we ready to face opposition? Leaders always face opposition.
• Are we Optimistic? Pessimism and leadership do not mix. Leading with vision is a great value.
• Can we stand with the truth when you it is in your power? Leaders must stand with the truth even though you may not win. (Abraham Lincoln) And the truth will win in the end. (John Wycliffe)
• Can we say ‘NO’ to wine, Women and Money when those temptations come to us? These three are the strongest test that we encounter and will encounter in our life. If a man can resist from these three pressures he is reliable.

How we response for above investigation will determine our potential as a leader. The worst problem and danger of our land is our leaders can be bought by money. They said great, great words but found nowhere when they were offered money. Money had lead leaders astray and they fail to perform that ought to be done. What frighten our people most is leaders tilted where there is more money.

Nagas are great in forming new society and organisation. We have many hundreds of societies and organisations from family and clan to the highest organisation, be it civil organisations, Churches, Governmental or non-Governmental offices. And we have leaders for those families, organisations and societies. It is not the size of society that determines the importance of leadership. All leaders are important and our role as a leader is tremendous. Our life should be distinctive. We must accept the blame when our societies are messed up.

Christian leaders where are we? Are we OK as we are called to be in-front before the people and lead? “Moreover you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear
God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.” Exodus 18:21

Fellow citizens! God is looking for truth, humble and faithful Leaders because when the righteous are in authority the people rejoice. Its time leaders act right with truth and courage. We need daring and courageous leaders today.

All great leaders possess two things: One, they know where they are going and Two, they are able to persuade others to follow.
3 business lessons corporate leaders can learn from the recent Cabinet reshuffle

Monica Jasuja | 5th September, 2017

*Passion and proficiency combined with professional and political acumen proved to be the winning formula for the four ministers elevated to Cabinet berths.*

The Union Government’s much-awaited Cabinet reshuffle concluded on Sunday with the inclusion of nine fresh faces inducted as Ministers of State (MoS) and the elevation of four state ministers to Cabinet berths.

Political and media pundits are unanimous that the reason for induction of new faces is to bring functional, administrative and policy experience into the government ranks. This will, over time, reinforce MyGov with 4 Ps — passion, proficiency, professional and political acumen.

But I believe there is much to derive from the reasons for promotion of the four state ministers: Nirmala Sitharaman, Piyush Goyal, Dharmendra Pradhan and Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi. Widely respected across party lines, the four are regarded as the government’s high performers.

**Nirmala Sitharaman**

Then: Union Minister of State, Commerce and Industry

Now: Union Defence Minister
Piyush Goyal
Then: Union Minister of State for Power, Coal, New and Renewable Energy and Mines
Now: Minister of Railways and Coal

Dharmendra Pradhan
Then: Union Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas
Now: Minister for Petroleum and Natural Gas

Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi
Then: Union Minister of State for Minority Affairs and Parliamentary Affairs
Now: Union Minister of Minority Affairs

Political discourse aside, analysing the narrative on mainstream media and closely following the chatter on social media, this is also a great case study of some key lessons for business leaders. It comes ahead of year-end appraisals and performance evaluations, which accompany plenty of coaching moments for managers.

The three lessons that I infered from the advancements of these four ministers are:

1. **To achieve your best results, put on blinders**

George Lucas, the creator of the Star Wars and Indiana Jones franchises, famously said: “You simply have to put one foot in front of the other and keep going. Put blinders on and plow right ahead.”

Each of the elevated ministers has exhibited incredible success in their ministries, which has helped India progress and helped the government advance towards its 5-year growth targets. While others may have digressed from the path with non-performance, involvement in petty squabbles and overt focus on increasing their own political clout, each of these ministers has shown laser-sharp focus on ensuring their job gets done and gets done well.

As business leaders, we deal with disempowering people, mindsets and situations, making us waste our time and energy (Sith, from *Star Wars* harnessing the dark side of the force) while exhausting ourselves. We should remember to pull away and pull on blinders to become the Jedis who connect to the light side of the force and achieve greatness.

2. **Live the brand and vision to become the best brand champions**

Do the things that you want to tell in your life story. Be the person you want to be in your story. Surround yourself with what you wish to be part of your story. Live the story you want to tell. - Topaz
The present government was elected with a huge mandate on the promise of development. Prime Minister Narendra said in an election rally last year: “I have a three-point programme; it is development, development, and development.”

Development is the answer to all problems of the people. Ensuring their ministries steered the government’s vision of development and worked tirelessly towards Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas explains these leaders extraordinary success. By maintaining a sterling reputation of being corruption-free, these four individuals have ensured they are known and regarded by critics and allies alike.

As business leaders, the onus is on us to live and be the brand vision of our company and be the leaders inspired by the brand the company stands for. It is a tough ask to live out the vision every day, but one that needs a conscious attempt to stay on track.

3. **Make effective storytelling complement strong performance and delivery outcomes**

“Stories constitute the single most powerful weapon in a leader's arsenal,” says Dr. Howard Gardner, a professor at Harvard University.

Complementing strong performance with a compelling story makes these results the cornerstone for change and differentiates leaders from performers. Leaders are required to rally large groups of people around a central idea to deliver results. Effective, strong and targeted storytelling is the key to success.

In the case in point, the four leaders have exceptional communication skills, are highly articulate, have a wide social presence and a team that has consistently communicated and highlighted the results of their ministries while making the effort to be accessible to the common voter. Their narrative via storytelling has been built on the foundation of finding the heart of the story, which for each of these ministers is honest, open communication about development and delivering results.

As business leaders, our style and need for storytelling is vastly different and must be tailored to create that aha moment to get buy-ins to new ideas and strategies and gather support across the organisation to deliver a common objective. Without a purpose and story, one thing is guaranteed: failure.

Leaders must lead from the front, we all know, and these four ministers have shown us how.
IV

Miscellaneous
On Beautiful Shared Places
By Tom Vander Ark | September 25, 2017

We seek an enlargement of our being. We want to be more than ourselves. Each of us by nature sees the whole world from one point of view with a perspective and a selectiveness peculiar to himself...We want to see with other eyes, to imagine with other imaginations, to feel with other hearts, as well as with our own...We demand windows.

~ CS Lewis

The National Mall in Washington, D.C., or Chicago lakefront parks; Grand Teton National Park or a park near your house; the bright lights of Time Square or the grandeur of the Champs-Élysées in Paris, the Smithsonian Museums or the Tate Modern in London--these public spaces are communal, awe-inspiring and essential to the life of a region that is more than survival.

We recently assembled a list of the 32 most pressing issues of our time--hunger, poverty, climate change, just institutions, sustainable development and the like, based on the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and a few other efforts to enumerate Grand Challenges. Overflowing with problems, the list seemed short of opportunity so we added human dignity, enterprise and innovation, mindfulness and character. A topic that just wouldn’t stay off the list was beautiful shared places: social and cultural infrastructure, art and architecture, open spaces, parks and museums.

The topic of beautiful shared places kicked off a rich dialog with Getting Smart team and friends. Following is a recap.

Do beautiful shared places belong on a list of important issues?

“Striving for truth, beauty and goodness, to quote Howard Gardner, has been the aim of education since the time of the Ancient Greeks,” said Ron Berger, CAO of EL
Education. “Beyond just schools, I live in New England where almost every old town is built around a Town Common—a Town Green—with lawns and trees and perhaps a gazebo or plaza. These spaces bring people together for meetings, festivals, celebrations, sports, events—it makes the town feel like a community.” He added that new suburban communities often have no space like this—the center of town is usually entirely commercial.

“Beautiful shared places you can experience with other members of your community builds and contributes to a shared sense of trust, optimism and empowerment,” said Getting Smart editor Erik Day. He also stated that coming together in public can be useful when it comes to more complicated or divisive issues.

“Shared places creates a sense of awe and wonder,” said Mary Ryerse, director of advisory at Getting Smart. She noted that philosopher Paul Woodruff called it Reverence, the capacity to be in awe of whatever we believe lies outside our control.

“Designed places (museums, buildings, ocean fronts) are exciting in that the beauty is defined through the eyes of each individual who walks through the door, onto the sands of the ocean beach or navigates the landscape of an incredible forest,” said Adam Kulaas, director of school coaching at Getting Smart. He added, “They inspire reflection and growth by expanding through a lens what ‘was’ and more importantly the possibility of what ‘could be’.”
Fostering a sense of awe is linked to positive mental health in many studies. “This could come from a museum, cathedral, top of a mountain or on a beach,” said Nate McClennen, Teton Science Schools. He added that “preserving these spaces in the world is important for long-term human health.”

Andrew Meyers ran City Semester, an interdisciplinary, experiential program at the Fieldston School that takes eleventh and twelfth-grade students out into New York City to construct their own learning experiences and address urban policy challenges. He urges caution around the definition of beauty in cities where it may be more associational than aesthetic given the robust cultural and political dimension of urban life. “There are also the questions of power, access, memory and meaning: who decides what a place means, which memories are sustained, how do the cultures and cultural associations of the less powerful survive?”

Meyers dives into the essence of place-based learning, saying, “Beautiful, shared places such as these hold the DNA of a diverse, dangerous, inclusive, sublime city that is under threat. That DNA is what makes the city a place where we can encounter each other with a degree of civility and common purpose.”

What knowledge and skills are associated with the curation of beautiful places?

McClennen notes that shared spaces “connect to the global goal of sustainable communities, as sustainability always includes economy, culture and ecology.”

Day values the focus on design that shared spaces evoke—the design of place, of experience and of human organizations that create and sustain shared spaces.

Kulaas takes a “choose your own adventure” approach where youth have the autonomy to find the beauty through their eyes and capture reflections that it provides. This learner-driven approach “allows them to navigate the learning and find ownership in protecting the ‘place’ and the experience.”

Janice Walton, project manager at Getting Smart notes, “Beautiful spaces can be found anywhere, perhaps they are not the "beautiful" in the traditional sense but they have
some level of meaning and worth to the students who live there. Students should be allowed to define beauty for themselves and mindful that beauty can exist anywhere."

“Shared public spaces are where contestations over power and meaning are expressed and (at best) worked out, where collective meaning and memory reside,” said Meyers. An advocate for global competence and critical thinking, he worries about a sterilized, sanitized and privatized view of urban life where “we lose the messy, multi-vocal and specific beauty of urban places.”

Berger looks at how we view beauty created in the past as the definition of a culture’s knowledge and skill level. “When we value ancient civilizations--Chinese, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Mayan--it is not typically for their political leaders but for the beauty of their art, their architecture and the beautiful spaces they created,” said Berger.

Are curation, preservation, design and advocacy going to become more important?

“Open and shared spaces will become more valuable over time as the world becomes more and more curated, technological and automated,” said McClennen, adding that preservation and advocacy are going to become even more important as well.

On almost every street in Seattle, Day says “old, beautiful homes are being torn down and replaced with large, bland soulless units with eight to ten 350-square-foot efficiency studios.” He notes that as space becomes increasingly constrained, it will be more important for people to have access to community spaces. “Humans are social beings, and connected screen time cannot provide a satisfying replacement."

“As our world continues to change rapidly and unexpectedly, we’ll want and need to preserve things we can control, and beautiful spaces are one of the few things we can design and preserve,” said Catherine Wedgwood, managing editor of Getting Smart. “There is a shared comfort in working together to keep something beautiful and available to everyone to enjoy.”

As more of us crowd into megacities, what are the implications for shared space?
Meyers is concerned about draining the local meaning from place as a result of gentrification, globalization and the emergence of a trans-national urban elite. “The walking tours and urban analyses that my students participate in will have less and less meaning, less and less to teach, as our spaces become homogenized and upscaled.” An example is Essex Street in the Bronx, where not long ago students could see and experience tenements, pickle stores, graffiti, clotheslines and Orthodox Jews next to Iranian nut-sellers and Dominican musicians. But now the street is filled with artisanal coffee shops, luxury condos (sold to absentee owners) and empty high-end clothing shops.

“As cities grow more dense and complex, urban planning and development are of the utmost importance,” said Emily Liebtag, director of advocacy at Getting Smart. As transportation shifts to ride share and autonomous vehicles, Leibtag sees less need for major train stations leaving more room for repurposed space like the Manhattan Highline.

As auto-curation fills every screen we view, what should we be concerned about?

“[We should be concerned] with the ease in which it is possible to accidentally fall into a cultural bubble or niche that makes it increasingly difficult to connect with your neighbor, who is likely to have gone down their own rabbit hole,” said Day.

“I worry about auto-curation decreasing the sense of discovery that I think is important for human development and learning and decreasing the open-mindedness that comes from seeking our own truths rather than being handed auto-curated collections built on our previous activities,” said McClennen. He added that preservation (and exploration) of the common spaces--built and natural--leads to long-term human well-being.

Given the importance of public spaces and the emerging importance of design and curation, we think beautiful places belongs on the list of big issues that young people should grapple with.
Stephen Wolfram—founder of Wolfram Alpha and CEO of Wolfram Research—discussed computational thinking in the 21st century with Graduate School of Education professor Howard Gardner at an Askwith Forum event on Monday.

Wolfram defined computational thinking as “the activity for a human of taking something that they want to know about or that they want to have happen in the world, and formulating it in such a way that a sufficiently smart computer can then know what to do.”

The process of computational thinking can be applied to any field, according to Wolfram. “Computational thinking is a bigger, more significant thing that I think will be remembered as probably the most important intellectual achievement of the 21st century,” he said.

Wolfram dispelled what he described as a misconception of equating coding with computational thinking. “Coding tends to mean the low-level construction of programs, sort of step-by-step, which is something more akin to knowing how to fix your car in detail than sort of knowing how to drive the car,” Wolfram said. “We're not so much interested in driving the car, we're more interested in going inside the engine and looking at the details of how to put together the pistons and so on.”

Coding, Wolfram argued, is “the enemy” of computational thinking. “I think with the low-level coding, it is as mechanical as a lot of the kind of math that kids find boring,” he said.

Gardner said he invited Wolfram because he wanted to learn more about Wolfram’s work and share the conversation with the public.
“I have known Stephen peripherally for a long time, but I don’t really know what he does, and I figured this would be a good way to find out in more detail,” Gardner said.

This event, part of the Askwith Forum public lecture series, attracted approximately 200 Harvard affiliates and nearby residents. The next event will be held on Nov. 14 at the Graduate School of Education.

“They are also a way to open our doors to the greater Harvard community and general public,” Gardner said of the Askwith Forums.

Gardner said these forms are meant to contribute to “the intellectual life of the school through conversation, debate, and exchange of ideas.”

Alaisha K. Sharma ’20, an avid user of Wolfram Alpha, said she attended the lecture to learn about Wolfram’s thoughts on education. “I thought that was an interesting intersection,” she said, referring to the nexus of computing and education.
The Kitasi-Berekuso road, off the Accra-Aburi highway in the Akwapim North District is symptomatic of the mediocrity that is fast becoming the acceptable norm in Ghana.

Only a few years ago, it was paved and motorable. Today, the paving is long gone. The red dirt road is riddled with potholes, making for difficult and even dangerous navigation, especially in the rainy season. Yet, this deplorable road leads to the Ashesi University College, an institution that is helping to create leaders who would prevent unfortunate nuisances such as that of the Kitasi-Brekuso road.

Set on over 100 acres of landscaped grounds on top of the Akwapim hills, Ashesi’s campus is a stunning oasis of peace and tranquillity which makes studying at Ashesi a delight and provides a source of daily inspiration and self-renewal.

There’s no litter to be found anywhere other than in the litter bins where they belong. Awuah tells me he dislikes people who show no regard for the environment. To him, people who litter are short-term thinkers and lack social capital – the ability to work together to solve elementary social problems. Given Ashesi’s mission to educate ethical leaders with the courage to transform
our continent, it’s understanding that Awuah would be almost as obsessed with preserving Ashesi’s pristine grounds as he is with the quality of teaching.

The Ashesi story

Ashesi’s story is more than buildings and beautiful campus. Awuah has created - unprecedented in Ghana - a real life laboratory of ethical leadership, entrepreneurship and critical problem solving, modelled on his own college life and liberal arts education which he received and thoroughly enjoyed at the Swarthmore College.

Ashesi provides access to holistic quality teaching and the opportunity to interact at an intellectual level with a wide array of people including the Berekuso community, where students tutor high school students, teach farmers better cultivation methods amongst others. At its founding in 2002 in a rented home on 2nd Norla Street at Labone, Ashesi’s freshman class was made up of 27 students, nearly 50 per cent of whom were on scholarship. Despite significant challenges such as run-ins with the National Accreditation Board and a year they barely made payroll, Awuah has steered Ashesi to become a globally recognised academic institution of excellence with a healthy endowment. Every one of its graduates has found quality employment and 90 per cent of them remain in Africa where they can make great impact. Need is not a barrier as Awuah tirelessly raises funds to provide generous scholarships.

Accolades

Awuah is easily the most globally recognised and awarded Ghanaian of his generation. His awards and accolades include Schwab Foundation 2014 Social Entrepreneur of the Year, TED Fellow, Honorary Doctorates from the Swarthmore College and the University of California at Berkeley, Member of the Order of the Volta, World Economic Forum Young Global Leader and the John P. McNulty Prize. In 2015, he was awarded the US$625,000 prestigious McArthur Fellowship “Genius Grant” as an investment in his originality, insight and potential.

Last week, Awuah was awarded the US$500,000 prestigious WISE Prize for his outstanding world-class contribution to education. The WISE Prize is becoming almost as prestigious as the
Nobel Peace Prize.
But founding a university was not on Awuah’s list when he started considering how he could contribute to Ghana’s economic development. As an electrical engineer with eight years’ work experience at Microsoft, he assumed he’d set up a software firm. He changed his mind about that when he realised how difficult it would be to find the right home trained engineers to help grow the company.

Equipping the next generation

By analysing various national problems faced by friends and family, Awuah came to the conclusion that those in control (the post-secondary educated elite who typically made the decisions) were the cause of many of the problems. So he decided to set up an institution to better equip the next generation of leaders - to make them ethical, entrepreneurial, critical problem solvers, as well as philosophical leaders – leaders who cared and thought deeply about the issues at hand. He figured that if he limited himself only to this five per cent or so, he could change the course of Ghana’s destiny as they would in turn impact and influence society generally.

Business School provided him an opportunity to refine and test his ideas including travelling to Ghana with three other students to research the viability of the idea and to develop a business plan.
Auwah himself is the best role model of the generation of leaders he is trying to develop.
Spending time with his family and helping nurture his children is what’s most important to him. He has no time for hierarchy and is always happy to roll up his sleeves to pitch in.

His office is surprisingly small – for a president of an African university. The bookshelf is full of books on a wide range of subjects that feed all the questions he has about our continent. At the moment, he is reading Changing Minds by Howard Gardner.

He queues in line to eat the same food as students at the student cafeteria and I don’t think Awuah has quite realised what a superstar he has become. He tells me he has no extravagances other than travel via business class travel (more for the practical reason of comfort – his long legs get cramped on long haul flights).
He tells me his greatest fear is that, at some point in the future, he will look back and feel the work he did at Ashesi did not matter. “Not a chance” I mutter to myself. He’s already been written into the annals of Ghanaian education reform and transformational leadership; an embodiment of the founding doctrine of his alma mater, Achimota School, to go forth “as living waters to a thirsty land”.

The Manila Times
Fundamentals of good work: When excellence and ethics meet

BY YEN MAKABENTA | NOVEMBER 23, 2017

First word

The three authors are: Howard Gardner, a cognitive psychologist best known for his theory of multiple intelligences; Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, a social psychologist, who writes from an evolutionary and motivational perspective, best known for discovering the psychological state called “flow”; and William Damon, a developmental psychologist who has focused on social and moral issues.

In 1994-1995, the three spent a year at the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS) in Palo Alto, California, a cloistered area overlooking nearby Stanford University.

One afternoon, their conversation turned to the question: “If you had the choice, what sort of problem would you work on for the next ten years of your professional life.”

High-level performance and social responsibility
It became clear to them, first, that each of them did have a choice; and second, that their envisioned projects were in many respects similar.

Each of them had begun to struggle with the relationship between high-level performance and social responsibility, between excellence and ethics.

They had been thinking about several key questions:
1. Is it true that most creative scientists and artists are selfish and ambitious, unconcerned with the common good?

2. Why is it that experts primarily teach techniques to young professionals, while ignoring the values that have sustained the quests of so many geniuses?
3. Is the impact of science, technology and communication predetermined—for good or ill—or do we have some control over it?

This set of questions led them to the idea of studying together what they first called “humane creativity”. They thought of interviewing and observing professionals at the cutting edge of a dozen fields that are essential to individual and social well-being – fields ranging from journalism and genetics to law and theater. The idea was to take stock of the kind of people who entered such professions and succeeded in them. They wanted to know about their backgrounds, values and goals. They wanted to look at how they approached their work, as well as the opposition they encountered, and the strategies they used to overcome it. They planned to ask them about their dreams and nightmares, about the future course of their chosen pursuit.

Because of their collective backgrounds in the study of creativity, leadership and moral excellence, they were particularly interested in learning more about those persons who succeeded in melding expertise with moral distinction.

After leaving Stanford, they started assembling research teams at their respective universities (each was a professor), and began applying for financial support so they could carry out their project.

They found much interest in their work in foundations. There was a growing interest in the object of their research: leading professionals face a growing challenge as they attempt to carry out their central missions, because conditions are changing rapidly, and market forces are extremely powerful, and their sense of time and space were being radically altered by technological innovations like the Internet.

Genetics and journalism
As their ideas coalesced and their planning proceeded, they moved away from the notion and terminology of “humane creativity” and toward that of “good work”—work of expert quality that benefits the broader society.

They asked: What promotes or impedes good work?

The first two fields they decided to investigate were genetics and the media.

They chose the two fields because they were two professions in which the practitioners are grappling with how to do top-quality, socially responsible work in a time of extremely rapid change.

One profession, genetics, was poised to control the composition of our bodies.

The other, journalism, had the potential to control the contents of our minds.
So, the authors decided to focus on the question of what it means to carry out good work—work that is both excellent in quality and socially responsible—at a time of constant change.

Thus was born the project which they then called “good work.”

From the beginning of the project, the research spanned diverse professional realms—law, medicine, theater, higher education, philanthropy, and more. They recognized in all of them the same set of forces operating, the emergence of powerful and still dimly understood technologies, the overwhelming power of market forces, and the common decline of various competing ideologies and "isms"; the waning of an agreed set of principles and of an ethical framework that has been designed to govern the decisions and behaviors and of all members of a profession.

There was the loss of powerful heroic role models that inspire the younger members of a profession and a concomitant foreboding sense that the future course of the domain was wrapped in uncertainty.

In sum, the challenge of good work confronts every professional and every profession today.

The authors decided to focus on journalism and genetics so they could do an in-depth analysis of the two professional realms, and so they could tease out answers to the central questions they were asking and to gain a nuanced view of the challenges that professionals were facing.

They conducted in-depth interviews with leading practitioners in each field, and in several areas of specialization within journalism and genetics.

Since the time of their initial research, the unfolding of the two professions led to the confrontation of new issues. Genetics emerged as a profession in which the scientists, the general public, and the shareholders of corporations agree substantially about their goals.

In sharp contrast, journalism emerged as a profession in which the reporter, the general public, and the shareholders of corporations differ sharply in their aspirations.

Since the 1990s, both these two realms have increasingly come to dominate public discourse.

The human genome would come to be mapped by the turn of the millennium.

The Internet would become a principal source of the news. News organizations would face their respective crisis of survival.
Fundamentals of good work
I wrote this column in the hope of sharing with readers the insights of the authors of Good Work, and the illumination that they might shed on the professional work and challenges of others. They have helped in my professional life. They may help you in your own.

To conclude, good work is used here in a dual sense: 1) work that is deemed to be of high quality; and 2) work that is socially responsible.

The fundamentals of good work are excellence and ethics. When they are in harmony, we lead a personally fulfilling and socially rewarding life.

When they are not in harmony, either the individual or the community will suffer.

Since most people want to do work that is useful as well as meaningful, one important question to answer is: What can people do when conditions threaten a harmonious alignment?

What are the strategies that will allow people to maintain moral and ethical standards at a time when market forces wield unprecedented power and work life is being radically altered by technological innovation?

These are the questions at the heart of Good Work. It is enlivened by stories of real people facing hard decisions. It offers a powerful insight into a most important issue of our time and an important issue regarding the future course of science, technology, and communication.
GARDNER BLOG, 2.0

Although he has spent his whole life in education, it wasn’t until 1983, with the publication of his seminal book on multiple intelligences, that Professor Howard Gardner began to actually study education. His latest venture, a new blog, focuses specifically on lifelong learning, including his own. Gardner devoted the first two posts to books he read that have had “a large effect on [his] thinking.” Other posts include a look at the end of final clubs at Harvard and what the term transformational means in higher education. Gardner says he’s really come to embrace the blog format.

“As an author of many books, I never thought I’d become a blogger. But, in fact, I appreciate both the medium (communicating in 1,000-word chunks) and the message (the privilege of writing about whatever ideas and practices in education I find most engaging). For the first months, the blog features contributions by me and colleagues on education writ large, but the blog will evolve into a site where we will describe impressions and initial findings from a very large study of higher education that we have been carrying out.”
The word “psychology” literally means the study of the soul (psukhē, in Greek). As such, it is an academic discipline that is unique in the way it straddles the sciences (natural and social) and the humanities.

These are the leading psychologists in the world today.

On the one hand, as Sigmund Freud would have been the first to acknowledge, a wealth of psychological insight is contained in the myths and epic poetry of ancient peoples (think of Esau’s envy, Medea’s hatred, Dido’s despair), as well as in the literature of more recent times (Lady Macbeth’s ambition and Satan’s pride in Paradise Lost; Madame Bovary’s boredom and Charles Swann’s jealousy). There is little that modern psychology can teach us about the deepest wellsprings of the human heart—or, to put it more “scientifically,” of the nature and causes of human motivation and action—that has not already been far better expressed by the poets, playwrights, and novelists down through the ages.

On the other hand, we moderns hardly believe in the “soul” that all those writers took for granted anymore. The soul has fled from the cultural battlefield where modern science has carried the day, leaving behind, at best, an ineffable entity we call the “mind”—which is itself little more than a will-o-the-wisp hovering over the three pounds of pulpy gray matter inside the skull like a ghost lingering about a graveyard long after the funeral.
For these reasons, psychology as an academic discipline is exceptionally diverse. The field comprises a spectrum which merges at one end with “soft” disciplines like ethnology, sociology, and the helping professions, and at the other end with “hard” disciplines like genetics, endocrinology, and neuroscience. Moreover, at every point along the spectrum, many of the most famous psychologists have often taken a step back to reflect upon the nature of the field as a whole—examining the tacit presuppositions that guide psychologists' thought and practice, and thereby assuming the role of philosopher.

For the purposes of this article, we have excluded persons whose primary academic affiliation lies in a philosophy department, or in one of the other humanities, or in some other social science. While many on our list have a foot in more than one disciplinary camp, to be included here their main academic position had to be located within either a psychology department or a psychiatry department (within a medical school).

Why is a list like this one important?

Certainly, we hope and believe that the work of the individuals listed here will be widely appealing just for its own sake. After all, we humans cannot help being curious about ourselves—about “what makes us tick”—and these 50 individuals are acknowledged experts in precisely that topic.

But we believe the article has some value even beyond the inherent fascination of the subject of psychology itself. It is important because, whether we know it or not, the ideas of psychologists hold great sway in our society, and are of the foremost practical importance for public policy, especially in areas like criminal justice and economics.

As the great economist John Maynard Keynes famously said:

Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually slaves of some defunct economist.
He might just as well have said “psychologist.”

The list comprises individuals in approximately equal numbers from each of the five following sub-disciplines:

- personality and clinical psychology; psychiatry
- developmental and child psychology
- social psychology
- biological, comparative, and evolutionary psychology
- cognitive psychology; psycholinguistics; behavioral economics

**Ranking Methodology**

The overall list is in alphabetical order.
Csikszentmihályi was born in 1934 in Fiume (now Rijeka) in what was then the Kingdom of Italy and is now the Republic of Croatia. He and his family spent time in an Italian internment camp during the war, but after the war was over he was able to complete his secondary school education in Rome. He emigrated to the US in 1956, at the age of 22. He received his bachelor's degree in 1960 and his PhD in 1965, both from the University of Chicago. He is currently Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Management at Claremont Graduate University.

Csikszentmihályi has worked almost exclusively in the field of positive psychology—the investigation of the positive human affective states such as pleasure, happiness, joy, love, and creativity. In particular, he is closely associated with the concept of flow. “Flow” is Csikszentmihályi’s term for the positive feelings associated with the experience of being completely absorbed in a task. He argues that flow-generating tasks are ones that people experience as rewarding for their own sake, as opposed to merely instrumental to some end. He further argues that fundamentally happy people are able to tap into their capacity for flow on a regular basis. He has described this experience in the following terms:

Being completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The ego falls away. Time flies. Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you’re using your skills to the utmost.[2]

Csikszentmihályi popularized this idea in his 1990 best-seller, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. In addition to personality psychology, his ideas have been influential in the fields of business management and education. Csikszentmihályi has also proposed a closely related concept he calls “work orientation,” which is basically the capacity to experience work as rewarding for its own sake. A high level of work orientation in students is more highly correlated with good grades in school, long-term success in one’s career, and general fulfillment in life than is family environment.

Csikszentmihályi is the author or co-author of about 250 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters, as well as the author, co-author, or editor of some 20 books. The recipient of numerous awards, grants, fellowships, invited lectureships, visiting professorships, board membership appointments, and honorary degrees, Csikszentmihályi is a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and of the American Psychological Society (APS).

**Selected Books**

Damon was born in Brockton, Massachusetts, in 1944. He received his bachelor’s degree in 1967 from Harvard College, and his PhD in developmental psychology in 1973 from the University of California, Berkeley. Today, he is Professor of Education in Stanford University’s Graduate School of Education, as well as Director of the Stanford Center on Adolescence and a Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution.

As a developmental psychologist, Damon has focused his research efforts particularly on the intellectual and social development of children, adolescents, and young adults, but also, to a lesser degree, on psychological development of persons throughout the lifespan. His work has consisted principally of large-scale empirical studies, based on both original field research (questionnaires) and meta-studies of the developmental psychology literature. His main conclusions center around the importance of the social environment for the successful enculturation of the growing child, which in turn is crucial to the child’s success and happiness in life. More specifically, Damon has been critical of changes in the conventional wisdom regarding child-rearing in our society over the past couple of generations. Pointing to the drastic decline in all the metrics of young people’s skills and behavior during this period, he argues that parents, schools, and others who have consciously discarded the commonsense attitudes and practices that had prevailed for centuries, putting a much more permissive set of rules and structures in their place, are in large part responsible for this decline. He writes that, albeit with the best of intentions, the relentless focus on “self-esteem” and so-called “child-centered” classrooms and child-rearing practices not only reflect a theoretical misunderstanding of children’s real needs, but have been disastrous in practice. As he summarizes the point: “Less is expected of the young, and in turn less is received.” Several of Damon’s many books have been aimed at a general readership; among these The Path to Purpose, in particular, has struck a chord, resonating with a very wide audience and helping to disseminate Damon’s ideas far beyond the usual boundaries of academia.

Damon is the author or co-author of about 125 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters, and the author, co-author, or editor of some 18 books in all. The recipient of many awards and honors, Damon has received grants supporting his research from such prestigious organizations as the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the John Templeton Foundation.

Selected Books

- *Greater Expectations: Overcoming the Culture of Indulgence in Our Homes and Schools* (Free Press, 1995)
- *The Path to Purpose: How Young People Find their Calling in Life* (Free Press, 2008)
Howard Gardner | Developmental Psychology, Educational Psychology

Gardner was born in Scranton, Pennsylvania, in 1943. He received his bachelor’s degree in social relations in 1965 at Harvard College, where he came into contact with Erik Erikson. After a stint at the London School of Economics, he returned to Harvard, where he obtained his PhD in developmental psychology in 1971, working under the supervision of famed developmental psychologist Jerome Bruner and philosopher Nelson Goodman. He is currently the John H. and Elisabeth A. Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education at Harvard University.

Gardner is a developmental psychologist who has primarily focused on child development and the psychology of education. He is without a doubt best known for his theory of “multiple intelligences”—the highly influential idea that the sort of intelligence measured by standardized IQ tests is only one among a variety of types of intelligence deployed by human beings in their interactions with the world around them (especially the social world). According to the theory, many common IQ tests themselves fail to distinguish adequately between linguistic intelligence (verbal fluency), logico-mathematical intelligence (numeracy), and spatial intelligence (the ability to manipulate 2- and 3-D shapes), while several other types of intelligence are not measured at all by standard tests, including kinesthetic intelligence (athletic ability), interpersonal intelligence (social/emotional skill), intrapersonal intelligence (self-knowledge), and aesthetic intelligence (artistic/musical ability). While Gardner’s theory of multiple intelligences has been broadly influential at a professional level, as well as wildly popular at a commercial level, it has not been without its critics. A number of observers have pointed out that there is very little empirical support for the theory. It must be said, too, that while many educators pay lip service to the theory, they have been slow putting it into practice in an everyday classroom setting. In later years, Gardner began exploring the implications of the theory of multiple intelligences for other areas, such as business school training.

Gardner has close to 500 peer-reviewed journal articles and book chapters to his credit, not to mention several hundred op-ed pieces, essays, blog posts, and other articles aimed at a popular audience. He is also the author-, co-author, or editor of some 50 books. Among the most widely known and celebrated of living psychologists, he has won far too many awards, prizes, grants, fellowships, and honorary degrees to mention here.

Selected Books

- *The Unschooled Mind: How Children Think and How Schools Should Teach* (Basic Books, 1991)
Where were you when Donald Trump was elected President of the United States? I was at my desk. Work had ground to a halt, and I was feverishly hitting refresh on the New York Times election prediction barometer. The needle swung to 95% certainty, triggering the rumblings of a seismic political shift felt around the world.

Dr Bandy Lee, a forensic psychiatrist and violence expert at Yale University, found herself in centre of the emergency response.

“The day after the election, I was flooded with phone calls and emails from people and organisations that were afraid of the violence that was to come,” Dr Lee tells The Medical Republic.

Many people fear that President Trump isn’t exactly the “very stable genius” he claims to be.

“His impulsivity, recklessness, paranoid reactions, lack of empathy, loss of touch with reality, constant need to burnish a sense of power, attraction to violence – these are psychological signs that point to dangerousness,” Dr Lee says.
As the election results rolled in, Dr Lee had a choice to make. Either she could abide by the new “gag rule” laid down by the American Psychiatric Association, or she could speak out.

“I had to ask myself, after devoting my entire career to preventing violence, do I turn away from the greatest violence we could possibly face?”

The association’s Goldwater Rule was expanded in March last year to prohibit psychiatrists from not just diagnosing, but from making any comments on the effect, behaviour or speech of public figures, even in an emergency.

It goes much further than the original Goldwater Rule, established in 1973, which allowed psychiatrists to share their expertise in general, so long as they did not actually diagnose a public figure without first examining them, and obtaining their consent. Dr Lee is a proponent of the Goldwater Rule in its original form, but she believes the new rule asks psychiatrists to violate a higher principle of medical ethics: the protection of human health and wellbeing. This principle was clarified in the Declaration of Geneva adopted by the World Medical Association in 1948.

Most psychiatrists privately consider President Trump a threat to public health and safety, says Dr Lee. But few are willing to say this publicly, and none of Dr Lee’s colleagues would sign their name to a letter to Congress following the 2016 election. “I thought that was odd,” she says. “I then decided to organise a conference to talk about it. No one would co-organise it with me and so I did it alone.” The conference took place in one of Yale’s 500-seat auditoriums. Only 20 people showed up.

Some of Dr Lee’s colleagues told her quietly that they were afraid of retaliation in the form of physical violence from Trump supporters, or legal action from the President himself.

The media caught wind of the Yale conference, and the international headlines that followed gave Dr Lee a way to connect with thousands of colleagues. Together, they formed the National Coalition of Concerned Mental Health Experts. Twenty-seven of these psychiatrists and mental health professionals published their views in a damning treatise, The Dangerous Case of Donald Trump, in October last year.

The book, edited by Dr Lee, presents a laundry list of psychological issues that may explain President Trump’s seemingly difficult relationship with reality. It didn’t directly diagnose President Trump, which would be in violation of the 1973 Goldwater Rule. But the book does provide education on narcissistic personality disorder, sociopathy, hedonism, paranoia, delusional disorder, cognitive impairment and dementia. You connect the dots.

This kind of information isn’t just relevant to the electorate, says Dr Lee. US legislators have the power to declare the President unfit and remove him from office under the 25th Amendment.
In early December, Dr Lee agreed to brief around a dozen members of the House of Representatives and the Senate who were worried about the president’s mental fitness. This meeting included one unnamed Republican senator.

While this may appear uncomfortably close to politics, Dr Lee says she abided by ethical guidelines, providing medical information in a politically neutral way. This is a public service similar to a psychiatrist commenting on a defendant in a court of law, she says. While knowledge of psychiatric conditions can help legislators make a decision, the question of whether President Trump is fit for office is a political one, not a medical one, she says. Dr Lee says she would provide the same service in relation to a Democratic president.

Dr Lee is very strict when it comes to conflicts of interest.

Late last year, she received a series of unexpected phone calls from close associates of President Trump, who said the President was frightening them. “They used the word ‘unravelling’,” she says.

Dr Lee explained she could not adopt a treatment role while she was involved in public education and told them to call the local emergency room.

Psychiatrists speculating about the President’s mental state have been savaged by the psychiatric association, which declares this kind of “armchair psychiatry” unacceptable and unethical.

“Simply tawdry, indulgent, fatuous, tabloid psychiatry,” was how past president Dr Jeffrey Lieberman described Dr Lee’s book.

“Psychiatry has made too many past missteps to engage in political partisanship disguised as patriotism – witness its collusion in Nazi eugenics policies,” he warned. But psychiatrists who believe they have an ethical obligation, and a legal right, to speak freely have pushed back.

The German Psychiatric Association said nothing during the rise of Hitler, psychologist Dr John Gartner, one of the 27 authors in Dr Lee’s book, said.

“Should they be our moral role models? As a Jew, I was raised with the mantra ‘never again’, which means it is a grave and terrible sin to be silent in the face of rising fascism. “We are fiddling with the Goldwater Rule while the world burns.”

Donald J. Trump
✔️@realDonaldTrump

....Actually, throughout my life, my two greatest assets have been mental stability and being, like, really smart. Crooked Hillary Clinton also played these cards very hard and, as everyone knows, went down in flames. I went from VERY successful businessman, to top T.V. Star.....

8:27 AM - Jan 6, 2018
Donald J. Trump
✓ @realDonaldTrump

....to President of the United States (on my first try). I think that would qualify as not smart, but genius....and a very stable genius at that!
8:30 AM - Jan 6, 2018

**IS DISTANT DIAGNOSIS ACTUALLY POSSIBLE?**
Making a diagnosis without personally examining a patient is forbidden under the Goldwater Rule, but researchers are beginning to question the science behind this prohibition.

The rule was created to prevent another major embarrassment to the profession, after more than 2,000 psychiatrists volunteered their opinion on presidential candidate Barry Goldwater in a survey by *Fact* magazine in 1964.

Without having so much as spoken to Mr Goldwater, let alone gaining his consent, psychiatrists incorrectly diagnosed him with chronic psychosis, megalomania, obsessive-compulsive disorder and paranoid schizophrenia.

Under the cloak of anonymity, psychiatrists falsely claimed that Mr Goldwater had been “scarred by his potty training” and had “the same pathological makeup as Hitler, Castro, Stalin, and other known schizophrenic leaders”.

After losing to Lyndon B. Johnson in the election, Mr Goldwater sued the magazine for $US75,000 in punitive damages and $US1 compensatory damages.

In the 1960s, psychiatry was caught in the “psychoanalytic zeitgeist”, which focused on how unresolved issues in childhood and other experiences influenced the unconscious mind. Diagnosis at a distance was virtually impossible at this time because much of the clinically relevant information was not in the public domain. Today, psychiatrists make diagnoses on the basis of behavioural patterns that match the DSM-5 criteria. And some psychiatrists believe they have access to more than enough information on the behaviour of a sitting president to start drawing diagnostic conclusions.

Dr John Gartner, who has observed hundreds of hours of Donald Trump’s behaviour, read thousands of his tweets, and heard from dozens of informants, believes he has a stronger basis for diagnosing Trump than most of the patients in his practice.

Interviews are the core tool for information extraction in psychiatry, but interviews have limitations, and in some cases they actually decrease the accuracy of clinical judgments, according to an analysis published last year in *Perspectives on Psychological Science*. Psychiatric interviews often lack standardised questions and scoring criteria, which makes them unreliable, and susceptible to cognitive biases, the researchers argue.

Lifetime data is less likely than interviews to be compromised by a patient’s poor memory, blind spots, and lack of insight.
Archival data may actually be more telling than interviews for patients who are incentivised to deny or minimise psychopathology, such as politicians running for re-election. Self-reported data often fails to reveal disorders that are particularly worrying in those seeking public office, such as psychopathy.

The Goldwater Rule “accords false primacy” to the interview and should be abandoned, the researchers argue. Not only is it possible to correctly diagnose a public figure from a distance by analysing large volumes of data, but clinicians should be able to offer diagnoses in times of crisis when an individual has substantial power over others. It seems reasonable that by choosing to have substantial power of thousands or millions of people, an individual forfeits their right to keep their mental health status private, Professor Scott Lilienfeld, a psychologist at Emory University in Georgia, says. Moreover, a person who has already chosen to express themselves through tweets, radio interviews, television appearances, and political debates is unlikely to have the same expectations of confidentiality as a patient.

**IS IT ETHICAL?**

Psychiatrists break into two main camps on the ethics of speaking about President Trump’s mental state.

The first group believes that medicine is about doing no harm to the patient in front of you.

The only instances where confidentiality can be broken ethically are when there is imminent danger to the patient or others, or where the psychiatrist is sanctioned by a court.

In clinical practice, the justification for breaking confidentiality is that the psychiatrist may be the only person who knows about the danger, says Assistant Professor Arash Javanbakht, a psychiatrist at Wayne State University.

In the case of President Trump, there is no doctor-patient relationship. Psychiatrists do not have special access to privileged information, and therefore they do not have a duty to warn the public.

“The psychiatrists who got involved in this have too much faith in themselves,” Professor Javanbakht says.

“The behaviour that they are observing is observable by everyone. It’s not like we see something that other people don’t see.”

Weaponising mental health diagnoses to attack political figures, even in the name of public safety, seriously damages mental health advocacy, he says.

By associating an unpopular president with certain mental health diagnoses, psychiatrists are stigmatising citizens living with these conditions.
Upholding the political neutrality of the profession also has benefits. Trump supporters may not want to visit a psychiatrist if the profession gets a reputation as a “bunch of entitled liberals” pushing their own political agenda, Professor Javanbakht says. Personal regret is another good reason for zipping your lips. Howard Gardner, an adjunct professor of psychology at Harvard University, had to public withdraw his comments after he was quoted calling Donald Trump “remarkably narcissistic”. “I should have anticipated the ways in which my words could have been cited and accordingly declined to utilise any words that smacked of diagnosis whatsoever,” he wrote in a blog post.

The second group of psychiatrists believe that do no harm calls on the medical profession to have a social conscience. Psychiatrists can’t just shut out the external world and attend to the needs of the individual patient because they have a broader civic duty to warn. Ethical rules are never absolute and meeting the humanitarian goals of medicine sometimes means infringing an individuals’ right to privacy.

The justification for commenting on President Trump’s mental health is that the psychiatric profession has centuries of accrued knowledge about the human mind and may see things that the public can’t.

Insights from psychiatry allow for the prediction of behaviour. Had psychiatrists spoken out sooner, they may have tempered false hopes that Donald Trump would become more presidential following election, says Dr John Gartner. People with malignant narcissism become even more grandiose, reckless and aggressive after victories, he says.

WHO IS RIGHT?

To answer that question, a little distance from the debate raging in the US is useful. Dr Chris Rudge (PhD), a postdoctoral researcher in psychiatry, literature, and law at The University of Sydney, says that psychological analysis of current political leaders can be done in an ethical way, but that clinical psychiatrists have professional duties that prevent them from providing that commentary.

Some psychoanalysts and psychological scientists have been writing psychobiographies about political figures in recent decades. One reason for this may be that these professionals are not bound by the same ethical standards as psychiatrists. Given their different training and ethical guidelines, commentators such as these might be better placed to enlighten the public about what is going on in President Trump’s head than practising psychiatrists.

Last year, for instance, the American Psychoanalytic Association sent a letter to its members saying that they were permitted, within some limits, to comment on the mental state of public figures, including the president.

“By issuing this letter, the American Psychoanalytic Association isn’t disobeying the Goldwater Rule; it’s just that psychoanalysts have very different traditions and
professional responsibilities to psychiatrists,” says Dr Rudge. “Psychiatrists are doctors whereas psychoanalysts are usually not, and so different ethical guidelines will generally apply,” he says.

The Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Psychiatrists doesn’t have a “down under formulation” of the Goldwater Rule and we probably don’t need one, says Michael Robertson, a psychiatrist and associate professor of mental health ethics at The University of Sydney.

The separation of powers is much more robust in a Westminster system like Australia’s, so it is unlikely that we will ever face the “mad king” drama unfolding in the US.

However, psychiatrists function in a political matrix, and cannot be completely agnostic to the political system, even in Australia.

“When the machinery of the state starts falling in lockstep with the malignant aims of the totalitarian regime, that’s where we need to raise alarm because that’s how genocide happens. That’s how holocausts happen, that’s how the persecution of the disabled happens,” says Professor Robertson. Psychiatrists have a duty to protect social institutions because these are what stop a power grab by political leaders with extreme ideologies, he says.

And perhaps that’s why psychiatrists in the US are so conflicted. The president is a social institution, so the inner workings, and seeming dysfunction, of President Trump’s mind may have a direct bearing on public safety.
THE BIG QUESTION
What Item Would You Put in a Time Capsule to Help the Next Century Understand Our Current Moment?

MAY 2018 ISSUE

Yrsa Daley-Ward, poet, model, and author, The Terrible

An app-heavy iPhone: I’d have open Tinder, Instagram, Grindr, a WhatsApp group conversation about inclusivity and representation in the media, Trump’s Twitter page, and an Uber Eats order of some vegan sushi.

Mitch Landrieu, New Orleans mayor and author, In the Shadow of Statues

A smartphone—they’ve revolutionized the way we communicate, and made life easier in many ways. But because they have made communicating about news and pop culture easier, we’ve forgotten how to have civil discussions.

Justin Baldoni, actor, Jane the Virgin, and co-founder, Wayfarer Entertainment

An iPhone, because it represents the best and worst of humanity. We’ve seen how amazing and how destructive these phones—and all that come with them, like social media—can be. I’d also include a few signs or photos from the recent marches, as unifying symbols in such polarizing times.

Jasmin Darznik, author, The Good Daughter and Song of a Captive Bird

This is a time of reckoning and redemption for women worldwide. The veil represents both our plight and our progress—a simple cloth with complex meanings in such a complicated time. Whether we cast it aside in defiance of autocratic regimes or wear it to free ourselves from sexual objectification, the veil speaks to women’s insistence on civil liberties and human rights.
Debra Lee, chairman and CEO of BET Networks

I would put in a “Time’s Up” pin to reflect this pivotal time where women have found their voice to speak out against harassment, abuse, and inequality. I would also include a copy of Black Panther, not only to represent Hollywood’s treating an African story with grace and care, but also to celebrate the film’s dispelling the long-held myth that black movies don’t attract a global audience.

__________________________________________________________

Randi Zuckerberg, author, Pick Three

A handy-dandy 2018 toolbox—complete with a voter-registration card, a hammer for smashing glass ceilings, a thesaurus for soldering better words and phrases than literally and I can’t even, a shovel for digging out of the mess we’re leaving, and the Hamilton soundtrack for fixing bad moods!

__________________________________________________________

Hillary Raphael, Montreal, Quebec

A fidget spinner. The emblem of our distracted minds and sedentary bodies will likely appear uncommonly tactile to our screen-integrated descendants.

__________________________________________________________


Ten full tax returns, each representative of a decile of income in the United States.

__________________________________________________________

Dan Fredricks, Janesville, Wis.

An AK-47 assault weapon, the international symbol for the current rampant military and civilian violence and death.

I’d insert an illustration of CRISPR, which allows the editing of stretches of DNA. This confluence of biological and computer code could usher in a new chapter of Homo sapiens.

Sara Walker, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

I would put in hospital bills for typical ER visits, along with paycheck stubs for the people who incurred the bills. I’d like the future to know how much health care costs as a percentage of our income in 2018. I hope that in 100 years, bankruptcies from health care will be a forgotten relic.

Peter Delametter, Colorado Springs, Colo.

Our current political and cultural environment of inequality, hate, and inaction is best forgotten. An empty time capsule would represent the quality of ideas we are passing on to the next century.
Is Howard Gardner the most misunderstood and misappropriated educationalist (his preferred term) in the world today or he just the only theorist most educators have heard of?

Today, two different pieces of reading started me thinking about Howard Gardner.

- A lovely interview/profile of Gardner in the *Harvard Gazette*, “The greatest gift you can have is a good education, one that isn’t strictly professional“

- A beautiful 2015 book, “*Early Learning Theories Made Visible,*” by the authors of the glorious “*Loose Parts*” trilogy. (Beloglovsky & Daly)

At first glance, the Beloglovsky and Daly book represents an impressive way of teaching learning theories to preservice and inservice educators. They identify a half dozen or so leading learning theorists, provide a brief description of their theories, and then through field examples, explore how those theories may be actualized in classroom practice. My initial thought was, “Why doesn’t anyone take a similar approach to educational psychology for elementary and secondary teachers?” Seriously!

It seems odd that the least paid and respected folks in education, early childhood teachers, seem to receive the richest exposure to learning theory. But, I digress.

Howard Gardner is one of the seminal theorists used in *Early Learning Theories Made Visible* and the author’s explanation and application of his multiple intelligences theory is a bit of a mess. (Discussions of multiple intelligences theory are often a confusing mess.) It seems as if the authors were so desperate to avoid wading into the fake
controversy regarding “learning styles,” popular across social media and ed schools who hate children, that they initially just call the theory MI, assuming that all of their readers know what MI means. Then predictably, many of the examples of MI in the book are about pedagogy, not learning. In any event, the Early Learning Theories Made Visible is impressive and a worthy addition to your library, even if the first chapter could have benefited from a critical friend.

I highly recommend reading the new Harvard profile of Howard Gardner. Long-form interviews of thoughtful experts blessed with rich lives and professional success are always a great read.

One comment in that profile stood out for me.
“I’ve been able to write a lot. I wrote three books when I was in graduate school, which was very unusual. I’m more a book person than an article person." (Howard Gardner)

Gardner’s thoughts on his written output made me think. Perhaps such prolific writing has obscured his ideas?

Gardner’s best ideas might be the ones reducible to a t-shirt slogan. For example, Multiple intelligences theory simply means that intelligence cannot be measured in one way.

Less might indeed be more.

Postscript

I highly recommend that everyone read an incredibly important and sadly overlooked anthology,"MI at 25: Assessing the Impact and Future of Multiple Intelligences for Teaching and Learning." This book contains essays by experts making cogent thoughtful arguments for and against multiple intelligences theory.

References

General Grant’s risk-taking

Sir, – In his review of books on Reconstruction America (January 26), Eric Foner writes, quoting Richard White (the author of The Republic for Which It Stands), that in this period Americans were a “sickly people”. “Even their average height fell”, he adds. Sickly though Americans may have been, the average height fell in large part because of the great immigrant population from Ireland, Italy and Germany. This is reflected in the heights of soldiers during the Indian Wars, where officers were often 5’8”–5’10” while many enlisted soldiers, a large proportion of whom were immigrants, were 5’4”–5’6”.

WILLIAM LOGAN
Cambridge.

Sir, – I read Eric Foner’s review with the greatest interest, as I did the two books under review. Professor Foner is the leading authority on the period of Reconstruction that followed the American Civil War, and his assessment of Grant by Ron Chernow and The Republic for Which
It Stands by Richard White deserves close attention. However, Foner’s comments on Grant’s generalship during that war rest on less secure foundations. Not only does Foner appear willing to accept Chernow’s assessment at face value; he also misreads it. (As an aside, it might be strongly argued that Chernow’s evaluation is questionable in any event.)

Foner postulates a view of General Grant, initially held by historians, as a “butcher . . . who triumphed not by virtue of superior generalship but because of a willingness to incur enormous casualties in a war of attrition”. This view, says Foner, is challenged, if not replaced, by recent historians, who regard Grant more sympathetically. He is now to be seen as a sensitive man and a great general. Chernow is, according to Foner, at the forefront of this re-evaluation.

In fact, however, Chernow accepts that, by the time Grant assumed supreme command of Union forces, the American Civil War was one of attrition. Furthermore, he also accepts (absent the unhelpful designation, “butcher”) that Grant’s strategy was to throw his numerically overwhelmingly superior army at his immediate antagonist, Robert E. Lee, as frequently and ferociously as possible. “Grant’s strategy”, Chernow writes, “depended on simple but gruesome math: the South could not replace fallen soldiers while the North could.” Simple, effective, determined, cold-blooded – but hardly, as Foner describes it, “a strategic vision”.

Nor – as Foner would have us believe Chernow thinks – was Grant a great risk-taker. His conduct at Shiloh, for example, to which Foner refers, was not the product of an otherwise admirable attitude to calculated risk but, in Chernow’s words, a crossing of the fine line that divides “immense self-confidence from egregious complacency”. The same may be said of Grant’s tactics at the Battle of Cold Harbor, to which Foner also refers.

Whether Grant was a greater general than Lee is probably a subject too far, but it might usefully be asked which of them would have fared better had their positions been reversed. I yield to no one in my admiration of Professor Foner, but I wonder whether, on this occasion, Homer may have nodded.
DAVID TIPLAD
Billingshurst, West Sussex.

Conrad’s politics
Sir, – Gavin Griffiths writes that my “condescending contention that Joseph Conrad’s *Nigger of the ‘Narcissus’* is ‘robustly right-wing in its politics’ (Letters, January 26) needs rather more evidence than [I am] able to provide”, while Roger Hogg suggests (Letters, February 2) that I am “guilty of misrepresentation” when referring to Conrad’s “jingoism” in this novella.

That Conrad shaped the serial version of his book to suit the preferences of the ultra-conservative Editor of the *New Review* is an idea explored in greater detail in two excellent studies: Todd G. Willy’s “The Conquest of the Commodore: Conrad’s Rigging of ‘The Nigger’ for the Henley Regatta” in *Conradiana* 17.3 (1985), and *British Literary Culture and Publishing Practice 1880–1914* (1997) by Peter D. McDonald. I am happy to point interested readers to them.

ELIZABETH LOWRY
Oxford.

Sir, – I’ve lost the exact reference, but in 1903 Conrad wrote: “both at sea and on land my point of view is English, from which the conclusion should not be drawn that I have become an Englishman. That is not the case. *Homo duplex* has in my case more than one meaning”. It is a description which many of us, who have become in our different ways very English, would understand completely.

JONTY DRIVER
Northiam, Rye.

W.H.
Sir, – Katharine Craik reports that a contributor to a collection of essays on Shakespeare’s Sonnets (“Sluttish time”, February 2) discusses whether Thomas Thorpe’s dedication of them to “Mr. W.H.” might have been a misprint for “Mr. W.S.”. No one seems aware that Geoffrey Caveney (*Notes and Queries*, 2015) showed that “W.H.” most probably referred to the stationer
William Holme (c. 1569–c. 1635), who had many links with Thorpe. Both were from Cheshire, both were printing apprentices in London in the early 1580s, both subsequently printed plays. Holme, a Catholic, was associated with the printer Adam Islip, also a Catholic, who had printed works by Robert Southwell, the Catholic martyr. In 1606 Southwell’s *A Fore-fould Meditation* was published with a dedication signed “W.H”, and printed by George Eld, who in 1609 printed Shakespeare’s Sonnets for Thorpe. Holme died in August 1607, and shortly afterwards Thorpe and Eld entered five plays in the Stationer’s Register. Caveney makes the plausible argument that these, like the Sonnets, had been in Holme’s possession, and that Thorpe faithfully acknowledged his debt to their “onlie begetter”.

BRIAN VICKERS
London NW6.

**Naughty Nineties**

Sir, – Jenny Hendrix’s review of David Friend’s *The Naughty Nineties (January 26)* provided an excellent description of that tawdry time (the 1990s) in the United States. One unintended (and favourable) consequence of the era was the fact that sex was finally permitted to be a subject of open conversation here. To a Generation Xer who grew up in the repressive American Bible Belt in the 1980s, this was long overdue. The moral backlash against Bill Clinton inadvertently let the genie out of the bottle, with humorous attempts by moral guardians to take us all back to the Dark Ages. (I’m reminded of the headlines about John Ashcroft’s appointment as US Attorney General in 2002. Ashcroft, a religious fundamentalist and prude from my home state of Missouri, famously had nude statues in the Justice Department covered because he found them embarrassing.)

As Ms Hendrix aptly points out in her review, the 1990s also provided a cautionary tale of entitled celebrity ogres behaving badly. While the 90s may have prepped us for the current trends of fake news, corrosive social media and shady scruples, the fundamental difference between what’s right and wrong still hasn’t changed.

DENNIS DIVINE
Joplin, Missouri.
Céline’s other work
Sir, – Given the nature of the book he is reviewing, it is perhaps not surprising that Frederic Raphael (February 2) should spend so much time on the more hideous aspects of Louis-Ferdinand Céline’s work (and life). Nevertheless it seems odd simply to refer briefly to “the mould-breaking vitality” of his first novel (Voyage au bout de la nuit) without mentioning that he went on to write four at least equally remarkable works; extraordinarily powerful and poetical writing that, as is clear from the manuscripts, took a huge amount of labour (and which really needs to be spoken out loud, as the actor Fabrice Luchini has brilliantly demonstrated), unlike the sloppily written, notorious pamphlets on which Raphael concentrates.
R. M. J. DAMMANN
Poynings, Brighton.

Found verse
Sir, – With reference to J. C. (NB, January 5) and J. Kates (Letters, January 26), I recall our music teacher setting words on public signs to music. This would have been in the mid-1960s. Alas, I can only remember the following, “found” at a rural station: “Passengers are requested / To cross the line / By the Footbridge. / All season tickets must be shown. / By order”.

GRAEME CAREY
Leigh-on-Sea, Essex.

Johann le Carré
Sir, – J. C. need not look far to find a luminous contender for the inaugural Ursula K. Le Guin Prize (NB, February 2). Long ago John le Carré decided that the (Man) Booker Prize was not his scene and insisted that his publishers refrain from submitting his novels. In March 2011 the judges of the Man Booker International Prize, which at that time honoured a writer for a body of work rather than for a single volume, included him in a thirteen-strong line-up, only to hear from his literary agents that while he was “enormously flattered to be named as a finalist . . . I do not compete for literary prizes and have therefore asked for my name to be withdrawn”. That same
year, while remaining true to his word, he did accept the Goethe Medal, given by the Federal Republic of Germany – through the institute that bears the name of the great Schriftsteller – to reward “outstanding service for the German language and for international cultural relations”. The Goethe-Institut declared him “Great Britain’s most famous German-speaker”. And who would argue?

JOHN COLDSTREAM
London NW8.

**Remarkable year**

Sir, – J. C. (NB, January 19) concludes remarks on the emerging fashion of “the date as title” by saying readers “will be excused for hoping that 2018 turns out to be so uninteresting as to generate no histories at all. That in itself would make it remarkable”.

J. C. might be amused to learn that the year 1587 already has a claim in this respect, in Ray Huang’s study *1587: A year of no significance – The Ming dynasty in decline* (1981), a date chosen by the author precisely because “nothing very special happened in China” that year.

ANTHONY PAYNE
London SW19.

**Have a nice day**

Sir, – In the early 1980s, the phrase “have a nice day” was gaining wide currency in the United States (see Joyce Chaplin’s review of *American Niceness* by Carrie Tirado Bramen, January 26). Paul Fussell, the Anglophilic American literary critic and historian, came up with the riposte “Sorry, I have other plans”.

HOWARD GARDNER
Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138.
Trump desperately needs a science adviser, experts say. He just doubled the record for time without one.

President Trump can add another tick in the records column: This week, he doubled the length of time that any modern president has gone without a science adviser.

George W. Bush set the previous record for the longest science adviser vacancy at nine months and four days. Bush, four months into his presidency, nominated physicist John H. Marburger III to direct the Office of Science and Technology Policy. The Senate confirmed Marburger on Oct. 23, 2001.

Barack Obama selected his science adviser before assuming office, as did John F. Kennedy, Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton. Every administration since Eisenhower named a science adviser by the first October of the presidency, according to a Washington Post analysis. Except for Trump — who has yet to make a nomination, let alone begin the congressional confirmation process.

“There are many things about the Trump presidency that are historic, and the disregard for science will be seen as high on the list,” said Kumar Garg, a fellow at the nonprofit...
organization Society for Science & the Public who was a member of the Office of Science and Technology Policy during the Obama administration.

“If you had asked somebody at the start of the administration if we would be approaching this sort of marker,” Garg said, “they would have been shocked.”

Congress established the Office of Science and Technology Policy, or OSTP, in 1976 as a way to channel scientific analysis and advice to the president. Most presidents also gave OSTP directors the title of assistant to the president for science and technology. That appointment allowed advisers to directly and confidentially communicate with the president.

In the past, science advisers guided presidents during disease outbreaks, natural disasters, biological weapons attacks and other national crises. The advisers also led the OSTP’s review of federal research and collaborated with the Office of Management and Budget to develop a research budget.

Science advisers to the president typically hold advanced degrees and have leadership experience in research institutions. The job requires comprehension of dozens of branches of science and fields as varied as national security, climate and artificial intelligence. The highest-ranking member of OSTP is Deputy Assistant Michael Kratsios, a 31-year-old Princeton graduate who majored in politics, as a profile notes.

On Monday, Sen. Christopher A. Coons (D-Del.) sent a letter to Trump urging the president to select a science adviser. “Currently, nine out of ten key OSTP staff positions remain vacant,” he said.

Nothing less than U.S. scientific leadership is at risk, Coons warned. “I remain quite concerned that, when it comes to science, America is falling behind its major competitors,” he said, citing a skyrocketing trend in Chinese research and development.

This was not the first letter lawmakers have sent to Trump about vacancies at the OSTP. In November, Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-N.H.) and six other Democrats issued a similar letter to the president, urging Trump to make a nomination.

“In previous administrations, OSTP was central to disaster-mitigation efforts, including hurricanes — but when Hurricanes Irma, Harvey and Maria struck the United States, OSTP lacked key leaders,” the senators said. “Scientific and technical input would also have contributed to decisions around climate change, the Iran nuclear deal and North Korea’s nuclear program — areas where key decisions have been made over the past nine months in absence of a science adviser and other officials.”

There is also an unusually large number of empty desks in the OSTP’s wing of the Eisenhower Executive Office Building, the senators noted in the November letter. “Beyond its leadership, OSTP continues to operate well below full capacity: recent reports indicate OSTP has fewer than 50 staff, well below its peak of 130 or more in the past.” The OSTP did not respond to a request for comment from The Post asking for clarification about the number of staff members.
In the absence of an official nomination, rumors and suggestions have filled the void. Garg said he has received about a phone call a month from a reporter, asking for his opinion on a possible nominee.

When Bill Gates brought up the vacancy in a meeting with Trump, the president reportedly offered Gates the job on the spot. (Gates declined, telling the president it would not be a “good use of my time,” the Microsoft founder recalled to Stat in April.) A Freedom of Information Act request by Science magazine revealed in February that Kratsios has met with at least three candidates for the position, but their names were redacted. The Post reported in March that University of Oklahoma meteorology professor Kelvin Droegemeier may get the nomination.

Given Trump's track record with science, journalist Brian Palmer argued at Slate that the White House was better off without a science adviser. “No sane, credible scientist worth having in the position would take it,” Palmer said. Just look at what happened to Marburger, Bush's science adviser, he suggested.

Marburger, a Democrat, had publicly criticized Bush for his delay in picking a science adviser, so when Bush asked Marburger to take the job, the physicist accepted. But Bush did not give Marburger the assistant to the president appointment, which hamstrung the adviser’s influence. Instead, Bush called on Marburger to defend the White House's approach to climate change and stem cell research.

When Marburger died in 2011, The Post wrote that he was “singled out as the administration’s whipping boy” by critical scientists. (After Marburger took the job, Harvard University psychologist Howard Gardner told NPR that the physicist “basically has become a prostitute.”) Whoever accepts Trump's nomination, Palmer said, risks facing the same ridicule.

But former OSTP officials maintained that a scientist with a line to the president's ear was better than nothing.

“The science community should want the position filled,” Garg said, “and should want the position filled with someone who is qualified and capable.”
V

Multiple Intelligences
Pratt: Studying mindfulness still a major challenge

By Beth Pratt | Sep 1, 2017

A glimpse into the way our minds work is always sobering, often amusing and sometimes frightening.

Marketing professionals are probably the most assiduous students of the general population’s thinking process. Example: one of America’s favorite cookies is now available in a “thin” version. That means maybe half the number of calories (I didn’t check the label) in the thin cookie sandwich. Chocolate of course, otherwise I would not have given it a glance on the shelf.

Do you catch the smarts of naming that cookie the “thin” choice? We like thin, especially when we are overweight. It seems while birthrates are down, there are still “more and more” of us, younger and older, who are over-filling chairs, etc.

The word “thin” alone means in my self-pleasing mind that I can eat twice as many cookies. Am I right? You know I am. If I usually eat two of the regular sandwich cookies, I can have four and still not be overdoing it. Does this make sense?

Of course not. I really should not be eating cookies at all because of the sugar content.

Did you ever wonder about what happened in the Garden of Eden with Eve and the serpent. This Being must have been a really attractive one before God cursed it to forever after crawl, and without legs, for serving as the bodily container of temptation.

This biblical story is often mentioned as if Eve were alone in her decision to disobey God, but Adam is standing beside her and did nothing to intervene. Although he seems to have given passive agreement, neither he nor Eve admitted responsibility for their disobedience.

Whatever you believe or disbelieve about this biblical story of humankind’s creation, we cannot deny that our minds still work in the same way — we suppress the truth when we want to do something we know we should not for our health and future happiness. Then, when called to account, we blame someone else for our unwise or disobedient action.
Scientists studying the brain look for mechanistic, measurable ways to understand the human mind. Despite progress in finding pathways to the interconnectedness of common thought processes, studying mindfulness is still a major challenge.


“I sought to undermine the common notion of intelligence as a general capacity or potential which every human being possesses to a greater or lesser extent,” he explains.

His target was the well-entrenched idea that we could properly measure via intelligence tests. He cites the limitations of such testing “which rely heavily on a blend of logical and linguistic abilities.”

He redefines intelligence as “the ability to solve problems or to create products that are valued within one or more cultural settings.”

In my opinion, he contradicts assumptions that an institutional “one size fits all” approach to problem solving produces the best educational outcome. Instead, it brings great pressure to conform to mediocrity.

Separating brain development from age-body growth in an effort to produce “super” intellects is not a viable alternative. Here the saying, “the devil is in the details,” becomes particularly evident in social engineering, with its unintended consequences.

As important as it is to increase knowledge, without recognition of the spiritual component in human experience, we miss the most important factor in human mindfulness.

We are more than body and mind. We are spiritual beings, whatever our beliefs or our test scores.

That, in our desire to satisfy our PQ (pleasure quotient) instead of using our IQ illustrates, we are certainly relatives of Adam and Eve, who judged a taste of the forbidden more important than their relationship with their Creator.

Such is the way we frame our minds to do our bidding.
What Personalized Learning Is Not

By Kenya Ransey  Sep 1, 2017

“I really want to personalize learning for my students, but I just don’t see how it’s possible—there’s no way I can create individual lesson plans for all of my students everyday!”

“I really like what you’ve shared with us today, but I can’t personalize my students’ learning because I don’t have enough devices for all of my students.”

These are just two of the statements I hear from teachers about the challenges of facilitating personalized learning. As an instructional technology coach for a large district in the metropolitan Atlanta area, I serve several schools. Working closely with over 300 teachers on a consistent basis means that I talk one-on-one with teachers a lot. Teachers openly share their legitimate concerns about implementing personalized learning, and unfortunately, the sentiments above are not uncommon. I feel it’s my responsibility to help teachers understand that both of the statements above are misconceptions.

...once we all consolidate around a standardized definition, it will no longer be personal.

Attempts to clearly define personalized learning are commonplace in education now more than ever—and the more conversations we have, the more apparent it becomes that many of us (educators) are unsure of how to define the term, or recognize what it takes to bring it to life. The term is robust, because it has the potential to be different for every learner; so, instead of trying to define it, perhaps it would be more beneficial to take a look at some of the misconceptions running wild amongst the education community, and consider what personalized learning is NOT.
Personalized learning is not:

1. Having each student select a different online game, app or online learning module to use independently each day during class

A core component of personalized learning that most people can agree on is that student interests and learning preferences should play a role in learning. All learners are more engaged when their involvement is rooted in personal interest than in mandated compliance.

However, having all students select an online game, app, or learning module from a predetermined list is not really student choice—after all, someone else curated the list. While it’s a step in the right direction, allowing students time to explore and make choices for themselves bears a stronger connection to personalization. It will undoubtedly take more time, and not all of that time will be spent acquiring hard knowledge and collecting facts; but rest assured learning is occurring. Having students reflect in a digital or traditional journal about their experiences with open exploration may help capture the intangible learning evidence.

2. Teachers generating individual learning plans for each of their students

Hopefully teachers everywhere just breathed a heavy sigh of relief. Making the teacher solely responsible for all of the learning that occurs in a classroom is a practice of the industrial age, in which one person possesses the authority to make the decisions, and everyone else complies.

In a personalized learning environment, the responsibility is shared between the teacher and student—all participants in the learning process have an important role and must work collaboratively. This approach requires a paradigm shift for educators teaching in traditional school models, because information acquired and learned is not limited to the scope, perspective, or knowledge level of one individual (the teacher.)

This environment also allows students to take an active role in their learning, and utilizes learners’ innate interests to fuel the processes of investigation and discovery, which relieves teachers of unrealistic goals and expectations. In personalized learning, the roles of teacher and learner are not mutually exclusive—both parties teach and learn at different stages of the process. If this sounds busy, that’s because it is.

...although technology can support personalized learning in a number of ways, it does not lie at the core of the concept.

3. Something that can only occur with technology

When it comes to personalized learning, sometimes technology can simplify things. Logistically, a 1:1 device-to-student ratio makes it is easier for students to engage in unique learning experiences, work at their own pace, and pursue their own interests. Technology can also give access to a wider range of content and resources that are not readily available in a learner’s physical location.

Yet, although technology can support personalized learning in a number of ways, it does not lie at the core of the concept.
Learning is the primary focus, and technology can be along for the ride—or not. What does it look like when technology is not at the center of a personalized learning experience? In a first grade classroom that I've observed, the teacher and students were working on a unit about plants. This teacher believed wholeheartedly in Howard Gardner’s *Theory of Multiple Intelligences* and used it to guide her unit design. Students explored their topics through various mediums—through children’s texts, music, outdoor discovery in nature, and yes—technology. In this classroom, students were encouraged to access both digital and analog tools on their quest for knowledge. I believe technology enhanced the student’s learning potential in unique ways; however, this unit could have existed without technology.

**4. Something that can “fit” into a neat textbook definition (because then it’s standardized, and no longer personal)**

It is natural for humans to crave some level of organization and structure, especially teachers. Given that many of us work in schools and districts that have personalized learning initiatives, it makes sense that we’re all looking for a standard definition of personalized learning—we want to know what we’re being asked to do, and have some guidance in how to do it effectively. But it’s critical that we realize that once we all consolidate around a standardized definition, it will no longer be personal.

Every individual student, classroom and school community is different, so how we tailor instruction to meet student’s needs varies within each classroom, school, district and even state. Most teachers are already working tirelessly to meet their students’ needs as best as possible.

Changing one’s mindset is no easy feat. But shifting one’s view of personalization from overwhelming and cumbersome, to an opportunity which allows and encourages students to take a more active role in their learning and partner with us in addressing their own learning needs, can feel like a breath of fresh air.
Ask Brian: What subjects should my daughter choose for the Leaving Cert?

Transition year can be an amazing period of self-discovery for students

Brian Mooney | Sep 4, 2017

Encourage your child to engage fully in every transition year activity as, collectively, they awaken latent talents.

Question: My daughter (16) has just started transition year. Her grades have been very good so far but she has no idea what subject choices to make for fifth year in the run-up to her Leaving Cert. Can you offer any advice?

Answer: Transition year, if properly planned and executed, can be an amazing period of self-discovery for students. Howard Gardner, in his 1983 book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, proposed eight abilities: musical-rhythmic, visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinaesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic.

The traditional school curriculum focuses almost exclusively on verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical.

Transition year, or TY, can awaken the innate skills across the other six intelligences identified by Gardener, which may have lain dormant since the beginning of second-level education.
The first piece of advice I would give your daughter, then, is to engage fully in every activity offered by the transition year programme, no matter if she finds herself out of her comfort zone.

Some parents look at the education system purely through the spectrum of the verbal-linguistic and logical-mathematical intelligences, and see the other aspects of transition year as a distraction from the real business of school.

They fail to see that real life does not mimic school. In my experience of more than 40 years in education, children enter transition year and emerge as young adults on the other side.

In my own work with transition year students, I introduce them to the wide range of online sources of relevant information on third level, further education and apprenticeship programmes, available both within Ireland and taught through the medium of English through the rest of the EU.

I also familiarise all transition year students fully with careers resources online to get a window into the reality of the world of work, in its ever-changing variety and complexity. There are tests online to enable the student to identify career preferences through a wide range of self-administered tests. Check out websites such as Careers Portal (careersportal.ie) for more information.

I, along with my guidance counsellor colleagues nationwide, administer a series of aptitude tests and interest inventories in the second half of the year to capture, at a moment in time, a picture of each student’s emerging interests and skills, to enable them to make their fifth-year subject choices based on scientifically validated data. Many schools continue to use the familiar DATS aptitude test as a method of identifying student’s aptitudes/strengths.

I have successfully used a combination of interest questionnaire Eirquest, in conjunction with an aptitude test Cambridge Profile, offered by Cambridge Occupational Analysts (coa.co.uk), which has proved very successful in helping my students select Leaving Cert subjects which will match their appropriate career strengths.
I am certain your daughter's school will administer whichever instruments they have found successful in assisting their students select suitable subjects. My key message remains: encourage her to engage fully in every TY activity, as collectively they awaken latent talents, which will blossom in the real-world students are destined to emerge into at the end of their studies.
Seminar stresses SMART goals, learning styles

By Gerald Kern/reporter | September 12, 2017

Each year, thousands of new college students walk through the doors of the various TCC campuses, but only a fraction will earn a four-year degree.


Ronda Isaacs, NE coordinator of special services for the advising and counseling center, led a discussion Sept. 6 with a team of campus facilitators for first-year students who sought life-changing guidance.

The discussion called Start on Track was based on Harvard professor Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory. According to Gardner, success in college and life takes a blend of street smarts and book smarts. It also requires grit and a growth-oriented mindset.

Isaacs and her team of facilitators broke down eight key learning styles listed by Gardner and helped students identify their optimal learning styles.

• Linguistic students often do well in a traditional classroom setting due to their strong use of the language arts: writing, speaking, listening and reading.

• Logic and math students often do well in conformity-oriented classrooms where empirical results in numbers, reasoning and problem-solving are measured.
• Music students often get overlooked in traditional schools. Their minds are geared toward music expression, patterns, songs, creativity and instruments.

• Spatial students can interpret data quickly through maps, tables, charts, graphs, art and puzzles. They are often quick to identify things that stand out or how things fit visually or organizationally.

• Bodily kinesthetic learners are hands-on learners. They do better with on-the-job training versus textbooks and lectures. They tend to get restless and can often fidget unknowingly to the annoyance of others.

• Interpersonal people are the people persons. They succeed in group or partnered projects. However, outgoingness and a need to be social can also distract them from accomplishing critical tasks if left unchecked.

• Intrapersonal students are more Zen-like. These tend to gravitate toward self-help books as they seek to get in better touch with their ideas, feelings and values.

• Naturalists and existentialists tend to dial into their inner survivalist like Bear Grylls or the late crocodile hunter Steve Irwin. They appreciate nature in its finest details while asking themselves deep meaningful questions of existence.

Once one’s learning style is determined, creating SMART goals helps build the path to success, Isaacs said. SMART goals are defined as goals that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely.

Addressing the unique learning styles of students and following it up with tailored SMART goals will have a greater impact on developing a growth-oriented mindset, which delivers more results than just high test scores alone, Isaacs said.
The Directorate of Matriculation of Schools, Tamil Nadu has recently issued a significant notice to a school which warns them not to force students to join coaching classes. If schools force students to join coaching classes they might lose their recognition. The schools have also been advised not to take additional fees from students for offering additional help.

The notice says that the violation of the instructions will warrant stringent penal action by the Department as contemplated by the Tamil Nadu Private Schools (Regulation) Act, 1973, including withdrawal of recognition.

The Directorate had seen several schools giving integrated coaching from class six onward for competitive exams. The teachers employed to take these classes were teachers from coaching centers and not school faculty. The notice tells schools not to conduct coaching classes during school duration. The circular also asserts that the
school cannot promote a single career choice without considering the aptitude of the student.

In the state of Tamil Nadu, the School Education Department has taken a prudent decision. It has issued a notice to schools in the state enabling them to act against forcing students to sit for competitive examinations.

In a country where equality and equal treatment of all streams of knowledge is something one can only hope for, this decision seems to be in the right direction. India is a country where engineers, doctors and lawyers are celebrated, even though they but people from the arts stream are looked upon with scorn and disregard. Many pure science students have impure mindsets, as in they assume that an individual’s Intelligence Quotient is low which is why that particular individual has opted for the arts. How illogical and ludicrous!

In a country where students from a tender age are forced to attend engineering and medical coaching classes, without being given the chance to explore several diverse vocational choices - the choice made by the Tamil Nadu government is a positive effort in the direction. The notice will break the linkage between schools and coaching classes which will lead to rebirth of schools as lively educational arenas. The students will also have a choice to get exposure to various vocations and fields of knowledge instead of being compelled to opt only for singular career options.

It is paradoxical that the great psychologist Howard Gardner, whose theory of multiple intelligences had created ripples in the education and scientific community has not received due acknowledgement of the teaching community.

Freedom to choose one’s subject of choice must also be considered a basic human right. After all, one’s career or occupation is one among the significant life areas the other two being personal area and interpersonal area.

Those who don’t treat all disciplines equally fail to realize the interdisciplinary nature of epistemology. In poetry, one finds mathematics, in history one finds psychology and in literature one finds value education. The list is endless.

Unless we as a nation learn to embrace all fields of study and treat them with the same mentality, the situation will not change. In fact, not only do we need some sort of change, but what we do need is a national revolution in education and educational practices, and a metamorphosis of the human mind. Discrimination in education is akin to any other type of discrimination like racial discrimination or discrimination between different castes. The difference is that in caste and racial discrimination, it is to do with people’s community and skin colour, whereas discrimination in educational choices is to do with the field of study chosen by an individual. In this case, not only is the field of study being looked upon with disdain, but also the person who chose that discipline.

Schools must offer free career counseling to pupils after 10th standard. This must take into consideration the pupil’s aptitude, interests and personality characteristics. Based on the results of the counseling process, an appropriate decision must be taken and the
field of study that best incorporates all the essential elements must be pursued. In this regard, the recent introduction of Bachelor’s in Liberal Studies by Jain University is a wonderful new initiative. According to the university, the student can take up a variety of subjects which need not necessarily fall under one stream of knowledge like the arts, commerce or science.

The candidate may choose subjects like music, theatre and physics, and will be assigned a mentor to guide him/her through the entire course. This seems like a noble initiative, being adopted from the Western nations. It ensures that one’s passions can be pursued and it permits the student to have an immersive academic experience.

Thus, the sagacious decision taken in Tamil Nadu is a blessing in disguise and one hopes to see many more like this one, paving the way for freedom, equality and liberty in education. For, one has the right ‘to know’ and ‘to know what to know’ in depth.

The significance of this measure is immense because it will help learners to get exposed to a diverse arena of vocational arenas and enable school communities to regain their missing sense of self-respect and dignity.
If necessity is the mother of invention, dire necessity is the mother of Jugaad: Part 2

By Virender Kapoor | Oct 07, 2017

In part one of this article series we talked about historical perspective of street smart intelligence, the origin of the word Jugaad and how it can be used to solve various problems. Today, we compare it against various widely held principles of intelligence.

Mapping Jugaad to the theory of Emotional Intelligence

Howard Gardner came up with the concept of "multiple intelligence" theory in his book Frames of Mind. He argued that Intelligence quotient was not sufficient to define human competence fully. Out of the many, two intelligences defined by Gardener are of direct relevance to theory of Jugaad. These were dealt in detail by Danial Goleman and clubbed together to be termed as emotional intelligence. These are Interpersonal intelligence and intra personal intelligence that give you the ability to deal with yourself and with others effectively.

One practical definition of human intelligence is given by David Wechsler as "the aggregate capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally and deal with his environment effectively."

All the above definitions have one common thread, namely dealing with people, yourself and environment (which implies people and situations) effectively.

The word 'effectively', means 'producing desired or intended result.' This implies using available means and resources under the prevailing circumstances and optimizing efforts to produce results under the most challenging conditions.
One difference between the Jugaad thought process and the ordinary one is that of being effective or being ineffective in essence.

Jugaad, therefore, is the highest form of Emotional Intelligence at one end of the intellectual understanding of human competence. At the lowest level of understanding Jugaad closely relates to common sense. Jugaad is thus, a context based new intelligence.

**Mapping Jugaad to the theory of constraints**

Theory of constraints was defined by EM Goldratt in his book titled 'The Goal'. It adopts the common idiom "A chain is no stronger than the weakest link." It urges you to study the system that has a problem and indentify the most serious constraint causing the problem. Then exploit or handle that system constraint. There after subordinate everything else to the decision and elevate the system constraint (to highest priority) and handle it or neutralize the constraint. Once the most difficult constraint has been handled, indentify the next most serious constraint. Do this iteratively till all constraints are handled.

Henry Ford devised the assembly line, which was also a simple way to increase production but result of lateral thinking. Process of assembly line falls between invention and innovation. The idea was innovation, but design of the conveyers etc required some inventions. Innovation is the psychological manifestation of human thought whereas invention is the physical manifestation of an idea.

Jugaad mindset also looks for the weakest link in a situation. It attacks where it affects most. And that is why it can effectively solve a problem with the least amount of effort. That is the axiom of Jugaad.

**Fuzzy logic and Jugaad**

Fuzzy logic deals with reasoning that is approximate rather than absolute or exact. The traditional theory of logic uses binary sets having two valued logic as true or false. Whereas fuzzy logic has truth values that range between 0 and 1, thus handles partial truth. It to an extent deals with imperfect truth or partial truth where the truth value may range from completely true to completely false.

Fuzzy logic has been applied to artificial intelligence- how it can imitate function of a human mind. Terminology used in Fuzzy logic and examples are based on perception rather than measurement, like very low, decreasingly, unreasonable or low cost etc. In fact life situations are more like fuzzy logic and everything- situations, people, behavior, likes, dislikes have that "somewhat" factor in them and do not necessarily work in a binary fashion. Jugaad mind set also looks at "real life problems" the fuzzy logic way.

**Chanakya's Principles of Diplomacy and Jugaad**

To handle people, situations and relationships (effectively) is the hallmark of diplomacy. Chanakya's principles of diplomacy can be applied to break any deadlock, conflict, problem existing between people or groups of people. Saam, Daam, Dand, Bhed is a four word philosophy of Chanakya to handle a person or a situation. Briefly these four words mean as under.
Saam - To resolve a conflict by explaining your point to your opponent and by a dialogue.
Daam- If dialogue doesn't work then it suggests using money, gift or any materialistic way to lure and
resolve the issue.
Dand- If both the above fail, one can try punishment or penalty or pain to the other party to give in.
Bhed- Create differences between the people in the opposition or divide and rule.

Jugaad is in a way extension of Chanakya’s Principles of Diplomacy, to handle people, problems and situations on a day to day basis.
After Secretary of State Rex Tillerson allegedly called President Donald Trump a moron back in July, the president boasted that he would score higher on an IQ test than Tillerson. But that may not mean as much as the president would like to think.

In a recent interview with Forbes, Trump said of Tillerson's alleged insult, "I think it's fake news, but if he did that, I guess we'll have to compare IQ tests. And I can tell you who is going to win." [Creative Genius: The World's Greatest Minds]

But what do IQ tests really measure? Are they a valid metric for intelligence?

For some, the answer is fairly clear. "In my view, 'intelligence' is easy to define: It is that quality measured by performance on a well-standardized intelligence test," Robert Bilder, a psychologist at UCLA who researches cognition and psychopathology, told Live Science.

But intelligence testing, even intelligence as a concept, is the focus of a constant debate that raises more questions than it answers. The IQ, or the intelligence quotient, is a measure of a person's mental age divided by their actual age, multiplied by 100. So, a person who is exactly as "mentally old" as one might expect for that individual's chronological age would score a perfectly average 100. People who deviate from that score in either direction are considered to be of above- or below-average intelligence. These
scores can change with age and can fluctuate from one testing session to another, according to researchers. But intelligence is a many-faceted beast. While it is colloquially associated with math and reasoning skills, psychologists assert that there are many kinds of intelligence, with Howard Gardner, a developmental psychologist at Harvard University, classifying seven distinct types, including bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, musical, logical-mathematical, visual-spatial and linguistic. Given that it's so hard to pin down exactly what intelligence is, the task of measuring it with a standardized test is particularly difficult, experts say. One of the standard IQ tests used today is called the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale (used for adults and older teens), which measures verbal and nonverbal cognitive skills, or as the psychologist who developed the test put it, the ability to "adapt and constructively solve problems in the environment."

Trump might not get the clear-cut result he's hoping for, since this test and others like it, including the Stanford-Binet test, don't present some unified quantity of a person's "smartness."

Test results are affected by several confounding variables, such as smoking habits, hours spent playing computer games and various aspects of one's personality, according to past research. IQ scores also change with the test taker's level of self-discipline and personal motivation and grit — all things that can change from testing session to testing session — according to a 2005 study that surveyed the IQ test results of 140 eighth-graders.

"Indeed, IQ tests are influenced by many factors," Cornell University developmental psychologist Stephen Ceci told Live Science. "For example, schooling affects IQ test performance," he added, explaining that for each year that a student falls short of finishing high school, there is a drop of between 1.8 and 4 IQ points compared to peers who did finish high school.

In Vietnam, Ceci explained, people who had a higher risk of being drafted stayed in school longer as a means to defer service compared to those with safer draft numbers. IQ testing revealed that those who stayed in school longer had higher scores — not because they were smarter, but because they had greater exposure to the conditions that would help them answer IQ test questions such as "who wrote Hamlet," Ceci said.

IQ test scores even correlate with birth order among siblings, according to two 2007 studies, as reported by The New York Times.

Therefore, IQ tests measure not just intelligence (however that is defined), but also the environment and context of one's life.

Whether or not a superior IQ test result would actually provide Trump with a satisfying victory over Tillerson, Bilder said he would love to help out. "I would be delighted personally to test President Trump's hypothesis, and [I] offer to conduct the examinations for free," he said. "I would only request that we also include standardized tests of 'emotional intelligence' and 'response inhibition' that are not as fully examined in standard IQ tests but are very important to our success as a species."
Trump’s obsession with his IQ is the opposite of wisdom

By David Von Drehle Columnist | October 13, 2017

Forgive me for dredging up ancient history, but back on Oct. 10 — an eternity in Trump time — Forbes magazine published an interview with the president in which he challenged Secretary of State Rex Tillerson to an IQ contest. Veteran Trump-watchers rushed to their e-files to show that this is a recurring theme. Trump brags about his IQ as freely as he boasts about his interior decorating; it’s like he has a chandelier between his ears.

If only I had a time machine to summon my 12-year-old self. That gormy little nerd would definitely throw down with the president.

In 1973, a much brighter version of me spent several hours in the school library untangling tricky word problems and picturing irregular solids turning in space. It’s a miracle I got any of the answers right, given that 98 percent of my mental energy was consumed by the breathtaking transformation the previous summer had wrought on the girls in seventh grade, and most of the remaining 2 percent was storing memorized dialogue from "Gilligan's Island."
The lad's results, however, were impressive enough that — for a few weeks anyway — school officials eyed me with the mixed shock and pride of Farmer Arable gazing on Wilbur the pig under a spiderweb spelling out "radiant." Thus began a lifetime’s discovery of the pointlessness of IQ tests and whatever it is that they measure.

I'm not saying that intelligence is useless. When I drive across a bridge or board an airplane, I give thanks for engineers who are a heck of a lot better than I am at math. As for genius, of course it exists. How else to explain a Michelangelo, a Curie, an Ellington or a Turing? The rare spark is struck in some unmapped dimension. Yet to apply a single label, be it intelligence or genius, to the multifaceted power of the human brain, and then to reduce the label to a number, is folly. Brainpower shows in so many ways, from critic Helen Vendler reading a poem to quarterback Tom Brady reading a defense; from architect David Adjaye building a museum to author J.K. Rowling building a universe to investor Warren Buffett building a portfolio. Harvard University's Howard Gardner is clearly correct when he observes that humans possess multiple intelligences in varying degrees. Mine may be more linguistic, yours more spatial, another person's more musical or interpersonal or mathematical.

Compared with my 12-year-old self, I’ve undoubtedly lost at least 10 or 20 percent of my IQ points. What I've gained over the decades is a deep appreciation for all the things I don't know, and will never know, because they require varieties of intelligence in which I am lacking. And thank God, because my world is so much richer for it. Albert Einstein is often credited with saying "the more I learn, the more I realize I don't know."

Amen to that.

Trump's notion that intelligence is reflected in a single number — wearable on a jersey, flashable on a scoreboard — is the opposite of wisdom. Worse, it is the root of an intellectual isolation that endangers the country he leads. Trump finds himself increasingly at odds with his own staff and at war with would-be allies. He is squandering perhaps the most precious presidential power: the ability to surround oneself with a challenging mix of insightful and experienced advisers.

Some highly intelligent women and men serve on Trump's staff, Tillerson among them. Yet sources tell Vanity Fair that the president has been fuming lately, "I hate everyone in the White House." Frustrated with Congress, he attacks the political intelligence of Mitch McConnell, the moral intelligence of John McCain, the diplomatic intelligence of Bob Corker. A smarter president would be hungry for dissenting views and willing to hear from well-meaning critics, because listening is learning, and the more you learn, the more you win.

Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. suggested that intelligence matters less in a president than the qualities of judgment, discipline and discernment that he called "temperament." That is even more true in our world of increasingly specialized knowledge and rapid change. No person, no matter how bright, can begin to know more than a small corner of all that a modern presidency encompasses.
I guess we'll never find out how the young DVD would fare in an IQ showdown with Mensa Don. But I know one guy who could kick Trump's tail for sure. His name was Socrates, and he lived in Athens nearly 2,500 years ago. Though the IQ test lay far in the future, Socrates spent a lot of time thinking about these matters — in a vivid demonstration of what Gardner calls "intrapersonal" intelligence, or the ability to understand oneself.

Here's what Socrates concluded: "How is not this the most reprehensible ignorance, to think that one knows what one does not know?" If Trump is so smart, let's hear his answer to that.
BAPA hosts children’s author visits

Jan 9, 2018

Author W. Nikola-Lisa will visit area schools as part of the Beverly Area Planning Association’s Authors in the School program.

W. Nikola-Lisa prioritizes his interests as storytelling, music and writing, in that order. The author of 20 children’s books and a former second-grade teacher, Nikola-Lisa is a man with many stories to tell, and he likes to share them with an enthusiasm that invites young readers to not just relate to the stories, but be inspired to go beyond the pages of the books and relate the stories to their own lives.

In January, the Beverly Area Planning Association Education Committee will bring Nikola-Lisa to neighborhood public schools through the Authors in the School program, and each class will get to meet the author and receive a copy of his book, “How We Are Smart,” and participate in a one-day workshop.

The book is a collection of short biographies of successful people—some of them known, and some who people may never have heard of. Each of these people are
smart in a different way, and, as written by Nikola-Lisa, the stories encourage children to identify and appreciate their own unique way of being smart.

Nikola-Lisa got the idea for the book when attending a lecture by Howard Gardner on his theory of multiple intelligences in 2000. Nikola-Lisa said he felt a connection to the theory, which sets out eight ways in which people are smart—body, logic, music, nature, people, picture, self and word. The different ways of being smart influence people to become athletes, artists, scientists, activists, musicians, lawyer, explorers, writers and more. The author spent two years researching and writing to make sure “How We Are Smart” includes the success stories of inspiring people of all genders and racial groups.

In his Author in the Schools workshops at neighborhood schools, Nikola-Lisa will use music, storytelling and more to help third-graders develop reading, writing and storytelling skills.

“My goal is to guide students through my writing experiences in a logical, sequential way so students have a broad understanding of what an author does and what makes a good story,” Nikola-Lisa said.

Participating elementary schools include Barnard, Clissold, Esmond, Kellogg, Sutherland and Vanderpoel.

“How We Are Smart” has been recognized with the Christopher Award and Gustavus Myers Book Award, and is recommended by the Great Lakes Great Books Award List, School Library Journal Book Review and New York Times Book Review.

Nikola-Lisa grew up in southern Texas and currently resides in Chicago. He began teaching in elementary schools in the late 1970s and then went on to get his doctorate. He was a professor of education at National-Louis University and currently spends a great deal of time visiting classrooms as an Author in the Schools.

Pictures in “How We Are Smart” are by award-winning illustrator Sean Qualls who draws his inspiration from many sources including childhood memories, movies, television, nature, music and literature. Qualls lives in Brooklyn, N.Y.
An iPhone in Hand... Worth Two in the Bush?

by Laura Jeliazkov | 1/24/18

In the know. Savvy. Informed. Tuned in. Appraised. Knowing what’s what. With it. Au courant. Plugged in. All of these qualify the state of the average human being today. Technology has stretched its web over and around the world. The strands are pulling people from all corners of the world together into close quarters; they cross paths in the same online markets, the same news servers, the same online forums, game rooms, articles, chat messages and FaceTimes. People have access to information and answers beyond what could be found in a stack encyclopedias. They observe, or even participate, in technological innovation happening in the fields of science and health and society every day. They have the power to order things to their doorstep, finish errands with the flick of a finger and get directions to anywhere and everywhere they would like.

Technology has given us all this — plus some more. And people seem to be making good use of these privileges. They seem to be enjoying it all, quite a lot, quite often — almost constantly. Very rarely are people of the developed world unplugged. Laptops and iPhones are attached to the lap and the hand, lines and waiting rooms are now times for (almost obligatorily) catching up
on Instagram instead of places to stand around. Commercialism is at a high as Amazon packages veer left and right along the roads. Workspaces, fueled by startup culture, are dominated by virtual interaction and online platforms.

The 21st century might be afflicted with a slight addiction.

But what kind of addiction is this? Is it serving us well? The advancement of technology is spinning at a stunning pace — and the global stage it is setting is unlike anything the world has ever experienced before. How has it changed the way in which the human mind works? Is it truly a benefit?

Take the classroom here at Dartmouth, for instance. More and more curricula revolve around online resources. Lesson plans integrate and make use of media, assignments are completed and submitted online and pages of online shopping and social media outlets slide up and down laptop screens with alarming frequency. The moment that class is dismissed, iPhones emerge from pockets, earphones go in and eyes are cast downwards to the screen for a recalibration with the social world.

Humans are a very social species. According to Facebook in 2014, each of their 1.23 billion users might sign onto the site for an average of 17 minutes a day. This might not seem like much, but those minutes eventually tally up to more than a collective 39,757 years of time spent on the site in a single day. Humans are also a very narcissistic species. This is not just a value statement. There exists, in the brain, a neural circuit called the default network — a series of regions that is actively firing when the brain is not occupied by any task. This is considered a state of “restful wake,” or daydream. What is interesting is this: one of those active default regions is in the medial prefrontal cortex, which also engages when the mind is in restful wake, as when the mind is thinking about oneself.

This overlap in neural engagement is what psychology professor Meghan Meyer, has been investigating in her research of human social cognitive neuroscience.

“The tendency [of the human brain] to activate those regions at rest basically nudges you to think about yourself,” Meyer explained.
This could very well be an indication of why we, as humans in this day and age of technology, are so smitten with social media. It is a medium where we may spend all the time that we would like pondering and playing with our virtual image and its relation to those around it.

“When we disclose information about ourselves, we are activating reward circuitry in the brain,” Meyer said.

However, Meyer points out that how these inherent neural patterns are going to play out on the evolving social stage is unclear.

“We have all this new technology, but we have evolutionarily old systems that are dealing with it; it might be what’s leading to some of these odd behaviors,” she said.

Developmental psychologist Howard Gardner proposed a theory of what he coined the “naturalist intelligence.” This, according to his theory, is the human’s ability to make critical decisions in the natural world. Our naturalist intelligence is our reference book of instinct for use in the navigation of our world — it is the Charles Darwin intelligence, a vestige of our ancestry, the tailbone of the brain, one might say. We may no longer be picking between the poisonous and the edible mushroom. We may not be out hunting. We may not be fashioning a dagger from a rock and stick. But we are choosing which winter jacket to buy or which haircut to get. We are choosing which photo to post on social media or when best to buy that plane ticket. We are still making decisions with the aim of optimizing our safety and our status. The cognitive processes remain fundamentally the same. We have just evolved to reapply them to a different setting.

Technology presents us with a wealth of choice. It takes time and attention to filter through all of the available possibilities put before us. Education professor Holly Taylor tries for this very reason to discourage her students from having laptops out in class.

“There are lots of things that are happening cognitively within the classroom,” she said.

Taylor will use multimedia resources to supplement her lesson plans, which she believes bolsters engagement with the material and encourages active, real-time investigation into class topics. The variety of modalities with which Taylor can share her curriculum, can round out the learning experience for her students. But therein lies the irony: the same variety of modalities can also
become overwhelming. If students have access to the internet during class time, the possibilities are endless. They can check the news, Facebook, read their emails and messages, check that online sale and then check Facebook again. The student’s attention can become divided. Why is his technological juggling act so addictive? Is it an earnest desire to know everything about everything? Most of the time, Taylor argues, it’s not.

“People are cognitively lazy” she said.

Humans are categorizers, taking incoming information and quickly, reflexively sorting it. In this way we are able to manage the rich and complex and fast-paced world around us. Too much information could be paralyzing. When students perform this juggling act, they are skimming the surface for the information, but pushing off the critical thinking. Taylor cited Gardner, saying that if we went back out into the woods to be with our naturalist intelligences, people would have time to think again. But today this may not be possible.

“Ever-present technology is taking over the time to think,” Taylor said.

Matt Magann ’21 is an anomaly — he does not have a Facebook. He deleted it a year ago. And now?

“I think I have a pretty healthy relationship [with my phone] — I’ll use it like I use any other practical thing,” he said.

I found him and two other students, Fracis Sapienza ’21 and David Vonderheide ’21, coming back to campus Sunday afternoon from a day in the mountains of Coos County, New Hampshire. When questioned about the alleged “addiction” of the 21st century, there was a chorus of ardent agreement, yet the three of them managed to escape it for a day. Their phones snapped a couple photos of the view from the snow-covered summit of the 4,000-footer in the 20-degree weather — but otherwise they remained in-pocket.
Howard Gardner Multiple Intelligences Test for Students in India

(MENAFN Editorial) 2/2/2018

Multiple Intelligence theory emerged from the research by Howard Gardner (an American developmental psychologist). He concluded from his work at Harvard that strength in one area of performance did not reliably predict comparable strength in another area. With this intuitive conclusion in mind, Gardner set about studying intelligence in a systematic, multi-disciplinary, and scientific manner, drawing from psychology, biology, neurology, sociology, anthropology, and the arts and humanities. This resulted the theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI Theory) as presented in Frames of Mind (1983).

According to this theory we are able to understand the world through spatial representation, logical mathematical analysis, language, musical thinking, using our body etc..to solve problems or to make things, to understand others or oneself. These are different kinds of intelligences that individuals have and each individual has different profile of strengths of these intelligences. These intelligences are invoked based on the need to solve a problem or respond to a variety of diverse situations.

We provide multiple intelligence test, quiz, activity, assessment, inventory, book, and chart. We teach students multiple intelligence skill in India. For more information visit : http://www.mytalentfit.com/multiple-intelligence
Sudhir Kale explores the nine types of intelligence as defined by Harvard psychologist Howard Gardner and how they apply to the gaming industry.

DURING my decades of involvement in the gaming industry, I have had the pleasure of knowing many senior executives from all over the world. They are all somewhat unique in terms of their contributions and abilities. What is common across these individuals is their intelligence – intelligence not as typically expressed in IQ terms; rather, the expanded view of intelligence as espoused by renowned Harvard psychologist, Howard Gardner.

My interactions with and observations of many industry stalwarts lead me to conclude that they bring to the table different kinds of “intelligence”.

First, let us look at the nine different kinds of intelligence that Gardner talks about. Intelligence, Gardner argues, is much more than IQ. In his definition, “Intelligence is a biopsychological potential to process information that can be activated in a cultural setting to solve problems or create products that are of value in a culture.”

Dissecting this definition yields three key components: (1) Intelligence is biopsychological – not merely cognitive – potential; (2) Intelligence is the ability to process information of all kinds – sensory, emotional, and cognitive; and (3) The information processing inherent in the activation of intelligence occurs in a cultural setting to produce outputs valued by that culture.
Based on decades of research, Gardner came up with nine distinct kinds of intelligence. These are: Naturalist Intelligence, Musical Intelligence, Logical-Mathematical Intelligence, Existential Intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence, Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence, Linguistic Intelligence, Intrapersonal Intelligence and Spatial Intelligence. Each of these intelligences, he argued, develops somewhat independently of others.

Naturalist Intelligence. This type of intelligence allows a person to be sensitive to and discriminate among living organisms such as plants and animals, and to be able to notice features such as rock formations and the shape of clouds in the sky.

Musical Intelligence. People with musical intelligence love music. Able to discern sounds, tones and rhythm, they have a “good ear” for music. They appreciate rhythm and composition. They are gifted with the ability to compose, sing or play instruments.

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence. People with strong logical-mathematical intelligence are skilled at deductive reasoning, detecting patterns and drawing logical conclusions. Such intelligence endows individuals with the ability to calculate, quantify, consider propositions and hypotheses and carry out elaborate mathematical operations.

Existential Intelligence. Individuals high in existential intelligence are drawn to existential and metaphysical pursuits. Issues such as the meaning of life, whether life has a purpose, what exactly happens when one dies and how did life evolve constitute the objects of inquiry for these individuals.

Interpersonal Intelligence. This kind of intelligence pretty much equates with what we now call emotional intelligence. It provides us the ability to understand others and interact effectively with them. According to Gardner, people with high interpersonal intelligence possess sensitivity to the moods and temperaments of others and have the ability to entertain multiple perspectives.

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence. People with high bodily-kinesthetic intelligence are adept at using their bodies to convey feelings and ideas. This intelligence also involves a keen sense of timing and the perfection of skills through mind-body union as witnessed in dancing and sports.

Linguistic Intelligence. As the name suggests, linguistic intelligence is proficiency in the use of language to process and communicate abstract thoughts. People high in linguistic intelligence are drawn to creative writing, story-telling, word games and solving crossword puzzles.

Intrapersonal Intelligence. This type of intelligence involves the ability to understand oneself. It enables deep understanding of one’s thoughts and feelings and the ability to use such understanding in organizing and directing one’s life.

Spatial Intelligence. People with strong spatial intelligence possess the ability to comprehend three-dimensional images and shapes. Core capacities include mental imagery, spatial reasoning, image manipulation, graphic and artistic skills.
This intelligence comes into play when figuring out maps and taking part in any type of construction or engineering projects.

**EXEMPLARS IN THE GAMING INDUSTRY**

Armed with an understanding of the nine types of intelligence, I set out to find exemplars for each type of intelligence within the gaming industry. The exemplars were senior executives or gaming scholars from the recent past or the present. In choosing particular people, my self-stipulation was that the individual should have a high level of name recognition within the industry. Having identified an exemplar with a certain type of intelligence does not mean that the individual lacks or does not use other types of intelligences. The intent here was to choose a known person who exhibited a particular type of intelligence to a high degree.

I first carried out a quick memory scan to come up with exemplars for the nine categories. This resulted in people I knew and people I knew of. The people I knew were comprised largely of individuals whom I have known for decades. I would consider a majority of these individuals as friends, though the list did include a person or two that I would not trust to look after my kitten! The list of people I knew of was comprised of people I had worked with in a professional capacity but did not know very well, or of individuals about whom a lot has been written in the popular press, enough to get a decent understanding of their primary intelligence.

Having created my list of exemplars for each of the nine intelligences, I then sent my categorization along with descriptors of each type of intelligence to three veteran executives from within the industry, people I have known for a long time and whose judgment I totally trust. I also asked each of the three executives to suggest additional names for each type of intelligence.

After hearing the thoughts of the three adjudicators, I created my final list of exemplars which appears in the below table. If your name appears on this list and you happen to read this article, let me know if you agree with my assessment, providing a rationale for your agreement or disagreement. If your name does not appear on the list, let me know what you think is your strongest intelligence.

The intent of this article is not to slot people into iron-clad categories, but to appreciate the diversity of gifts among the industry’s leaders. Given the abnormal turbulence we all sense right now, I thought this light-hearted article would provide a pleasant distraction for many.

While Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences (MI) Theory has been severely criticized on conceptual grounds (such as assumed independent “modular” nature of intelligences) and for lacking empirical support (Klein 1997; Waterhouse 2006), this fun article is not about the reliability and validity of MI. We will leave that topic for scholars in psychology and psychometry to duke out with Gardner.

In my opinion, MI provides a convenient framework for educated laypersons to discuss multiple abilities; whether these abilities constitute intelligences or not is a moot point from our perspective.
Human intelligence is multiform! This is what psychologist Howard Gardner points out by his theory that classifies our cognitive abilities into eight categories. When the IQ test evaluates only the first.

There are those who juggle with numbers and those who prefer words. There are those who express themselves through drawing and those who opt for music or dance. And then there are the experts in communication and those who prefer introspection ... No doubt, we all have “facilities” in certain areas, more or less developed talents that differentiate us from each other.

But can each of these abilities be considered as a form of intelligence in its own right? Instead of being a global and unique skill of our brain, measurable by a test of intelligence quotient, could the intelligence take multiple forms, Einstein, Mozart or Victor Hugo having developed, to the extreme, that of mathematics, music and letters?

Each of us has a mix of different kinds of intelligence

This is the thesis advocated for thirty years the American psychologist Howard Gardner. According to him, a cognitive ability must be elevated to the level of intelligence as long as it meets a set of specific criteria: it must be vulnerable to certain brain lesions, manifest itself exceptionally in some people (geniuses), to be able to improve through learning, to study through laboratory experiments, etc.
Based on this grid based on his work at Harvard University, Gardner demonstrates that there are eight forms of intelligence: logico-mathematical, visual and spatial, interpersonal, intrapersonal, corporal or kinesthetic, verbal, and linguistic, musical and rhythmic and finally naturalistic.

Each of them would function as a computer specialized in a very particular task. Each individual would possess these eight forms of intelligence in himself, but one or the other would develop more than the others, making our brain a unique cocktail concocted from the same eight ingredients.

**A disputed theory**

How does this selection take place? By a clever mix between our genetic heritage and the educational and cultural environment in which we have been bathing since our birth To this day, the theory of multiple intelligences is not unanimous, but medical imaging has still allowed identify the brain region (s) involved in seven of the eight forms of intelligences defined by Howard Gardner.

And the world of education is even starting to get interested. By identifying, at the age of 4 or 5, the dominant intelligence or intelligences of each student, the teachers could form working groups: to solve a mathematical operation, for example, the children of the group with body intelligence would be encouraged to add numbers by counting on their fingers. Those in the "visual-spatial" group would be encouraged to visualize the numbers in their head, while those in the "verbal" group could describe operations aloud, and so on.

Succeeding in this way would give children the confidence they need to later approach the same exercise without fear by exploring other forms of intelligence that they do not master well. And so develop them.
How do your EYFS Children Learn Best?

Intelligence is so much more than the ability to answer questions in a test, says The Childcare Guru

Jamie Victoria  |  08th March 2018

Teaching in the early years means becoming familiar with many theories and approaches to education – most commonly, Montessori, Waldorf Steiner and Reggio Emilia – but it’s to our benefit to continually reflect on our practice and broaden our knowledge by exploring the work of others too.

Howard Gardner is someone we should all become familiar with. An American psychologist, he designed the Multiple Intelligence (MI) theory, which seeks to illustrate why we shouldn’t expect everyone to learn in exactly the same way.

The MI theory empowers individuals, as everyone is valued and no type of intelligence is regarded as more important than another.

Eight intelligences

The MI theory splits intelligence into eight areas: verbal, logical, kinesthetic, rhythmic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, visual and naturalist. A person can fall under one or more of these eight areas, but a particular strength will usually be apparent.
If you take a look at your friendship group, you will notice that each of you has different strengths and weaknesses, and this is what makes you unique and individual.

Just because your peer is fantastic at mathematics, for example, that doesn’t mean they are any more intelligent than you are purely because you find the subject challenging and your own strengths lie with music.

The world would be a very boring place if we were all good at the same one thing or learnt in the same way! The world is diverse, and as educators it is vital that we realise this and understand that it means education must also be diverse. Howard Gardner sums this up perfectly:

Education which treats everyone the same way is actually the most unfair education because it picks out one kind of mind and if you think like that, great, but if you don’t then there is no room on the train for you.

If we know that one child has a very spacial or visual way of learning, another child has a very hands-on way of learning and a third child likes stories, we do not have to talk very fast as a teacher; we can provide software, materials and resources which present material to a child in a way in which the child will find interesting so they can use their intelligences productively and show their understanding in a way that is comfortable to that child.

It is widely known that a child’s early years are crucial in laying the foundations for later development, growth and success. Whether you work in a nursery, preschool or Reception class, or as a childminder or nanny, your actions will have a great impact on the children you look after.

It is imperative to instil confidence in each child that they are capable learners, which is what the MI theory looks to achieve.

Change your methods

As early educators, we can use the MI theory in our everyday practice with the children that we teach and care for.

If a child is struggling to understand when taught in a particular way, then rather than believing the child can’t do the task, we should reflect on the way we are teaching and what we can do to modify and change our methods.
In this way, we can also learn how to be effective educators who cater for every child’s individual needs and qualities.

For example, at preschool you might be teaching the children about the weather and seasons. Some children may pick it up immediately while others take longer to grasp the concept.

This is completely normal and is a reflection that not all children learn and understand in the same way. Here are some ideas for what you might do to support children who fall under one or more of the eight intelligences:

- **Visual/spatial** – provide a calendar visual aid
- **Verbal/linguistic** – share a storybook or audio tape
- **Logical/mathematical** – offer a puzzle
- **Naturalist** – provide a hands-on outdoor experience
- **Kinesthetic/physical** – set up an active game, involving movement
- **Rhythmic/musical** – share a song, rhyme or poem
- **Interpersonal/social** – organise a group activity, such as a turn-taking card game
- **Intrapersonal/introspective** – share a story or picture book relating to that child personally

The most important advice that I can give you is to believe in yourself and your ability to think outside the box and create stimulating and exciting activities that are hands-on and inclusive.

Children are inspired by their role models, so if you can instil confidence in a child by supporting them to learn to their strengths, they will be far more likely to succeed in future.

**Boosting confidence**

Sometimes we worry about ‘school readiness’ and push phonics and numeracy upon children when, in fact, they need to develop emotional intelligence, social skills and self-confidence first.

These are the attributes that will carry them when they make the transition to school and ensure they are ready and equipped to take on further learning and the challenges that school life brings.

Early childhood passes us by quickly, and the rate of development and growth children undergo during this period is rapid. It’s important, therefore, to make the most of it – by allowing children to enjoy being children and learn through play and exploration.
Combining this thinking and the MI theory allows us to create an environment that offers them the best possible start and cements those foundations in place so that they continue to succeed as they grow older.

Confidence comes from within, so it’s beneficial for children to have someone supporting, praising and believing in them from the start.

As soon as they are made to feel inferior or less important because their intelligence does not fit the stereotype of mainstream education, confidence is lost, and they may begin to doubt or question their real strengths.

Positivity is essential, and an open mindset to reflect and be the best educator we can be is the recipe for success.
Siddhartha Mukherjee, author-doctor, is guest at Express Adda today

In the past two decades, Mukherjee’s lab has studied the behaviour of these cells and identified therapies for certain cancers in a clinical setting.

By: Express News Service | March 27, 2018

IN his 2011 Pulitzer Prize-winning book, The Emperor of All Maladies: A Biography of Cancer, Siddhartha Mukherjee quotes Hippocrates: “The art of medicine is long, and life is short; opportunity fleeting; the experiment perilous; judgment flawed.” The ancient Greek physician is right, but that never stopped Mukherjee, 47, from engaging with medicine at multiple levels. As a haematologist and oncologist who trained at Harvard Medical School, his research focuses on the link between stem cells and cancer cells. In the past two decades, Mukherjee’s lab has studied the behaviour of these cells and identified therapies for certain cancers in a clinical setting.

What sets him apart from his peers is his remarkable ability to demystify medicine for the rest of us. He did this first in The Emperor of All Maladies, when he took on the behemoth that is cancer, and explored the way it has impacted human history, from the time of the ancient Egyptians, to cutting-edge technologies practiced in the best cancer research facilities around the
world. In 2016, he delved into the personal genetic history of his family in The Gene: An Intimate History, a book that looks into the impact of genes in determining one’s quality of life, from traits to mental illness.

On Tuesday evening, as part of Express Adda, a series of informal interactions organised by The Indian Express Group with those at the centre of change, Mukherjee will speak about the questions that drive him to excellence — and help us with answers to the deepest mysteries of life. He will be in conversation with The Indian Express Deputy Editor Seema Chishti and Senior Editor Paromita Chakrabarti.

One does not simply read Mukherjee to know about the history of certain aspects of medicine and disease, but also to glimpse into the mind of a doctor and an author who is constantly looking to rewrite the book. His writings have comforted many a soul. In The Gene, Mukherjee criticises the IQ test as a measure of intelligence. Instead, he endorses a theory, introduced by Howard Gardner, of multiple intelligences, which asserts that the results of IQ tests for determining general intelligence do not represent intelligence in the real world.

Born in a Bengali family in New Delhi, Mukherjee attended St Columba’s School, where he won the school’s highest award, the ‘Sword of Honour’, in 1989. He went on to study biology at Stanford University, where he worked in Nobel Laureate Paul Berg’s laboratory, defining cellular genes that change the behaviours of cancer cells. He then moved to the University of Oxford, after winning the Rhodes Scholarship for doctoral research into viral antigens. He later moved back to the US, where he attended Harvard Medical School, earning his Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) degree in 2000. Currently, Mukherjee is an Associate Professor of Medicine, Division of Haematology/ Oncology, at the Columbia University Medical Center, New York City.
Who is the T-shaped student?
Saikat Majumdar | APRIL 21, 2018

It takes different types of intelligences to excel, whatever your profession. A breadth of knowledge, coupled with depth in your chosen specialisation, is the way to go

Is intelligence singular or plural? Is it a single, coherent quality, or are there different kinds of intelligences?

Educationist and developmental psychologist Howard Gardner persuasively negates the theory of a single IQ that underlies most standardised tests worldwide and has pioneered the influential theory of multiple intelligences. He listed seven fundamental intelligences — linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal — to which he added three more later: naturalist, spiritual and existential. These intelligences are variously rooted in the different disciplines, domains of knowledge, activities, and professions.

To better understand the professional lives that the different disciplines take on in the real world, it is useful to look back on the diverse sets of intelligences. If we imagine the world of work as made up of different sectors as Gardner suggests, it becomes easy to see the wide application of different kinds of intelligences.
Logical-mathematical intelligence, one of the most prized academically, plays a key role in finance, accounting, and the sciences. Sectors in which communication is key draw heavily on linguistic intelligences. Musical and other artistic intelligences find a natural home in the entertainment industry. Personal intelligences play a key role in any job, but they are especially crucial in sectors that deal with public interaction. Bodily-kinaesethetic intelligences are prized highly in athletics, arts and crafts. Sectors dealing with navigation, transportation, advertising or graphics require, more than anything else, a high degree of spatial intelligence; sectors that work closely with the environment, plant and animal life, textile, food preparation and ecology, prize naturalist intelligence.

A complex

In reality, however, a complex of various intelligences is essential to any profession. No one intelligence is enough, even though particular intelligences are of special value to different professions. A productive relationship between multiple sets of intelligences is especially crucial in the higher echelons of business and leadership. Most businesses have a range of departments in addition to management and leadership positions: marketing, sales, accounting, production, human resources, finance, customer relations, outreach, philanthropy, and community outreach. Different combinations of linguistic, personal, logical-mathematical, existential and spiritual intelligences shape success in different positions. Even when disciplinary expertise is helpful in specific spheres of professional life, it needs to be supplemented by a complex of other intelligences. These can only be nourished by a range of disciplines and co-curricular training.

The importance of curricular range and diversity in one’s college education cannot be exaggerated, even if depth forms the crux. The ideal liberal arts science graduate is a T-shaped individual. Jeffrey Selingo, former editor of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, outlines this idea evocatively in his recent book,*There is Life after College*. The expert in a single subject, the product of a traditional undergraduate education, is an ‘I-shaped’ person, one who embodies vertical expertise. The T-shaped individual, on the other hand, comes out of a college education that combines depth along with breadth or range. The vertical line of the T stands for depth in one’s direction of specialisation. The horizontal bar stands for breadth of knowledge in a number of fields and domains. A dedicated curriculum of general education, followed by disciplinary expertise goes a long way in preparing the kind of individual who can harness multiple intelligences.
Most leading universities in the U.S. have dedicated curricula of general education that require all students to experience the full gamut of disciplines, methods, and archives. For instance, Northwestern University structures its general education curriculum into three divisions — nature, culture, and data. Nature includes fields that contribute to the understanding of the natural or physical world, culture deals with different domains of human behaviour and creativity, while quantitative reasoning, statistical analysis, and computational modelling are clustered under data.

At Stanford, students have to take courses in eight broad categories: creative expression, aesthetic and interpretive inquiry, social inquiry, applied quantitative reasoning, scientific method and analysis, formal reasoning, ethical reasoning, and engaging diversity. The University of Virginia takes a similar approach, where students are required to take courses in non-Western perspectives in addition to the established divisions of knowledge in the humanities, social and natural sciences.

If disciplinary expertise — along with the attendant intelligences — must have close links to the goods or services produced by the corporation, its location within the world at large demands an assortment of other intelligences. Such an assortment can only be nourished by a range of disciplines, and crucially, by the horizontal stroke of the T. The worldly success of a corporation and its employees is not simply measurable through quantitative trends in the free market, but through the way they bring together a complex of intelligences, ranging from the mathematical to the personal.
Can An Intelligence Test Really Tell You How Smart You Are?

By Amanda Wilson | 06/03/2018

Determining whether a person is intelligent or not presents a complex scenario. Numerous intelligence tests have been taken as ultimate in determining this. Well, an IQ test is still not good enough to estimate the brain ability of a person. Which is confirmed by modern scientists. Therefore, you cannot rely on an IQ test to state whether someone is smart or not. It is must involve a consideration of many other aspects, as we are about to see here!

For instance, the iconic 35th President of the United States John F. Kennedy had an IQ of about 60. Mike Tyson despite having a low IQ was a great boxer. A perfect homework done performance at school doesn’t predict a successful future, just as a low IQ result doesn’t show how smart a person is. Other people like Paul Allen with a 160 -170 IQ, who ended up working at Microsoft and became billionaires, didn’t achieve this because of their IQ alone. Your level of emotional intelligence is more important now than your IQ level. Here are some things to consider:

Multiple Intelligences Theory

This theory was founded by Howard Gardner to help form communities of self-directed learners who are reflective, in order to pursue a deeper understanding inside and across disciplines and to enhance creative and critical thinking. Multiple Intelligence Theory suggests that every person
has at minimum eight areas of intelligence that work at different levels for each individual. These are: logical-mathematical, linguistic, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, musical, spatial, intra-personal and natural intelligence. However, natural intelligence was initially not contained in Gardner’s theory but became part of it in 1996 to include those who did well in the world of natural science. It means someone could lose their linguistic intelligence and yet be in a position to sing because we have other areas of intelligence to draw from. Though considered to have had a high IQ, Albert Einstein wasn’t successful in the world of physics because of that alone. In fact, researchers had to estimate his IQ score based on the body of work he wrote.

IQ and Job Performance

The relationship between IQ and job performance has received enormous support from those who value IQ tests. However, looking at the results closely paint a different picture. Earlier studies in the 1970s were inconsistent in matching IQ with job performance. Whereas recent studies have not been able to prove the relationship between job performance and IQ, especially where the complexity of the job increases. Realistically, it is not certain whether job performance is the primary measure of IQ. Therefore, caution should be exercised when using the IQ test’s validity to assess potential job performance. Muhammad Ali, the boxing great, didn’t even qualify for a high school diploma but was rather given a certificate of attendance. Despite that, he had a very successful boxing career and his intelligence in that area was not based on IQ.

Intelligence and Genetics

The question of intelligence has attracted many definitions, such as: the ability to extract meaning from life encounters and adapt to environments as they change. Important elements include the ability to plan, reason, solve issues, comprehend difficult matters and think abstractly. Research on how genes impact on intelligence has widely been done, mainly focusing on the differences and similarities in IQ inside families for twins and adopted children. Some studies have established a correlation between genetics and the varying intelligence between individuals. Looking at the various studies, it appears that genes do contribute to the intelligence quotient measure but that they have a very small influence on a person’s overall intelligence. Therefore, intelligence is not entirely determined by genetics. On the other hand a person’s environment — living conditions, surroundings, education, parenting and nutrition — is a significant factor of their potential intelligence level.
Smart People Also Act Stupid

You can be smart and still do stupid things. Intelligent individuals sometimes make dumb mistakes, particularly on matters that need common sense. Simple matters can get swallowed up in the intelligent mind of a smart person. Overconfidence is another problem. Smart people may not realise when they need help. They also tend to push other people very hard, expecting the same level of performance from them as they are able to produce. But worst of all, they can be terrible at accepting their own mistakes and feel that you are attacking them when you try and address their faults. Quite typically, smart people can lack emotional intelligence which can at times render them unproductive. When they fail, they can easily give up. This is because they are used to things coming quickly and relatively effortlessly to them, and when they don’t they simply don’t have the grit to put in the hard work and endure.

Conclusion

To measure intelligence only through IQ is unreliable and frankly overrated. There are different types of intelligent people out there, many who have practical intelligence as opposed to IQ-based criteria. Even with high intelligence, hard work is important. Scoring a low IQ doesn’t mean you are doomed, neither is it a guarantee for success. There are always other factors that can and do determine intelligence. IQ primarily measures a narrow aspect of your abilities; testing your abstract thinking and reasoning. But there are many types of intelligence and productive people successfully combine these with hard work to achieve success.
No One Is Just An Auditory, Kinesthetic, or Visual Learner; Best Teaching Practices

Teaching to one learning style handicaps the learner from fully comprehending their experience because no one is a single learning style.

All coaches are familiar with learning modalities—kinesthetic, auditory, and visual—and it is common practice to gear a lesson towards the dominant modality of the student. If you were trying to teach a more efficient catch in freestyle, you would describe the catch to the auditory learner, demonstrate it to the visual learner, and manually manipulate the arm of the kinesthetic swimmer. It is quite unfortunate that this is a very common approach to teaching an athlete, because this approach is wrong. In fact, this approach will handicap a swimmer’s learning abilities in the future.

Modern brain-based research indicates that everyone possesses the abilities to learn kinesthetically, auditorily, and visually, and that our modalities exist together on a
continuum. We may identify a swimmer as dominantly kinesthetic, but that doesn’t mean that they are only a kinesthetic learner or that audio and visual won’t work as well.

Take a swimmer that is 75% kinesthetic, 15% visual, and 10% auditory. When you teach them solely through a kinesthetic process, you only reaching 75% of their learning capacity. Teaching them through all three modalities not only reaches 100% of their learning capacity, but it reaches the dominantly auditory and visual learners too. In essence, teaching to all modalities kills two birds with one gigantic bazooka.

Learning strengths change based on experiences, needs, and age. We have all heard of critical windows; they exist based on our physiological development. Dr. Maria Montessori’s early discoveries of teaching windows drove her creation of the Montessori Method. She argued that ages 0-6 were critical windows for developing language, while 6-12 were windows for moral, social and mental independence.

These theories were written in the early 1900’s and still hold true to today’s research; they support the argument that learning strengths change along with our physiological development. If we only use one way to connect with the athlete, we are prohibiting their other strengths from developing. This could handicap future athletic development during future critical windows.

And here is the kicker: there are more than 3 learning modalities.

Dr. Howard Gardner, professor of education at Harvard University, argues that we have the capacity to learn through at least 8 different methods he identifies as Multiple Intelligences:

- **Verbal / Linguistic** – To think in words and to use language to express and understand complex meanings. Sensitivity to the meaning and order of words, their sounds, rhythms, and inflections. This athlete needs things explained to them specifically and concisely.
- **Logical / Mathematical** – To think of cause and effect and to understand relationships among actions, objects, or ideas. To be able to calculate, quantify, and perform complex mathematical or logical operations. This athlete needs to understand the numbers behind their skills, sets and practices as well as their splits and how they align with their goals.
- **Musical** – To think in sounds, rhythms, melodies, and rhymes. This athlete needs to hear the sounds associated with their technique, the sounds of their skills, and will understand their lesson best through rhymes and rhythms.
- **Bodily / Kinesthetic** – To think in movements and to use the body in skilled and complicated ways. This athlete needs to feel the physical sense of timing and coordination.
- **Naturalist** – To understand the natural world and scientific systems. This athlete needs to know the science behind what they do and feel a connection with the aquatic and scientific world.
- **Interpersonal** – To think and understand another person, to have empathy. This includes interacting effectively with one or more people among family, friends, or working relationships. This athlete must connect emotionally with a group or individual to enable
them to learn most efficiently. They need to know how their coach and teammates tick and feel emotionally safe within their community.

- **Intrapersonal** – To think about and understand one’s self. To be aware of one’s strengths and weaknesses. To reflect on and monitor one’s thoughts and feelings. This athlete needs their coach to allow them to learn and process information independently.

- **Spatial/Visual** – To think in pictures and to perceive the visual world accurately. To think in three dimensions and to transform one’s perceptions. To work with objects. This athlete needs a coach who shows them videos and diagrams in order to learn. They may need to manipulate an object in order to listen most effectively.

**What does this all mean?**

It means that no one is an auditory, kinesthetic, or visual learner. Our athlete’s brains more closely resemble a rainbow-colored lava lamp: they are a beautiful blend of continual changing learning strengths. The next time you are teaching a lesson to your athlete(s), ask yourself, “am I reaching all their intelligences?” Chances are you aren’t, and it isn’t because you aren’t teaching to their strength; it’s because you aren’t teaching to their full capacity. Instead of teaching your lesson over and over, teach it in a variety of ways to reach all of your athletes’ diverse learning abilities. Teach to their full and future capacities.
Which of the 8 kinds of intelligence does your child have?

Katie Novak  | May 25 2018

When my oldest son, Torin, was born, I had an idea of when he should take his first steps, say his first words, and identify the diggers in My Big Truck book. Every time he did not meet a milestone, I worried. Why wasn’t he pulling himself up yet? When would he say his first word? How does he not know what an excavator is?

This same child really understands people. When I was watching Steel Magnolias with a box of tissues, he crawled on my lap and rubbed my back. Strangers fell in love with him at the grocery store with his huge gummy smile, and at play dates other children naturally gravitated toward him, pushing action heroes into his hands as he smiled and babbled.

What was a mother to do? My answer: Take a deep breath and a warm bath. All our kids have amazing strengths, and when we acknowledge them, we realize that all our kids will be okay.

Now that I’m a mom of four little ones and an educator, I embrace the concept of “variability” and so I’m able to let go of those pesky comparisons and celebrate all my kids and their strengths.

The universal truth is that all of our kids have a unique mix of strengths and weaknesses from the time they are babies. That magical combination, and their own individual timeline, is what makes them who they are. That is variability, and it’s a beautiful thing.

Milestones were defined for the “average” toddler—someone who does not exist. All of our kids have strengths and are wildly intelligent in different ways. Certainly, they may need support to build some skills as they have weaknesses (as we all do!), but it’s a lot easier to build skills when strengths are applied to that journey.

One way to appreciate the concept of variability is to understand the theory of multiple intelligences. Dr. Howard Gardner, a renowned professor at Harvard University, proposed eight different types of intelligences because “intelligence” is far too limiting a concept.
When we realize all the different types of strengths our kids have, it can help us to celebrate our kids and push the milestones to the back of our minds.

Instead of worrying about what our kids can’t do (which is so tempting!), it’s important to celebrate how they are incredibly smart in their own ways! You may have a child, for example, who struggles to meet a walking milestone, but is incredibly empathetic and is able to connect with people. Being “people smart” is a talent that should continue to be fostered and valued, because it’s a skill that will take them far.

So, what are the eight intelligences?

1. Linguistic and verbal intelligence (good with words)

These babies talk early, experiment with language by babbling and making up songs and stories, and are early readers. They love telling stories and listening to stories read to them!

As an example, my husband’s name is Lon. When my daughter, Aylin, was less than a year old, she saw a lawnmower and bounced around screaming, “Daddy mower, daddy mower.” She continues to have a way with words and at 6 years old is experimenting with sarcasm (lucky me).

2. Logical intelligence (good at math and solving logic problems)

Maybe your little one isn’t talking yet, but he’s a phenom at puzzles, putting together huge block structures, and figuring out how to get his paci from on top of the refrigerator. If this is true, you’re probably raising a future engineer who will always be able to use that intelligence to think critically and solve problems.

3. Spatial intelligence (good with pictures)

Do you have a little artist on your hands? These little ones love drawing and they recognize where they’ve been when you’re on a walk (“That’s the blue house we saw with the little squirrel yesterday!”). These pumpkins also love looking at picture books and family photos.

4. Body and movement intelligence (good at sports and movement)

My son Brecon was an early walker (he walked at 9 months, and his twin sister didn’t get off her bottom until 15 months!), rode a bike without training wheels at two, and has a running gait like a marathon star. His balance is exceptional, and he picks up sports easily. You may have a child who isn’t a reader yet, but he’s a star at Lil’ Kickers Soccer. Good for him!

5. Musical intelligence (good at music and rhythm)

Is your little lady a star in your music together class? Does she make instruments out of pots and pans and love to sing songs in the bathtub? If so, she’s probably a budding Mozart with a gift for music. Foster that as you’re working on the skills that may not come as easily!
6. Interpersonal intelligence (good with people and communication)

When I was little, my mom used to say that I could talk a dog off a meat wagon. These kids are just good with people. They are outgoing, can converse with strangers, and are probably never upset when you drop them off at daycare because they have so many friends to play with. They are our charmers!

7. Intrapersonal intelligence (self-smart)

Some kids are great at reading their own emotions and thinking deeply about them. They are reflective and introspective and always know when they are sad, mad or embarrassed and why. While many of us work to help our kids understand their feelings, some kids are naturally aware.

8. Naturalist intelligence (nature smart)

Does your little one stop to look at bugs? Love playing in the mud? Is she always pointing out the window to go outside? If so, she probably has a strong naturalist intelligence and loves to garden, hike and roll in the leaves.

So tonight, watch your little one play and consider his or her strengths. Know that these strengths will allow him or her to overcome obstacles and be successful later in life.
Democracy did not solve everything

Sarah Setlaelo | 2018-06-17

One of the prevailing anthems of the US civil rights movement – To be young, gifted and black – was written in 1969 by Nina Simone and Weldon Irvine. They were part of a formidable movement of black intelligentsia, protesting against racism and segregation, who harnessed their self-determination to influence the direction of US society. To echo the innate force commanded by young people, South Africa also witnessed a concerted uprising by black youngsters in 1976. On two separate continents, black people actively rejected regimes that tried to tell them they were not good enough.

Being young is probably the most difficult life phase because of its foundational and formative nature. Considering the nature versus nurture debate, the former states that the disposition and future wellbeing of children is genetically determined, while the latter puts more weight on environmental factors. Recent research advocates that a combination of both in varying degrees creates the foundation of a child’s future.

Nevertheless, many stories about the triumph of the human spirit have shown how some children beat both genetic and environmental odds to reach self-actualisation. Despite their adverse circumstances, these high-achieving young people illustrate that it is not where you come from but where you are going that matters.
The so-called gifted children have the odds in their favour as their impressive talents often solicit support and sponsorship from those around them. To justify the resources invested in them, words such as ‘merit’ and ‘prodigy’ are associated with them. The adults around them believe that investment in them will ultimately yield dividends for society.

Where does that leave the average child in terms of IQ or aptitude? I have a somewhat philosophical view of the conundrum of the “gifted” versus the “average”. It is by no mistake that children are born with varying aptitudes and acumen. Each has a default disposition that is an essential ingredient to the matrix of life. My opinion is supported by one psychological theory I resonate with – the theory of multiple intelligence.

Personal development practitioners have made it their cause to spread the word that all individuals are gifted, albeit in various categories. To echo that sentiment, the eight intelligences as identified by Howard Gardner are musical-rhythmic, visual-spatial, verbal-linguistic, logical-mathematical, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalistic. Plus one more he recently recognised – existential and moral intelligence.

The idea behind specifying these talents is not to confine people to a particular category, but rather to help them find their place in the world. Many people have a collection of these talents, making them even more versatile. This theory serves to show that the general labelling of talent as being confined to IQ, academic disciplines or job specification is a disempowering approach that discriminates against the majority of any population.

Looking at a practical application of diverse forms of intelligence, one would realise that the world of work does in fact employ people across the intelligences or has gaps in the market for entrepreneurial products and services issuing from them. The challenge, however, is when people are doing or aspiring to do work that does not complement their inherent disposition.

In an ideal society, children would be taught to identify the thing that they do the best and love the most, get exposure to its life application, learn, cultivate and master it and then follow a career path related to it.

They would be encouraged to find the kind of job referred to by Mark Twain when he said: “Choose a job that you love and you will never have to work a day in your life.”

The San Franciscan Silicon Valley model, built around those gifted in computers by way of their logical-mathematical abilities, is an outcomes-based system that employs youngsters and enables their contribution to the economy. There are innovation hubs in place, where venture capitalists facilitate technological breakthroughs by paying for living costs, resources, infrastructure, product development and trial runs for these young people.

However, if government’s intent is to channel youngsters exclusively towards the science, technology, engineering and commercial fields because they are considered to be essential for
economic growth, then it is being set up for a figurative Bantu education system – the foreign language in this case not being Afrikaans, but rather the language of capitalism.

The Black Consciousness Movement, founded by young black intellectuals in the 1960s, viewed psychological emancipation as the precursor to physical transformation. After witnessing the effects of the soul-sucking parasite of apartheid, these young people reaffirmed their personal and collective identity and rebelled against what stifled their souls. The movement’s contribution to the 1976 Soweto uprisings was akin to the kindling required to start a fire.

Fast forward 42 years. We are faced with the uncomfortable truth that the democracy that was so hard fought for was not, in fact, a solve-all. Under such unfavourable conditions, can we equate anything as revolutionary as Black Consciousness by and for the youth? We can perhaps give the #FeesMustFall campaign an honorary mention. But have today’s young black people cultivated the kind of self-respect, pride and dignity that warrant deference from their white counterparts, endorsement from their elders, sponsorship from civil society, inspiration from one another and accountability from government?

To be young is already a social movement by category that has the power to influence national agendas. Add to that a proactive and prolific development of gifts, talents and skills that breed self-determination. Fuel it all with a Black Consciousness that Pan-African philosopher Molefi Asante has reframed into an ideology that is not based on race or colour. Its purpose, according to him, is “… to express the most progressive political, cultural and ethical interests that, in a racist society … [are] for human liberation and thus against all forms of oppression”.
Some folks are so proud of their child’s intelligence that they brag about it to the world. Emblazoned on the bumper of their SUV is the message: "My kid’s an honor roll student," to be replaced years later with a college decal from an elite university.

Since being smart is such a source of pride in our culture, let’s look at what we mean by “intelligence.”

Years ago, intelligence was seen as a single entity, referred to as the “g” factor: “g” for general intelligence.

Kids who were in front of the line when God handed out brains scored high on IQ tests and scholastic exams. There was every expectation that these kids would grow up to be successful in life or, in the case of a girl, marry a “successful man.”

For those unlucky kids who were not “college material,” boys would learn a trade or use their muscle power to make their way in the world. Girls would become secretaries and/or learn the feminine wiles to “get a man” to take care of her.

As the field of psychology became more sophisticated, we became aware that it was simplistic to think of intelligence purely as a “given factor” while not taking into account other contributors, such as great parenting, excellent educational resources, good mental
and physical health, high motivation, sufficient self-confidence, being able to sit still, focus, concentrate and be free from emotional distress.

In addition, the ability to reflect on what you were taught was important. When we do so, we don’t let what was taught just wash over our bodies, touching only the surface. Rather, we consciously think about what we’ve learned, reflecting on what was said, searching for meaning and understanding. We give ourselves time to consider, contemplate, and immerse ourselves in the subject, becoming more informed and familiar with it.

The field of psychology now recognizes that there are different types of intelligence; some are rewarded in school, others ignored. These types are independent of one another. For example, you can be highly skilled at reading and writing, yet have incredibly weak spatial and social skills. Of course, the reverse is also true.

As our culture has become more diverse, we’ve become aware that other cultures have developed different assumptions about smartness. Some cultures put much more importance on effort and work ethic than do many Americans. Japanese parents would be ashamed to admit what some American parents brag about: “my kid’s so bright that he gets A’s without even cracking open a textbook.”

I hope that parents can appreciate the concept of “multiple intelligence,” helping their kids (and themselves) develop their minds in intriguing ways.

To assist in this journey, Dr. Howard Gardner, a leading developmental psychologist has identified these eight distinct types of intelligence:

1. linguistic (ability to use language well)
2. logical (capacity to understand logic and reasoning)
3. spatial (understanding spaces and spatial layouts)
4. musical (capacity to create and relate to musical patterns)
5. bodily kinesthetic (movement and athleticism)
6. understanding other people (common sense, social smarts)
7. understanding oneself (personal and emotional intelligence)
8. understanding the natural world (nature, animals, plants)

Which one(s) do you feel you are smartest in?  
Which one(s) would you like to further develop?  
Which one(s) do you recognize in your kids?
Which one(s) do you ignore in your kids?

In most schools and homes, it's only the first two forms of intelligence that are truly appreciated. I look forward to the day when I see a bumper sticker that lets the world know: "My kid has a great knack for understanding people" or "My child is in love with nature."
This article is about the multiple intelligence theory (MI), and the reason I write about it is simple. It’s because I am convinced that by knowing about MI and identifying your primary intelligence, you can discover your full potential and significantly improve your happiness. By being connected to the most effective path to your own realization, you can better and more effectively focus your attention and energies. You can learn, you can grow, and you can accomplish more overall. You can become a fulfilled individual.

**Understanding MI Theory**

[Dr. Howard Gardner](https://www.forsbes.com), Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education at Harvard University, developed this valuable theory based on his cognitive research. Early on, he concluded that there isn't just one kind of intelligence, but several. Through research, he then confirmed what most of us already knew: Different people learn in different ways. He saw — and was able to demonstrate — that people often learn, remember and even understand in radically different modes, or intelligences.
He identified eight different types:

- **Linguistic**: Uses words effectively, finding the right ones to express him/herself. Has highly developed auditory skills and often thinks in words, rather than impressions or concepts.

- **Logical-Mathematical**: Quantifies things, makes hypotheses and tests them. Thinks conceptually and abstractly and is able to see and explore patterns and relationships.

- **Musical**: Shows sensitivity to rhythm, sound and timbre.

- **Visual-Spatial**: Thinks in terms of physical space. Sees the world in 3D.

- **Bodily-Kinesthetic**: Has a keen sense of body awareness. Likes movement, touch and making things.

- **Interpersonal**: Understands and interacts well with others. Senses people’s feelings and motives.

- **Intrapersonal**: Understands his or her own needs, wants and goals. Stays in tune with inner feelings and motivations.

- **Naturalist**: Understands living things. In touch with nature.

Throughout history, we have generally thought of intelligent people as those who have mathematical skills or whose brains are good at logic and linear thinking. However, if we limit our consideration of intelligence to this traditional way of thinking, we ignore large segments of the population who are just as smart but in different ways.

The existence of MI is what creates such a huge diversity in the human makeup. And, it is to the great benefit of humanity. Can you imagine a world of mathematical geniuses in which no one had the ability to create beautiful music or see nature in an intimate or connected way? Or, more personally, an individual with only one thing he or she did exceptionally well, to the exclusion of any other ability?

Each individual has his or her own particular mix of MI, ranging in a kind of reverse-bell-curve fashion, from those having a lot of one intelligence on one extreme, to those having perhaps none of it on the other.

So, knowing that there are eight different forms of intelligence (and that the usual measures of intelligence don’t tell the whole story), what can we do to become more effective and fulfilled individuals?

**Be aware of your dominant intelligence.**

Unless you are extremely stubborn and want to pursue something even without aptitude for it, or because of some unusual circumstance, I believe you need to play to your strength. You might
long to be a concert pianist, but if you don’t have musical ability, it's better to seek competency in a field in which you have a better chance of fulfillment.

But, for some people, this is very hard to do. They have difficulty claiming their dominant intelligence and giving a lesser role to their weaker intelligences. For example, this is common in women who don’t want to admit that they would excel in a male-dominated field, like math or science.

If this sounds like you, you shouldn’t beat yourself up over it. Our brains are very skilled at justifying actions or inactions, especially when dealing with them involves added work or effort. And no one said pursuing your full potential was easy.

The bottom line is that you must critically assess yourself, perhaps with the assistance of professionals, to determine exactly what you're good at. What is your dominant intelligence?

Engage and apply your dominant intelligence.

Having determined what your dominant intelligence is and what you are potentially good at, you have to apply it. This is called execution.

Like any other endeavor requiring execution, you need to utilize your dominant intelligence in service to your goals and aspirations. As one bright guy or gal once said, "A goal without a plan is just a pipe-dream." You were endowed with a dominant intelligence that can be a wonderful tool in creating the life you dream of, but you have to use it. And, you can’t just use it any old way. You need to think it through logically and methodically, again, perhaps with the assistance of a knowledgeable third party, such as a vocational counselor, coach or advisor.

Then you must come up with and begin implementation of a doable plan.

Check yourself.

As your plan unfolds, you must constantly seek feedback and validation, both from yourself and from others you trust. With the pressures and vicissitudes of our busy life, it’s easy to get off track.

Stay on track by monitoring and measuring yourself against your plan. Establish as many metrics as possible so that you have some objective standards by which to gauge your progress. Check in with yourself on a regular basis and adjust your plan in accord with developments. Engage your emotional intelligence, too.

As for the non-dominant or lesser intelligences, you certainly don’t want to abandon them entirely. Feel free to engage in related activities all you want. Just recognize that your strength lies elsewhere and that one of your lesser intelligences will probably not bring you as much satisfaction and fulfillment as your dominant one.
Philosophy is actually useful -- and may be the best thing you can teach children before they grow up.

Today, our children are growing up in a world with complex moral situations and an overload of conflicting information. They (and we) are constantly being presented with wildly divergent views on what is real, what we can know, and what we should do.

We can give our kids answers based on our faith and personal convictions, but especially when our children reach adolescence, arguments from faith or authority (“because it’s what the Church teaches ...” “because it’s the right thing to do ...” etc.) tend to lose their effectiveness. Young people want to think things through for themselves, and understand them in greater depth. They want to know the why and the how.

How can we help our teens navigate the difficult and sometimes dangerous waters of their time?

Fortunately, there’s a discipline that deals with the big questions about existence, ethics, and how to think properly (among other things) — it’s called philosophy, or “the love of wisdom” (the word’s etymological meaning). While not all philosophy is good, there are
many great thinkers from the recent and distant pasts who continue to guide new
generations, teaching us to use our heads “for more than a hat rack.”

Here are some of the benefits teens can get from philosophy:

1. It will teach them how to think.
2. It will help them ask and answer the big questions.
3. They will learn how to take a critical look at life, allowing them to become more
discerning and not “swallow” every idea fed to them.
4. They will learn to live reflectively, ask questions, question themselves, and enter
into dialogue with others.
5. They will develop 4 of the 8 Multiple Intelligences identified by Howard Gardner:
   a. Verbal-Linguistic: They will express themselves better using words more
effectively.
   b. Logical-Mathematical: They will learn how to think conceptually,
      abstractly, and solve problems through reasoning, calculating, seeing and
      exploring patterns and relationships, and dealing with details.
   c. Intrapersonal: They will develop an understanding of their own interests
      and goals, strengths and weaknesses, and their inner feelings, etc.
   d. Interpersonal: They will gain understanding regarding interacting with
      others and learn how to empathize.
6. They will more easily break away from prejudices or established belief systems
   that do not conform to the truth, and more easily be able identify fallacies and
   manipulation.
7. They will become accustomed to investing time in observing things, and get
   better at recognizing the various elements of a situation and how they’re
   interconnected.
8. They will become more committed citizens who care about what’s happening
   around them and strive to find better solutions to the problems they face.
9. They will be more inclined to strive in pursuit of the truth, knowing it’s worth the
   effort.
10. They will embrace that innate curiosity characteristic of children and orient it
    toward valuable rather than superficial knowledge.
11. They will cultivate wonder and emphasize what is admirable in the world.
12. They will safeguard the value of love, friendship, sincerity, loyalty, prudence,
    perseverance, and generosity.
13. They will become more attentive to people around them, remembering that
    “Nothing human is alien to me.” (Terence, c. 195/185–c. 159? BC)
14. They will develop the resources needed to handle both success and failure, or
    what is to say, to live life.
15. They will establish the connections that exist between different forms of knowledge such as intuition and deduction.

Sounds nice, but what’s the first step?

Of course, the big question is, “Where do I start?” If your children are in a Great Books-based or classically-oriented curriculum (at a private school or in a homeschooling program), they will be taught philosophy as a matter of course. Some European countries still include philosophy in the standard curriculum at high schools. However, the majority of schools in the United States, for example, don’t touch actual philosophy with a 10-foot pole, beyond some references or brief readings in courses on history or literature. So, if your kids aren’t getting any solid exposure to philosophy, what can you do?

First of all: whatever you do, don’t just go to the Philosophy section of your nearest brick-and-mortar or online bookstore, unless you know what you’re looking for. Most retailers lump all sorts of things together in that section, from real philosophy, good and bad (Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, etc.), to New Age pseudo-metaphysical fanciful mush. Even if you pick a real philosophy book, not all philosophy is for beginners; starting someone with Spinoza, for example, is an almost guaranteed way to turn them off to philosophy for the rest of their life.

Start with a good book aimed at beginners. That could be through semi-fictional literature, such as Sophie’s World (an introduction to philosophy in the form of an imaginative novel), or through something a little more formal, like Philosophy 101 by Socrates, by Peter Kreeft. That will, one hopes, open something of an appetite and introduce the young reader to basic philosophical principles.

From there, they can embark upon the adventure of reading some works by the philosophers themselves, such as Plato’s Apology or Republic (some older translations are available for free online). Those more interested in science could be nourished by books like Modern Physics and Ancient Faith, by Stephen Barr, which uses a philosophical approach to show the compatibility of contemporary science and Christian faith. Those more interested in religion could enjoy St. Augustine’s eternally relevant Confessions (available for free and for pay in multiple editions), which combine philosophy, theology, and intimate autobiography.

Every teen is different, and some will be more open to and interested in philosophy than others. The most important thing is to help them start to formulate the “big questions” and point them towards the great thinkers who can help them discover the answers, using the gift of the intellect that God has given them, enlightened by faith.
Iberostar Hotels & Resorts has launched a new entertainment program for children and teenagers: Star Camp. Based on a format that aims to combine entertainment and values, the new program offers more than 140 activities designed to encourage growth and development based on values that also form part of the chain's philosophy: cooperation, empathy, healthy habits, development of technological awareness, value of diversity and environmental care.

With an appearance that aims to be reminiscent of the Scout movement, this program is rooted in sound pedagogical principles and applies Howard Gardner’s Theory of Multiple Intelligences, which includes a range of intelligences (linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, naturalistic, bodily-kinesthetic and spatial) for the correct development of the human being.

The Star Camp kids’ program includes more than 140 activities divided into 12 categories: physical leisure activities; precision and accuracy activities; team sports; social events; group challenges; activities related to the surroundings; artistic expression; creative handicrafts; board games, learning activities; polyvalent activities and shows; scientific activities and technology-based activities.

Minors are grouped by ages and work on the intelligences and values in ways tailored to meet their abilities and interests. The Monkeys group targets children aged between 4 and
7 years; **Dolphins** is for those between ages 8 and 12; while 13 to 17-year-olds are included in the **Eagles** group.

With these new activities, the ‘stars’ of the new Star Camp will be able to hone in on their culinary skills with a cooking program; discover their artistic side by forming teams to recreate works of art; put their senses to the test, just like in the trendiest restaurants, guessing the ingredients in the dishes featured in the **Sensory Menu**; film their own short movie; become journalists or publicists for the day or star in their own impromptu video clip; work with clay to bring out the artist in them; accept a **Mission (im)possible**, crossing an obstacle course while blindfolded with only their fellow team members for help; take an eco-friendly hike; dream up and create a robot; or figure out how to get out of a **Roomscape**.

Additionally, the educational initiatives for children under the Star Camp program include one day a week dedicated entirely to the oceans. This day includes activities, such as hunting for microplastics on the beach or handicap sessions using recycled materials. Throughout the day, the fun and games provide an opportunity to learn about the environment through play, while boosting the company’s commitment to sustainability.

On arrival at the Star Camp, each child will receive a kit containing equipment. Once they have finished their activities, the younger children in the Monkeys and Dolphins groups will stamp the ‘countries’ they have visited (identifying the various intelligences or aptitudes) on their very own passport, while the older children in the Eagles group will receive colored bracelets for the various tasks (and intelligences) they complete. To raise group awareness and encourage teamwork, Iberostar has also created exclusive and personalized spaces for the Monkeys, Dolphins and Eagles groups, providing each child with a venue to meet up and have fun with young people of their own age.

The new children’s activity program will be offered at all Iberostar hotels starting this summer.
Expanding the Parameters of Learning beyond Fixed Notions

SAMHITA K | 21/07/2018

Individuals have different potentials and standardized markers cannot determine their talents. We need a system of education that acknowledges and builds on the diverse ways in which individuals are gifted.

Learning is a lifelong. One process must not only strive to learn but to learn how to learn better and achieve optimal results. Psychologists are all too familiar with the concept of learning.

They acknowledge that each learner has unique learning styles and mannerisms. In order for the learning curve to progress, the individual must use scientifically-tested learning strategies, which have proven, time after time, to enhance this profound process of learning and acquiring knowledge. Psychologists believe with certitude that any learning refers to the relatively permanent change in behavior potentiality, brought about by experience.
Learning is something intimate and personal. Indeed, there exist individual differences in learning. “Social engineering” is a relevant concept in this context. Learners or pupils need to be conditioned and socially engineered during the process of gaining expertise in a field of knowledge. Many a time, social interaction, peer group facilitation and team dynamics encompass a vital aspect of the learning process.

In the late 19th century, as psychology began to flourish, a heavy onus was placed upon the accumulation of quantitative “hard” data about human behavior. The “classical” view of human intelligence focused merely on psychometric testing. A revolutionary step was taken by psychologist Howard Gardner who propounded the existence of eight different types of intelligences.

These intelligences are linguistic intelligence, logico-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, musical intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence and naturalistic intelligence. Gardner at a later stage added one more type of intelligence termed existential intelligence. An individual may possess one or more of these intelligences to a major extent.

Linguistic intelligence describes the ability to perceive or generate spoken or written language. It is exemplified by poets, writers and journalists. Logical/mathematical intelligence involves the using and appreciating numerical, causal, abstract or logical relations. It is exemplified by mathematicians, statisticians, engineers and scientists. Spatial intelligence refers to the ability to perceive visual or spatial information (large-scale or more local), to transform and modify this information, and to recreate visual images even without reference to an original physical stimulus. Spatial intelligence is employed in visual art, drafting, navigation and cartography, amongst other things. Musical intelligence refers to the ability to create, communicate and understand meaning made out of sound. It can be seen in musicians and music critics but also outside the musical sphere (for example, auto mechanics and cardiologists make diagnoses based on careful listening to patterns of sound). Bodily kinesthetic intelligence involves controlling all or part of one’s body to solve problems or fashion products. It can be seen, for instance, in athletics, dance and hiking. Interpersonal intelligence involves the capacity to recognize and make distinctions among the feelings, beliefs and intentions of other people. This type of intelligence enables people like Martin Luther King and Mao Zedong to communicate with others and perform effectively. Intrapersonal intelligence refers to the ability to form a mental model of oneself and to draw on the model to make decisions about the viable courses of action. Among the core operations are the capacity to distinguish one’s feelings and to anticipate reactions to future courses of action. Naturalistic intelligence involves the ability to understand and work effectively in the natural world. It is exemplified in biologists, zoologists, naturalists, geologists, etc. Existential intelligence refers to the ability to be sensitive to, or have the capacity for conceptualizing or tackling deeper or larger questions about human existence, like the meaning of life, why we are born, why we die, what consciousness is, etc. People high on existential intelligence can be called cosmic smart, wondering smart, spiritually smart or metaphysically intelligent. Gardner offers the following definition: Individuals who exhibit the proclivity to pose and ponder questions about life, death, and ultimate realities.
With the discovery of various types of intelligences, the focus shifted from attaching importance to I.Q testing to a multidimensional perspective on human potential.

Taking into consideration the different types of intelligences, the learner may be asked to choose to pursue what he/she is best at. The pupil’s learning style then needs to be assessed. There are seven different types of learning styles, which are intimately linked to the nine different types of intelligences. The learning styles include visual (spatial) learning style, aural (auditory-musical) learning style, verbal (linguistic) learning style, physical (kinesthetic) learning style, logical (mathematical) learning style, social (interpersonal) learning style and solitary (intrapersonal) learning style.

The learner with visual learning style prefers to learn using pictures, images and spatial comprehension. In the aural learning style, the pupil prefers using sound and music whereas in the verbal learning style, he/she prefers using words, both in speech and writing. In the physical learning style, the learner likes to use his/her body, hands and tactile sensation. In the logical learning style, the individual enjoys using logic, reasoning and systems. The individual who prefers the social learning style desires to learn in groups or with others whereas individuals inclined towards solitary learning style like to work alone, unperturbed, using self-study and reflection. It is to be noted that a learner may be comfortable using one or a combination of learning styles.

Depending on cultural differences, a learner in one culture may prefer to learn in an entirely different manner when compared to one in another culture. If the learner in an Asian country adopts and adapts to the way of learning followed in a European context, or adopts an amalgamation of modes of learning from different continents or countries, it will not only widen his/her perspective but will provide him/her hands-on experience and a global frame of mind. Such pluralism and diversity creates an opportunity with potentially positive outcomes.

Diversity in the learner’s process of accumulating knowledge can result in increased achievement and productivity, creative problem solving, growth in cognitive and moral reasoning, increased perspective-taking ability, improved relationships and general sophistication in social interaction.

Learners may choose to employ a variety of methods of learning such as using charts, maps, diagrams, mind maps, narrating the material learned to a peer, teaching other kids, reflecting on the syllabus covered, role plays, taking notes from various sources of media, watching videos, listening to audio recordings, reading magazines, newspapers, reading relevant books of different genres like non-fiction, fiction, reference books and so on.

One must keep in mind to recognize diversity and its value, build an inclusive, unifying identity, understand cognitive barriers, understand the dynamics of intergroup conflict, understand social engineering, create a cooperative space for learning, teach conflict resolution procedures and teach civic values.

Thus, one must embrace individual differences in learning, while valuing diversity, multicultural education and human relations.
VI

Non-English Press
Uma nova escola infantil

A ideia de criar uma escola de educação infantil "tradicional" passou longe do projeto de Vanessa Bercht Trombini e Vanessa Gomes Machado. Formadas em Educação Física e em Letras, elas estarão inaugurando, a partir das 18h desta sexta-feira, na rua Marquês do Pombal, Moinhos de Vento, em Porto Alegre, a Studio School, que promete inovar a educação de crianças de 6 meses a 6 anos de idade, para quem se destina. Trata-se de uma escola bilíngue de educação infantil, com um programa de sustentabilidade em que toda a infraestrutura e as atividades foram pensadas e baseadas na teoria das múltiplas inteligências, de Howard Gardner, que estimula a criança a partir dos seus próprios interesses e habilidades.

Uma escola bilíngue

O fato de ser bilíngue não significa que as crianças terão aulas específicas destinadas às línguas inglesa e portuguesa, mas que vivenciarão a rotina nos dois idiomas na mesma proporção e em todos os momentos. Com isso, desenvolverão as competências necessárias para usar as duas línguas em situações escolares e sociais.

Koch Advogados

Koch Advogados, de Porto Alegre, comemora, no dia 17 deste mês, os 60 anos, com uma recepção para 200 convidados, entre clientes e parceiros, no Leopoldina Juvenil. O evento contará com ambientes decorados de máquinas de escrever e livros, além de itens que remetem ao início e à evolução da empresa.

Unicred solidária

Unicred do Vale do Taquari, Vale do Rio Pardo e Produção acaba de lançar o programa DNA Solidário, para formar uma corrente do bem entre entidades e cooperados através de ações sociais, beneficiando inicialmente 15 de 9 cidades do Interior. Todos os cooperados podem escolher uma entidade e o modo de contribuir.
Vagas na Coca-Cola

A Coca-Cola Femsa Brasil seleciona 110 vagas, do nível fundamental, médio a técnico, para atuação em Porto Alegre; e oferece plano de saúde, entre outros benefícios. Os interessados devem enviar o currículo até o dia 15 deste mês. Todos os postos estão disponíveis para pessoas portadoras de necessidades especiais.

Distribuidora amplia seus espaços

A Fortpel, que há 15 anos atua no comércio e distribuição de materiais de higiene, limpeza, Office, EPI's e descartáveis, está de mudança para ocupar um espaço 50% maior do que o atual em Porto Alegre. Sua direção vai aproveitar a nova área, de quase 6 mil metros quadrados, para reestruturar e modernizar a empresa, que tem expectativa de fechar 2017 com uma expansão de 30% nas vendas. Aproveitando o bom momento, com um crescimento maior do que o esperado no primeiro semestre, também vai ampliar suas sedes em São Paulo e na Bahia. Atualmente, ela entrega, por mês, mais de 20 mil pedidos, em todo o território nacional, empregando direta e indiretamente mais de 900 profissionais.
Efecto Mariposa en el Bullying

Emma C. Fernández-Albert, M. Ed. | 29/08/2017

Emma c. Fernández, con motivo de la conferencia aniversario de plan lea, comparte un adelanto sobre los efectos del bullying

En la adolescencia, muchos jóvenes, con frecuencia, han escuchado la palabra bullying. De hecho, tanto el término bullying como acoso son parte del lenguaje común. Muchas veces ocurre algo que puedes etiquetar como acoso y, otras veces, como “relajo pesado” sin marcar distinción. ¿Cuántas veces te has sentido fastidiado por un comentario o chiste y fácilmente verbalizas “me estás bullyando”? El uso coloquial de estas palabras no significa que sabes lo que implican.

Cuando sepas distinguir entre un simple relajo o un momento de acoso o bullying, más posibilidades tienes de ser apoyo para quien pueda vivir esta situación. Estudios afirman que el 90% de los niños de cuarto a octavo grado han sido acosados en algún momento. Sin embargo, los jóvenes de sexto a octavo grado viven el bullying con una mayor frecuencia que los de primero y segundo de bachillerato, de acuerdo a Tonja R. Nansel, PhD y colaboradores del National Institute of Health de EUA.

El acoso escolar (bullying) es un término en inglés que describe un acto intimidatorio, físico y psicológico, iniciado y mantenido durante un tiempo considerable por parte de una o varias personas contra otra más débil. Dan Olweus, científico sueco, describe el bullying con tres criterios esenciales: conducta con intención agresiva y negativa; conducta repetida y desequilibrio de fuerzas.

Ahora bien, ¿dónde inicia el proceso ya sea de víctima o victimario? En la familia. La familia es la cuna de la inteligencia emocional de cada niño que crece pasando de la adolescencia hacia la adultez. ¿Qué tiene que ver la inteligencia con el bullying o acoso? El desarrollo de las neurociencias ha permitido que eruditos como el Dr. Howard Gardner y el Dr. Reuven Feuerstein, descubrieran que la inteligencia es modificable y que tiene diferentes vertientes como la inteligencia intrapersonal y la interpersonal. Gardner planteó una nueva definición de la
inteligencia: la capacidad de resolver problemas; la capacidad de generar nuevos problemas que resolver; la capacidad de crear un servicio o actividad, que nutra a la sociedad en la que se vive.

Ellos abrieron el camino a los expertos como el Dr. Peter Solevey y los psicólogos John D. Mayer y Daniel Goleman, para que enriquecieran el concepto de la inteligencia social de Edward Thorndike a la hoy conocida inteligencia emocional.

El sistema familiar es un contexto determinante en el desarrollo de la autoestima de sus miembros en todas sus etapas evolutivas. Una elevada autoestima implica que el niño/adolescente es capaz de protegerse ante determinados problemas emocionales y dificultades de comportamiento (Cava, Musitu & Murgui, 2006). Un estudio realizado en el 2005 por Estévez, Musitu y Ochoa, determinó que la existencia de una comunicación abierta con los padres está asociada positivamente con la autoestima escolar del hijo o la hija.

¿Ser capaz de hacer las cosas nos da autoestima, o es la autoestima la que nos hace capaces de hacer las cosas?

A ti adolescente: Si ves a un compañero amenazado por otro para que le dé merienda o le haga la tarea, puede estar experimentando bullying directo que incluye patadas, golpes y amenazas verbales. La coacción, que es ejercer un dominio y un sometimiento total de su voluntad, es otra forma de bullying.

A ti maestro: Tú estás en una posición de privilegio, pues puedes apoyar el entorno en el que ocurren los procesos de acoso escolar. Los estudios plantean que los educandos pueden asumir diferentes roles ante el acoso y el acosador: apoyo silente, asistentes, incentivan o pueden ser rescatistas.

Planteados por los autores de “El valor de escuchar” en beneficio de la comunicación fluida con sus hijos:

1. Escuche con mente abierta… esté preparado para escuchar y considerar todas las partes de un problema.
2. Deje de hacer lo que está haciendo, haga contacto visual e involúcrrese completamente. Dé a la otra persona toda su atención. Deje a un lado el correo electrónico, las llamadas telefónicas y otras distracciones potenciales.
3. Escuche objetivamente. Cuando inicie la conversación que sea con una actitud sin prejuicios.
4. Haga preguntas. Asegúrese de que realmente comprenda el significado detrás de lo que la persona está diciendo.
5. Evite la tentación de pensar acerca de lo que está por decir. En lugar de ello, preste atención a todo lo que la persona está diciendo antes de formular su respuesta.

Los padres y maestros pueden estar muy atentos y, aun así perder oportunidades de observar la realidad del bullying. Las familias y comunidad educativa pueden apoyarse en los adolescentes. Educarles les empodera como agentes de transformación. Así lo propone el Programa KiVa desarrollado en la universidad de Turku de Finlandia por las doctoras Christina Salmivalli y Elisa Poskipartia. El programa plantea que la prevención y el manejo del bullying debe incluir a los que rodean la situación para interactuar mejor con los que viven en ella evitándola o reduciendo su efecto.
Wie wir Aufgaben produktiv deuten

Michaela Brohm-Badry | 20 September 2017


"Er-folg" ist leicht, wenn das folgt, was man sich vorgestellt hat. Schwieriger ist es, erfolgreich zu scheitern. Doch die Biographien außergewöhnlich erfolgreicher Menschen von Einstein über Picasso bis hin zu Stravinsky oder Freud zeigen genau das: Wenn ihnen etwas missglückt, verschwenden sie ihre Zeit nicht mit jammern, Schuldzuweisungen oder gar aufgeben.

**Grit: Ich beende, was ich anfange**

Aktuell taucht diese Eigenschaft in der Forschung immer wieder unter der kernigen Bezeichnung „Grit“ auf, was so viel wie Schneid, Mut oder Mummm bedeutet, und meint, hartnäckig langfristige Ziele zu verfolgen. Menschen mit Grit sagen Sätze wie "Ich beende, was immer ich anfange", "Rückschläge entmutigen mich nicht. Ich gebe nicht leicht auf", "Ich bin fleißig", "Ich habe Rückschläge überwunden, um eine wichtige Herausforderung zu schaffen". Erfolgreicher, gesünder und wohlbefindlicher macht das.

Das Gegenteil von Grit liegt im sprunghaften Umherschweifen: "Neue Ideen und Projekte lenken mich manchmal von früheren ab", "Ich bin von einer bestimmten Idee oder einem Projekt für kurze Zeit begeistert, verliere aber später das Interesse", "Ich setze mir oft ein Ziel, entscheide aber später, ein anderes zu verfolgen", "Meine Interessen ändern sich von Jahr zu Jahr".


**Es ist möglich und wichtig**

Es geht dabei um die Fragen, ob Leichtigkeit die Motivation ruiniert, während Schwierigkeit sie stärkt, oder ob es genau umgekehrt ist: Leichtigkeit motiviert und Schwierigkeiten schwächen uns? Erledigen wir eine Aufgabe also lieber, wenn sie uns leicht, oder wenn sie uns schwer vorkommt? Räumen wir also lieber den Schreibtisch auf, statt den wichtigen Bericht zu schreiben? Unsere Interpretation in der jeweiligen Situation scheint das zu entscheiden. "möglich für mich/das kann ich" gedeutet werden, oder eben als

- "nicht meiner Zeit wert/nicht wichtig/etwas Besseres zu tun haben".

Schwieriges hingegen kann bedeuten, dass etwas
• "wichtig für mich" ist, oder dass etwas

• "für mich unmöglich" ist.

Es geht demnach um Leicht-als-Möglichkeit, Leicht-als-Trivialität, Schwierig-als-Wichtigkeit und Schwierig-als-Unmöglichkeit-Deutungen. Wer eine schwere Aufgabe als "unmöglich zu schaffen" interpretiert, nimmt sich direkt am Start die Energie. "Unmöglich" ist keine besonders prickelnde Schwierigkeitsstufe. Und wer eine leichte Aufgabe abschätzig als "nicht meiner Zeit wert", "nicht wichtig" oder "habe Besseres zu tun" deutet, wird sie gar nicht oder eben nicht besonders gut bearbeiten.

Alcuni pensano che il cambio di rotta della musica liturgica verso soluzioni inclusive per il pubblico sia dovuto alla partecipazione dei fedeli al rito attraverso il canto. Le cose non stanno proprio così – basti pensare all’importanza della musica corale nella liturgia già dalla fine del primo millennio, poi sfociata nel canto gregoriano. Insomma, il coro propone una dimensione musicale aperta, in grado di avvicinare il fedele al rito come gli affreschi e le vetrate che traducono in parabola iconografica le storie del cristianesimo.

Il coro è una pratica esecutiva comune a tutte le civiltà, dai tempi più remoti, cosicché la sua storia e le sue forme coincidono in gran parte con quelle della musica stessa. La chiesa ha rappresentato per almeno un millennio il luogo d’elezione per le scholae cantorum, ma la modernità ha messo sotto scacco questo primato e le stesse scuole diventano ormai luoghi dove sperimentare la pratica corale.

Il Coro di voci bianche del 48° circolo didattico di Napoli diretto dal Maestro Salvatore Murru offre l’occasione di entrare in contatto con una realtà che ha fatto della promozione della
musica e della sua potenza espressiva – come alta forma di crescita personale, sociale e umana – il suo principale obiettivo.

Quando, dove, come e perché nasce l’esperienza del coro?
Comincerò dal perché. Quella corale rappresenta un’importante esperienza a prescindere dal valore artistico/musicale. Gli studiosi confermano l’importanza che il canto corale rappresenta per la dimensione cognitiva, emotiva, affettivo-relazionale di ciascun individuo. In molti paesi occidentali l’attività corale è obbligatoria in ogni struttura scolastica, spesso con il risultato che ogni paesino ha la sua compagine. Qui da noi, solo da alcuni anni si è risvegliato, con una serie di azioni partite dal basso (spesso iniziative di singoli docenti, supportate da capi d’istituto lungimiranti), una rivalutazione dell’attività corale.

Questo è il caso del 48° circolo “Madre Claudia Russo”, nella periferia orientale di Napoli (tra Barra, San Giovanni e Ponticelli).

Circa dieci anni fa è nata e continua felicemente l’attività corale destinata a bambini e ragazzi. Già, perché quasi sempre il valore riconosciuto dagli stessi è tale da determinare la voglia di continuare a cantare anche dopo che hanno lasciato la scuola primaria. E così, con cadenza settimanale, a gruppi determinati per tessitura vocale, teniamo a scuola, in un laboratorio strutturatosi nel tempo, le nostre lezioni di canto corale. Attualmente mi occupo di due cori, considerato che l’esperienza delle prime leve (gli ex allievi che ormai non si possono più considerare voci bianche) continua e si somma a quella dei piccoli, appartenenti alla scuola.

La funzione didattica di questa pratica sembra affiorare a più riprese dalle parole di Salvatore: La didattica, naturalmente, tiene conto di vari approcci che si rifanno a una pedagogia non solo musicale in senso stretto. In questo sono aiutato dal fatto di essere docente di scuola elementare (come un tempo era chiamato questo segmento scolastico). Bruner, Piaget, Vigotskij, sono stati i miei maestri, coloro sui quali ho fondato la mia formazione di docente. Più di recente, psicologi come Howard Gardner, hanno messo in risalto come il concetto d’intelligenza, che noi per molti anni abbiamo limitato associandolo a quello di abilità logico-matematiche, va integrato con una più ampia visione delle capacità intellettuali, tra le quali l’intelligenza musicale ha uno spazio tutto suo.

Gli chiedo infine di raccontarmi le evoluzioni del progetto fino ai recenti impegni che l’hanno messo in gioco:

Abbiamo iniziato circa dieci anni fa con un piccolo gruppo di ragazzi. All’inizio, al di fuori delle mura scolastiche, ci si muoveva più che altro per concorsi e qualche rassegna. Ciò nasceva dalla naturale voglia di confrontarsi, nel senso più sano del termine, con altre realtà sia locali, sia al di fuori del proprio ambiente di appartenenza. Nel tempo abbiamo trovato numerose opportunità per esprimerci. Per esempio, a eventi promossi dal comune di Napoli come il Maggio dei monumenti, E … state a Napoli, Giugno Giovani; o anche a manifestazioni create ad hoc, come il concerto che insieme all’orchestra dell’istituto Bonghi abbiamo realizzato nell’Auditorium di Castel Sant’Elmo nel giugno 2016. Alla fine, ai più non sfugge che una cosa è il coretto scolastico (e non uso l’espressione in senso dispregiativo) che deve sicuramente avere una sua collocazione e ragion d’essere, altro è (per contenuti, finalità ed esiti) l’esperienza corale che, pur partendo dal contesto scolastico, intende porsi come importante momento di crescita, di riflessione sulle possibilità espressive e di formazione personale.

Dopo aver saggìato l’armonia che si respira nel gruppo per le prove, non mi resta altro che aspettare la prima occasione utile per ascoltarli in concerto.
EDUCARE A PENSARE

L'educazione al pensare potrebbe essere la chiave di volta in famiglia, a scuola, con gli amici e in palestra.

Ci si deve chiedere quale cultura stiamo promuovendo e quali sono le prospettive che si intendono adottare per sviluppare le capacità di pensiero. Purtroppo siamo sempre più oppressi e imprigionati da un pensiero che tende a mettere assieme tante immagini e tante idee giuste, ma manca una mente unificante che si trasformi in pensiero produttivo.

Pochi affrontano il “comprendere” come una problematica esistenziale e come un’arte, in grado di ben orientare le azioni più significative e rischiose, quali l’adozione di principi e di valori a cui ispirarsi, l’assunzione di progetti ai quali dedicarsi, la scelta delle persone alle quali donarsi e degli ambienti in cui radicarsi.
Howard Gardner sostiene che nella famiglia e nella scuola non c’è un’adeguata stimolazione della “comprensione profonda” della realtà e si tende piuttosto ad accontentarsi di prestazioni meccaniche, ritualistiche e convenzionali.

Secondo Gardner l’errore grave che si commette quotidianamente ai danni dei bambini, consiste nel focalizzare l’attenzione più sull’apprendere che sul comprendere. Tutti siamo consapevoli della pericolosità delle “idee sterili”, cioè di quelle idee che sono semplicemente trattenute dalla mente, ma che non sono utilizzate per essere sottoposte a verifica o per ottenere nuove soluzioni.

Non si tratta solamente di insegnare tecniche o metodi di pensiero e di comportamento, ma soprattutto di creare nei bambini la disponibilità a rimettere in discussione le loro concezioni sulla mente e sui processi attraverso cui si costituiscono i pensieri o sulle strategie che possono essere utilizzate, in modo di renderli coscienti delle modalità e dei rispettivi gradi di certezza con cui si fanno delle scelte, si prendono delle decisioni e si sviluppano delle capacità.
Hay más de una forma de ser inteligente... también en el trabajo

Por M. Victoria S. Nadal | 15 DIC 2017

Tenemos hasta ocho tipos de inteligencia distintas. Debemos aprender a detectarlas para poder potenciarlas.

Cada vez más empresas son conscientes de la necesidad de estimular el desarrollo de sus trabajadores y de aprovechar el talento al máximo para no perder el paso de la transformación. Hay tantas formas de conseguirlo como jefes y departamentos de recursos humanos, pero algo que parece haber pasado desapercibido para muchos es la oportunidad de maximizar el desempeño de los trabajadores analizando qué tipo de inteligencia tienen más desarrollada y estimulándola para que puedan sacarle el máximo partido. Porque, aunque nos hayan enseñado lo contrario, no hay solo una forma de ser inteligente.

Comúnmente, entendemos que alguien es inteligente cuando tiene una capacidad de razonamiento elevada, es capaz de sacar conclusiones acertadas con rapidez y eso se refleja en un test que marca que tiene un cociente intelectual alto. Esto convierte a aquellos con un cociente
intelectual por debajo de la media en personas “lentas” o no tan inteligentes. Lo que se nos
escapa es que esa solo es una forma de ser inteligente y que cada trabajador tiene unas
capacidades y aptitudes que muchos expertos han definido como inteligencias múltiples. El
psicólogo estadounidense Howard Gardner definió en los años 80 hasta ocho tipos distintos,
incluyendo la capacidad de comunicarse, de expresarse a través del cuerpo, de entender a los
demás o expresarse a través de la música.

Al aplicar la teoría de las Inteligencias Múltiples de Gardner en el trabajo, podemos cambiar la
forma en que se capacita a los empleados y en que se asignan los roles dentro del equipo porque
estaríamos comprendiendo mejor sus aptitudes. "Para los autónomos, la conciencia de las
aptitudes propias puede ayudar a dirigir un negocio de manera más efectiva, al tener una idea
clear de las fortalezas y las áreas donde se necesita ayuda", aconseja Nayanee Silva, fundadora
de Smarter Lives Coaching & Consulting. Saber qué se le da mejor a cada uno de los
trabajadores hace más fácil que los jefes puedan alentar el trabajo en equipo con diferentes
estilos de aprendizaje. Según Silva, también para ser líder tienes que desarrollar ciertas aptitudes
intrapersonales, interpersonales y lingüísticas, entre otras, para inspirar a los demás, comunicarse
bien y predicar con el ejemplo.

Precisamente estas capacidades, junto con una visión creativa, estrategia de resolución de
problemas y pensamiento crítico son lo que muchos reclutadores solicitan. Pero no te alarmes si
crees que no las tienes. Todos tenemos todas las inteligencias, más o menos pronunciadas, y se
pueden trabajar. "Como las inteligencias múltiples también se pueden desarrollar con el tiempo y
esfuerzo, es necesario enseñar a los estudiantes a detectar estas facetas durante su periodo
educativo", explica Silva.

Posiblemente no todas las inteligencias sean significativas para el desarrollo de una
organización, pero en su mayoría —como la lingüística, la interpersonal, la intrapersonal o la
lógico-matemática— ayudan a aumentar la eficiencia no solo de manera individual, también
collectivamente. Para conseguirlo, hace falta detectar y potenciar las capacidades individuales.
Nayanee Silva explica que si eres jefe y normalmente tienes que trabajar en equipo, hay cosas
que puedes hacer en el entorno para aumentar las posibilidades de que esa persona muestre su
mejor lado y tenga confianza en creer en su inteligencia. Obviamente, tener expectativas
positivas de su rendimiento laboral ayuda. Pero también hace falta que esa persona sepa que el
tipo de inteligencia que está aportando al trabajo es apreciada y valorada.

A muchos sitios aún no ha llegado la idea de que es necesario valorar estas inteligencias, y se le
da más importancia a la puntuación de cociente intelectual. Una de las explicaciones es que
habitualmente en los centros educativos un cociente alto está relacionado con buenos resultados
académicos. Y eso parece suficiente. Pero los alumnos mal llamados “lentos” suelen puntuar alto
en inteligencias diferentes, difíciles de evaluar, y cuando se les permite participar en algo que les
resulta personalmente significativo, cobran vida y pueden llegar a ser brillantes. Esta es al menos
la idea de Scott Barry Kaufman, profesor adjunto de psicología en la Universidad de Nueva
York, que defiende la necesidad de redefinir el concepto de inteligencia. “Si tu forma de pensar y
tu inteligencia se desvía de una métrica estandarizada, no debemos asumir que no eres
inteligente”, explica Barry.
Las ocho inteligencias de Gardner

**Lingüística.** Capacidad de poder usar el lenguaje de forma efectiva. Periodistas.

**Lógico-matemática.** Habilidad de identificar modelos, formular y desarrollar hipótesis y razonamiento numérico. Ingenieros

**Espacial.** Capacidad para percibir y comprender el espacio. Arquitectos.

**Kinestésica.** Facultad de poder expresar ideas y sentimientos a través del cuerpo, así como manejo de habilidades físicas. Desde deportistas hasta cirujanos.

**Musical.** Capacidad de percibir, transformar y expresarse a través de las formas musicales. Músicos, pero también cualquier persona que se concentra escuchando música.

**Interpersonal.** Capacidad de percibir y distinguir los estados de ánimo, intenciones, motivaciones y sentimientos de otras personas. Psicólogos.

**Intrapersonal.** Autoconocimiento de las capacidades propias. Emprendedores.

**Naturalista.** Observar, comprender y analizar la naturaleza, discerniendo patrones y tendencias en los comportamientos de la naturaleza. Agricultores.
Global Business Corporation, con sede en Miami, otorgó el galardón Business Management Awards 2017 a Ángela María Londoño Mejía, directora del Gimnasio Los Robles de Armenia, recibió el premio Business Management Awards 2017 en la categoría Liderazgo Educativo.

En ceremonia que se llevó a cabo en el marco de la Cumbre Empresarial de las Américas, que tuvo lugar en Cartagena, Ángela María Londoño Mejía, directora del Gimnasio Los Robles de Armenia, recibió el premio Business Management Awards 2017 en la categoría Liderazgo Educativo.

El premio fue entregado por Global Business Corporation, organización con sede en Miami, Estados Unidos, que promueve la gestión empresarial y reconoce el éxito de las pequeñas, medianas y grandes empresas. LA CRÓNICA, dialogó con la galardonada sobre el reconocimiento y el proceso de la institución educativa.

**A usted le acaban de hacer un reconocimiento, ¿de qué se trata?**

El reconocimiento es de parte de la organización Global Business Corporation, entidad internacional que se dedica a buscar líderes a nivel mundial. La verdad fue una sorpresa, no sé quién me postuló, ellos tienen un equipo de investigación que se dedica a buscar perfiles teniendo presente 9 ítems, entre ellos calidad, impacto con la comunidad, liderazgo y
encontraron que yo cumplía ese perfil y el día menos pensado me llegó una carta donde se anunciaba el galardón.

¿En qué consiste el galardón?

Mérito a la excelencia en Liderazgo Educacional, fui la única institución en Colombia con este premio, con el que se condecora y se exalta a la empresa, propietario y gerente directivo, en este caso fui condecorada con las tres porque cumple las tres funciones. Fue un impacto, la gente muy contenta porque a nivel de los rangos fui la única en educación.

¿Cómo se dio cuenta del premio y dónde lo entregaron?

A través de correo electrónico. El reconocimiento tuvo una ceremonia especial en Cartagena en la Cumbre Empresarial de las Américas.

¿Qué significa para usted este reconocimiento?

Algo muy grande, son bendiciones, yo pienso que mi filosofía de vida no está en hacer para que reconozcan, porque cuando uno tiene clara su misión hace las cosas como son desde el punto de vista ético y bien hechas, pero que le llegue a uno un reconocimiento inesperado sin postularse, pues es maravilloso para mí y para mi institución. Uno sabe que hace las cosas bien, pero que desde afuera haya gente pendiente de este nivel, pues es algo muy grandioso.

¿Cómo nació Los Robles, cuáles son los fundamentos que la han llevado a tener reconocimientos?

El colegio tiene 37 años de trayectoria, fue fundado por mis padres y unos socios. Luego mis padres se quedaron con la institución. Yo empecé a trabajar en él alfabetizando en el año 1983 y comencé trabajo en el 84. Desde 1987 lo administro, en el 89 cuando me gradué me lo dan mis padres.

¿Se creó con el nombre de Gimnasio Los Robles?

El colegio ha tenido varias evoluciones, en un principio se llamaba guardería Amiguitos, después cambiamos a guardería y preescolar Pequeños y cuando me pasé para la nueva sede campestre monté la primaria y lo pusimos colegio Gimnasio Los Robles, a raíz de que los niños grandes no iban a querer que les dijeran pequeños, entonces por autoestima se cambió el nombre.
¿Cuál es la filosofía del colegio?

Nuestros fundamentos y filosofía son dos principios muy importantes. El primero educar en afecto que para mí es la esencia del ser humano. Si uno está bien emocionalmente todo se da: aprendizaje, la parte laboral, las relaciones, pero si el ser humano tiene un bloqueo emocional, ni el aprendizaje ni sus relaciones ni su vida va a estar bien. El segundo principio es aprovechar todos los talentos que los estudiantes tengan y estimular esa parte en su cerebro, es decir lo cognitivo. Y también como bandera nuestra educación en valores, la familia es muy importante, trato de convencer mucho a los papás que vengan a las actividades programadas y que acompañen a sus hijos, hoy en día necesitamos más de ese acompañamiento.

¿Qué le hace falta por hacer?

Pienso que todo lo que he querido lo he hecho. Seguir siendo buenos y éticos y la verdad quisiera trabajar más porque las familias se comprometan mucho en la educación y en el apoyo a sus hijos, creo que todos los días se debe alimentar esa parte de valores. La verdad he sido una privilegiada, un mujer proyectada, lo que me propongo lo hago, me encantan los retos, los cambios son bienvenidos, siento que tengo mi vida en total plenitud y he disfrutado con pasión mi misión de educar.

¿Qué le diría a sus colegas para que alcancen el éxito?

Cada institución tiene que tener su modelo pedagógico, nuestro colegio tiene un modelo único que es el desarrollo de las ocho inteligencias múltiples de Howard Gardner, es muy interesante. Es hacer que nuestro niños disfruten del aprendizaje, que se sientan queridos y sean parte de la institución, es educarlos con amor, pero con disciplina, es involucrar a las familias, proyectarse, tener retos. Y como directora concienciarnos que tenemos la más bella, la más responsable labor que se llama educar. De nosotros depende qué niños le entregamos a la sociedad y el mundo. Si yo como directora estoy comprometida, pendiente de cada niño en su parte emocional, de su desarrollo académico de sus relaciones interpersonales, de sus valores como familia, de integrar esas familias, seguro que vamos a tener niños muy sanos emocionalmente y muy buenos para la vida y la sociedad.
Dios, religión y ciencia

Ciertamente, los diálogos entre un creyente y un ateo son ilustrativos e interesantes.

Recientemente se efectuó en Bogotá un debate entre el sacerdote colombiano Gerardo Remolina, S. J. y el biólogo británico Richard Dawkins. El encuentro fue de gran altura intelectual, a pesar de las diferencias, casi siempre irreconciliables, entre la fe y el pensamiento científico. El tema de la controversia (¿es Dios una ilusión?) generó notable interés entre creyentes e incrédulos, por igual.

Dado el enorme interés que despertó este evento, que vi en diferido, ¿no deberían también promoverse, a nivel mundial, millares de debates, no con ateos y devotos, sino con eruditos de las grandes religiones? Las diferencias entre Dios, Alá, Jehová y Brahman son bastante menores que las existentes entre los panelistas de Bogotá. Pienso que tales debates serían muy provechosos. Encontré poquísimos ejemplos de eventos semejantes en Google o YouTube.

Las discrepancias conceptuales entre el padre Remolina y el doctor Dawkins son muchísimo mayores que las que podrían existir entre un prelado cristiano y un teólogo musulmán, ambos creyentes en seres metafísicos y profetas elegidos. Los intercambios entre pensadores de los distintos credos bien podrían contribuir a mejorar la tolerancia inter-religiosa.

El doctor Dawkins es el ateo más célebre del mundo. En particular, admiro su teoría de la forma cómo pudo haber comenzado y evolucionado la vida, que magistralmente presenta en ‘El gen egoísta’, la obra que lo convirtió en celebridad científica. De esta teoría obtuvo las bases para formular mi propia interpretación biológica del renacimiento budista.
¿Qué relación existe entre inteligencia y religión? Muy poca. En 1983, Howard Gardner publicó su reconocida y controvertida teoría sobre las inteligencias múltiples, con la cual propuso siete expresiones diferentes y complementarias de esta cualidad humana.

Años después, en revisiones de su propuesta original, el doctor Gardner concluyó que sus siete alternativas no daban cabida a mentes tan brillantes como Charles Darwin y Alfred Russell Wallace, los proponentes de la teoría de la evolución de las especies por selección natural. En 1998 resolvió entonces agregar una octava forma de inteligencia que denominó inteligencia naturalista, “la capacidad para identificar y clasificar los componentes del entorno”.

En las evaluaciones de su lista de inteligencias, el doctor Gardner también consideró la posibilidad de agregar una ‘inteligencia religiosa’. Pronto, sin embargo, dejó de lado la sugerencia, pues el acto de creer en seres etéreos o metafísicos no demanda exigencias intelectuales suficientes para justificar tal adición. Creer siempre es una tarea sencillísima, cuando no ingenua.

El padre Remolina, sin duda alguna, posee suficiente inteligencia naturalista para aceptar, como lo reconoció en Bogotá, la evolución darwiniana. El sacerdote también considera razonable que el universo actual en permanente expansión tuvo que ser alguna vez, por ‘extrapolación retroactiva’, algo muy pequeño y que en algún momento debió producirse la descomunal explosión conocida como ‘big bang’. No hubo pues divergencias entre los dos panelistas de Bogotá en cuanto a evolución u origen del universo.

Es necesario anotar además que alrededor de algunas hipótesis de la física moderna, los legos solo podríamos repetir sus enunciados, sin esperar comprender las ecuaciones inescrutables que respaldan tales teorías. Para la gente corriente, ‘creer’ en tales ecuaciones (por ejemplo, la hipótesis de que “el universo es matemáticas” de sueco-americano Max Tegmart o las controversiales teorías de las cuerdas) difiere poco de creer en Dios, Alá, Jesús o Mahoma.

Las personas que carecen de los conocimientos matemáticos requeridos para la comprensión de
la teoría general de la relatividad o de la mecánica cuántica, pues… tienen fe en San Albert Einstein o San Niels Bohr. El padre Remolina, quien con certeza sabe más de ecuaciones que el ciudadano promedio, acepta con fe la realidad de Dios, de Jesús, del Espíritu Santo y del alma. Richard Dawkins, no. (Quienes nos inclinamos por el agnosticismo, estamos seguros de que ni las creencias religiosas ni la física cuántica son prerrequisitos para la armonía interior).

Ciertamente, los diálogos entre un creyente y un ateo son ilustrativos e interesantes. Las conversaciones entre los ateos, cuando no son sobre ciencia, con frecuencia terminan en burlas hacia los creyentes. ¿Qué podría ocurrir con los encuentros interreligiosos? Los intercambios desapasionados entre antagonistas de distintos credos, repetidos millares de veces por todo el planeta, bien podrían evolucionar hacia una convicción colectiva, lenta pero continua, de la inexistencia de entidades metafísicas.
Os 50 psicólogos mais influentes do mundo (e da Administração)

Lista traz os profissionais mais influentes do planeta na área de Psicologia e a grande maioria é de autores cultuados também por administradores; Daniel Goleman e Howard Gardner, que têm conteúdos disponíveis no Administradores Premium, estão entre os citados

15 de janeiro de 2018

Ao estudar a mente e o comportamento humano, a psicologia é abordada nas mais diferentes disciplinas acadêmicas, com grande relevância para estudantes e profissionais de ciências naturais, sociais e humanas. Quem é área de Administração sabe: alguns dos profissionais mais proeminentes da Psicologia também têm contribuições muito importantes para os negócios.

Uma lista elaborada pelo site The Best Schools demonstra isso. Ao destacar os 50 psicólogos mais influentes do mundo, o ranking inclui pesquisadores e autores que são conhecidos e admirados por muitos administradores no mundo todo. Uma interdisciplinaridade que, segundo a publicação, faz com que a lista (que você pode conferir completa em inglês) tenha valor "além da fascinação inerente ao assunto da própria psicologia".
“É [um ranking] importante porque, mesmo que nós não saibamos, as ideias dos psicólogos têm grande influência em nossa sociedade, e possuem uma importância prática para políticas públicas, especialmente em áreas como justiça criminal e economia”, explica o The Best Schools.

Na lista, que reúne profissionais focados em cinco áreas [psicologia clínica, psicologia infantil, psicologia social, psicologia biológica e psicologia cognitiva], é possível encontrar nomes como Dan Ariely, autor dos livros A Mais Pura Verdade Sobre a Desonestidade e Previsivelmente Irracional, Daniel Kahneman, autor de Rápido e Devagar e os pesquisadores Daniel Goleman e Howard Gardner.

Howard Gardner, PhD em psicologia do desenvolvimento e professor na universidade de Harvard, é conhecido por sua teoria da inteligências múltiplas, que defende que o tipo de inteligência medido em testes de QI é apenas um de vários tipos de inteligências usadas pelo ser humano em suas interações com o mundo. De acordo com o estudo de Gardner, abordado em diversos dos seus livros (como Inteligências Múltiplas - A teoria na prática e Inteligências Múltiplas - Ao redor do mundo ) os testes de QI mais comum falham ao distinguir as inteligências linguística, lógica, e espacial, ao mesmo tempo que ignoram inteligências como a cinestésica corporal, interpessoal, intrapessoal e estética.

Já Daniel Goleman, também pesquisador de psicologia do desenvolvimento, é famoso por seu livro "Inteligência Emocional", que se tornou um bestseller mundial depois de seu lançamento em 1995 e popularizou o termo. Na obra, Goleman estuda as emoções a partir de perspectivas biológica, evolucionária, psicológica, filosófica e do senso comum, mostrando o papel que desenvolvem não só na vida afetiva, como em todos os aspectos da cognição e ação humana. Além disso, o pesquisador tem obras que estudam Foco, Liderança e Meditação.

Os dois pesquisadores falam sobre seus estudos e perspectivas no curso Leadership: a masterclass, conteúdo apresentado por Goleman e disponível no Administradores Premium com exclusividade no Brasil, fruto de uma parceria entre o Administradores e Key Step Media (antiga More Than Sounds), produtora de Daniel Goleman. Confira o trailer do Leadership: a masterclass:
Jeg forbløffes over hvor stor forskjell et enkeltmenneske kan gjøre

Noen få setninger fra en klok professor gir fornyet tro på verden og menneskene. Les hvorfor:

Marius Middelthon | 01.02.2018

Jeg anser meg for forsker, og utviklingslæren spiller en sentral rolle for tenkningen min. Jeg er samfunnsforsker, og har lært mye av innsikter fra forskjellige samfunnsvitenskaper, deriblant økonomi. Likevel har jeg liten sympati for forsøk på å totalforklare all menneskelig adferd ut fra evolusjonspsykologi eller økonomiske teorier om rasjonelle valg, eller gjennom en kombinasjon av disse to forklaringsmodellene.


Jeg anser Mahatma Gandhi for å være det viktigste mennesket de siste tusen årene. Resultatene han oppnådde i India taler for seg selv. Men ved siden av den avgjørende kraften og lederskapet Gandhi bidro med i sitt eget land, fikk han en enorm innflytelse på fredelige motstandskjempere over hele verden: Nelson Mandela i Sør-Afrika, Martin
Luther King Jr. i USA, og de ensomme skikkelsene på Den himmelske freds plass i 1989 og Tahrirplassen i 2011.

På tross av vitenskapens prisverdige innsats for å oppdage mønstre i menneskelig atferd, blir jeg fremdeles slått av påvirkningskraften til enkeltindivider eller små grupper som arbeider mot alle odds. Som forskere hverken kan eller bør vi skyve disse fenomenene under teppet. Vi bør legge oss på sinne antropologen Margaret Meads berømte formaning: «Tvil aldri på at en liten gruppe bevisste og engasjerte borgere kan forandre verden. De er faktisk de eneste som noen gang har gjort det.»
Concurseiros apostam em Mapas Mentais para acelerar os estudos

Por Dino | 14 mar 2018

Concurseiro é um termo muito utilizado nas redes sociais para a pessoa que estuda por conta própria com o objetivo de ser aprovado em algum concurso público. Segundo o IBGE, um dos concursos públicos mais concorridos do Brasil é o de Consultor Legislativo do Senado Federal e Câmara dos Deputados.

O último, realizado em março de 2016, teve 157.939 inscritos para 246 vagas disponíveis, o que representa uma média de 642,02 candidatos por vaga. Com tanta concorrência, os concurseiros apostam cada vez mais em métodos de estudos inovadores que garantam um aprendizado mais rápido e eficaz.

A técnica do Mapeamento da Mente, criada pelo inglês Tony Buzan na década de 70, organiza um conteúdo no formato de diagrama, partindo de uma ideia central para várias ideias paralelas.
Concurseiros e outros adeptos dessa técnica afirmam que, através do estudo com Mapas Mentais, é possível ler um livro apenas uma única vez e criar um resumo tão claro e completo que estudando apenas por 5 minutos depois você se lembraria de todo o conteúdo estudado.

Segundo Howard Gardner, professor de Cognição e Educação na Universidade de Harvard, os Mapas Mentais estão entre um dos melhores métodos comprovadamente eficazes para aprendizagem de vários tipos de assunto. Confira 4 benefícios desta técnica:

1- A inteligência flui e os parágrafos limitam

A inteligência humana flui. E grandes blocos de textos não incentivam esse processo natural da mente humana.

Quanto mais dinâmica for uma informação, mais fácil e eficiente será para o cérebro processar e retê-la, impedindo que o estudante esqueça aquele conteúdo no futuro.

2- Os mapas mentais são objetivos

Eles permitem que conteúdos extensos e cansativos sejam explicados através de pontos principais. Na era da informação, assimilar tudo seria impossível.

Com um Mapa Mental, é possível ter uma visão macro do assunto, onde apenas os pontos mais relevantes estão destacados e organizados de uma forma hierárquica e tudo isso sem perder a qualidade.

Todos esses fatores reunidos são capazes de aumentar em até 73% a taxa de memorização em comparação a outros métodos tradicionais de estudo.

3- Os Mapas Mentais são atrativos

Um Mapa Mental bem construído dispõe de recursos como cores e imagens, que são muito eficientes.
Quando se utiliza Mapas Mentais, o espaço em branco ao redor do conteúdo colorido ajuda a focar melhor, a saber o que é mais importante e também ajuda os olhos relaxarem dos textos lineares e cansativos.

Já as imagens são uma linguagem universal que pode superar qualquer barreira linguística. O ser humano é intrinsecamente ensinado a processar imagens desde criança. Quanto mais cor e mais chamativo, mais fácil será o aprendizado.

4- Estrutura hierárquica

Quando conceitos são ensinados aleatoriamente é mais fácil esquecer. Já os Mapas Mentais formam estruturas na mente humana, o que permite que a memorização seja bem maior.

O cérebro funciona por associação. Uma ideia sempre dará origem a outra. E é isso que o Mapa Mental faz.

Por isso os Mapas Mentais são tão eficazes para pessoas que estão estudando para concurso público, vestibular e até mesmo para quem está na escola ou deseja simplesmente organizar a rotina.
Stephen Hawking: la inteligencia adaptativa en la era del cambio

Martín Simonetta | 3 de abril de 2018

El reciente fallecimiento de Stephen Hawking ha despertado diversos aspectos de su vasto legado. Uno de ellos, no tan enfocado en el cosmos, es su concepto de inteligencia como "la capacidad de adaptarse a los cambios". En su visión, no es más inteligente el mejor matemático, el mejor científico, literato, músico o empresario, sino que pueden serlo todos en la medida en que tengan la capacidad de adaptarse a los cambios de circunstancias que el entorno les impone. La clave es adaptarse al cambio, del contexto personal y del contexto de nuestra especie.

Hawking hace referencia a lo que se conoce como inteligencia adaptativa, pone el énfasis en un punto diferente al que tienen otras visiones sobre ese tema. Algunas concepciones previas han asociado a la inteligencia con la capacidad de resolución de problemas lógico-matemáticos, tradicionalmente vinculada al coeficiente intelectual-IQ. Otras, a la capacidad de desarrollo de relaciones interpersonales y el conocimiento intrapersonal, como el concepto de inteligencia emocional desarrollado por Daniel Goleman. Del mismo modo, otras vertientes han puesto el énfasis en la existencia de múltiples inteligencias (lógico-matemática, literaria, musical, deportiva, interpersonal, intrapersonal, etcétera), como el caso de Howard Gardner.

Adaptación y creación del cambio

La inteligencia adaptativa pone su acento en la capacidad de adaptarnos a un contexto crecientemente cambiante, lleno de desafíos, incierto, impredecible, donde buena parte de los viejos patrones de comportamiento son puestos en cuestionamiento. El fin de la
era del *statu quo* exige poner el énfasis en nuevas características, muy distintas, o no tanto, a las que se ponía énfasis en momentos previos de la historia de nuestra especie. En este marco, **son otros los activos estratégicos que posibilitarán la supervivencia: la flexibilidad, la creatividad, la capacidad de innovar.**

Sin querer volvemos al pensamiento de Charles Darwin y su visión respecto de la evolución y la supervivencia de las especies. Darwin, entre 1832 y 1834, cuando tenía 23 y 25 años aproximadamente, durante su viaje por las costas patagónicas de las actuales Argentina y Chile, fue analizando evidencia que lo hizo pensar que las especies iban desarrollando pequeñas adaptaciones según el contexto en el que le tocara vivir, lo cual le posibilitaba la supervivencia. No sobrevivían las especies más lindas ni las más fuertes, sino las que desarrollaban habilidades para adaptarse a los desafíos de un medio que podía ser cambiante.

Nunca la humanidad ha vivido un proceso de cambio tecnológico tan profundo y a un ritmo tan rápido como el que estamos viviendo en estos momentos. No podemos imaginar cómo serán nuestras vidas en 10 o 20 años. Ni la vida de nuestra especie en 50 o 100 años. Los humanos estamos generando cambios tecnológicos que incrementan la productividad, abren las puertas para innovaciones y despiertan nuevos desafíos. En este marco, **la inteligencia se asocia con la capacidad de generar nuevas soluciones ante nuevos escenarios, tal como sucede en el mundo de los negocios, donde claramente se visualiza esta dinámica desde otra perspectiva.** Ya lo dijo Joseph Schumpeter al hablar de destrucción creativa como esencia de la dinámica de la innovación y la mejora.

La historia de vida de Stephen Hawking habla por sí sola. Más allá de su genialidad intelectual, viene a nuestra mente su imagen flotando en el aire en un vuelo de gravedad cero a los 65 años. Esa imagen nos pinta de cuerpo entero su concepción de inteligencia como la capacidad de adaptación a las cambiantes circunstancias. **Hawking ilumina no solo desde sus desarrollos teóricos, sino desde el entusiasmo con que vivió cada instante de su milagrosa vida. Sus innovaciones intelectuales recién han comenzado a dar frutos, cuyos resultados serán vistos incluso por las siguientes generaciones de humanos.**
**Stroppa, il peso di un respiro**

Ritorno al futuro con una prima assoluta con il compositore veronese

di Vincenzo Santarcangelo | 20 aprile 2018


_**Qual è la linea, se ce n’è una, che conduce dalla musica da camera di Brahms a quella di Stroppa?**_ Ha una sola dimensione quel ritorno al futuro evocato dal titolo della rassegna De Sono?

«Le linee continue mi sembrano troppo didascaliche e stimolano poco la curiosità. Preferisco un percorso a zig-zag o, per citare il titolo della mia prima composizione, una Traiettoria…deviata. Questo ritorno è pieno di linee che il pubblico potrà scoprire lasciandosi guidare dal “pensiero musicale” del programma».

_**Cosa intende quando definisce la musica una forma di pensiero sensibile, come ha fatto più volte?**_

«È sempre stato naturale per me concepire la musica come un pensiero autonimo rispetto ad altri, come il pensiero scientifico o filosofico. In fondo ci sono tanti aspetti comuni: la scrittura,
la volontà di comunicare, la capacità emotiva. Ma parlare di musica non è farla – scriverla o suonarla. C’è quindi una differenza ontologica fra queste due forme di espressione; in un saggio, definii la seconda pensiero sensibile, da non confondere con il discorso sulla musica. Se il pensiero è processo mentale, però, la mente non può essere ridotta a mera razionalità: lo psicologo Howard Gardner ha parlato di intelligenze multiple, una delle quali è quella musicale. Il neuroscienziato Antonio Damasio ha mostrato quanto razionalità, emozioni e tanti altri processi simultanei interagiscono e si influenzano reciprocamente nel nostro cervello. Per quanto mi riguarda, un’esperienza musicale è una realtà autonoma dell’essere umano nella sua interazione con il mondo».

Si definisce bilingue rispetto alla musica strumentale e a quella elettronica.

**Il suo percorso di formazione, così come la sua scrittura, sono caratterizzate dal fatto che**

«non sa più dove finisca l’elettronica e dove inizi la musica strumentale. Crede che anche l’ascoltatore di oggi sia immerso in questo continuum?

«Mi sembra che oggi molti giovani ascoltino musica prevalentemente elettronica, di solito su internet, mentre il pubblico che va ai concerti di musica classica, spesso piuttosto anziano, si diletta con repertori che pescano prevalentemente dal passato. Il continuum, normale negli anni ottanta, è cambiato, ma questi mutamenti socio-culturali ci spingono a inventare altri percorsi creativi».

**Il peso di un respiro è un brano scritto per corno di bassetto, uno strumento piuttosto insolito. Anche rispetto agli strumenti il suo è un approccio di ricerca?**

«Per me la composizione e un’intensa ricerca musicale e personale sono due facce della stessa medaglia. Reputavo che il corno di bassetto fosse un clarinetto pigro. Grazie all’interazione con Michele Marelli ho scoperto invece un clarinetto basso arzillo e potente, capace di generare sonorità che mi hanno fatto venire la pelle d’oca, come i doppi suoni dell’inizio, oppure il parlato alla fine del brano. È stato compito mio, poi, trovare una forma nel tempo, cioè una drammaturgia, che stimoli l’ascoltatore e gli racconti un’immaginaria storia musicale». 
El “Último Primer Día” y las habilidades blandas

Por MARIO A. VESTFRID | 21 de Abril de 2018

Con el comienzo del nuevo ciclo lectivo y como ha ocurrido en los últimos años, se ha comenzado festejar el “Último Primer Día en las escuelas secundarias”. Esto que parecería ser una situación aparentemente normal y de festejo se ha transformado, por el contrario, en una modalidad que trae una serie de inconvenientes para el resto de la comunidad y, fundamentalmente, para los habitantes que viven cerca de dichos colegios, lo que ha dado lugar a múltiples protestas, no solo por el horario y los ruidos molestos, sino también por el entorpecimiento del tránsito. En su lugar, tendría que ser un día normal donde los alumnos ingresen a las aulas para comenzar a conocer cuáles van a ser las tareas habituales que van a desarrollar durante el ciclo lectivo con el objetivo de lograr educarse adecuadamente.

La educación incluye en su formación dos tipos de habilidades. En primer lugar debemos mencionar las habilidades o capacidades duras, las que son propias de cada disciplina en particular. Estas habilidades incluyen las destrezas teóricas y técnicas que se adquieren para desempeñar determinada tarea o función, las cuales se logran durante la formación y capacitación correspondiente. Estas habilidades son posibles de medirlas o cuantificarlas a través de lo que se conocía, y aún se conoce, cómo el coeficiente intelectual y es la única que se utilizaba antes de conocer la importancia que hoy tienen las emociones en el proceso de aprendizaje.

Como lo expresó en el libro que he escrito (Dialogando con la mente- Una visión desde la Neurociencia, 2017) “…Cada persona tiene un cerebro único e irrepetible y su inteligencia es el resultado de la combinación de sus potencialidades múltiples” y no solo de las habilidades duras o técnicas. “…Por lo tanto, cada individuo tiene la posibilidad de fortalecer alguna más que otras y lograr de esta manera desarrollar su capacidad intelectual o talento para tener éxito en la vida”. En efecto, “…Este nuevo enfoque dio lugar a un cuestionamiento de los clásicos test de inteligencia, ya que no consideraban una serie de otros aspectos entre los que se destacan, como mencionamos, las emociones”.

La teoría de las inteligencias múltiples descriptas por Howard Gardner se basa en los diferentes talentos de cada persona. En efecto, en la actualidad se considera que prácticamente todas las disciplinas dependen, en mayor o menor grado, de la influencia que tienen otras capacidades que se las conoce como las habilidades blandas.
En el proceso educativo, y fundamentalmente, durante la capacitación profesional se debe tener en cuenta junto a las habilidades duras, teóricas y técnicas, a las blandas o de carácter social, por lo cual hoy en día se considera que ambas juegan un rol fundamental en la formación de los recursos humanos. Por ejemplo, en las entrevistas de trabajo los evaluadores realizan un exhaustivo análisis tanto de las habilidades teóricas como de las sociales de los diferentes postulantes y en muchas ocasiones la elección depende de estas últimas.

Según Marcos Singer, Ricardo Guzmán y Patricio Donoso (2009), las actividades blandas incluyen a “...las habilidades no-cognitivas esenciales para desempeñarse exitosamente en la profesión”, es decir, como debe actuar para aplicar más efectivamente y con más éxito sus conocimientos teóricos.

Como se aprecia, las habilidades blandas son de carácter social, es decir, se trata del conjunto de las capacidades y actitudes necesarias que nos permiten lograr una adecuada interacción social de acuerdo a las circunstancias.

Las habilidades blandas están relacionadas con los factores emocionales de cada persona, mientras que las habilidades duras con las racionales adquiridas por el aprendizaje y esta es la razón por la cual debemos incluir en los planes de estudio, entre otros aspectos, la educación emocional.

José Antonio Marina señala que “...Todo aprendizaje cambia el cerebro”, pero la educación va mucho allá. En efecto, para Marina “...la educación lo hace de una manera intencionada, dirigida, aprovechando conscientemente las posibilidades que el mismo cerebro proporciona. Somos híbridos de naturaleza y cultura, sistemas plásticos y autopoyéticos que van construyéndose a sí mismos”. En tal sentido, la Neurociencia nos está ayudando a entender y comprender como mejorar el proceso educativo, por lo cual los docentes deben capacitarse a tal efecto.

Por su parte, el aporte de la educación emocional responde a las necesidades sociales o habilidades blandas que no están cubiertas por las materias académicas que forman el curriculum y su importancia está relacionada con el manejo o gestión de las emociones. Teniendo en cuenta lo que ha ocurrido en estos días, indudablemente nos está demostrando, que tanto los padres como los docentes, no han logrado influir lo necesario y suficiente sobre los alumnos a través de las habilidades blandas, para concientizar a los mismos sobre el respecto que deben adquirir sobre sus semejantes, aprendiendo a gestionar adecuadamente sus emociones.

En conclusión, es necesario no solo capacitar a los docentes y orientar a los padres, sino que se debe incluir en los programas de contenidos de cada materia, además de las capacidades o habilidades duras las blandas, ya que tienen tanto o mayor posibilidad estas últimas en lograr constituir una sociedad más justa y equitativa a través de la educación.
Ποιο το DNA της Καινοτομίας

Ολοι οι οργανισμοί επιθυμούν οι ηγέτες και τα στελέχη τους να διαθέτουν δημιουργικό και καινοτόμο τρόπο σκέψης. Ποια είναι τα συστατικά της πολυπόθητης αυτής ιδιότητας;

Παρά το γεγονός ότι η δημιουργική νοημοσύνη διαφέρει από τους άλλους τύπους νοημοσύνης, όπως συστήνει ο καθηγητής Howard Gardner δεν αποτελεί μία γενετικά προκαθορισμένη γνωστική ικανότητα.

Η έρευνά μας σε μονοζυγωτικά δίδυμα απέδειξε ότι η γενετική προδιάθεση επηρεάζει σε ποσοστό 25% την ικανότητα καινοτομίας. Τα υπόλοιπο 75% εξαρτάται από την εκπαίδευση και την διαρκή εξάσκηση.

Ανοιχτό μυαλό

Θα μπορούσαμε να παρομοιάσουμε την ικανότητα του να σκέφτεται κανείς ριζοσπαστικά με το DNA. Αναφέρομαι σε έναν ιδιαίτερο, μοναδικό και προσωπικό κώδικα καινοτομίας τον οποίο ονομάζω Innovator’s DNA. Κεντρικό σημείο στον
συγκεκριμένο κώδικα αποτελεί η σκέψη των συσχετισμών (associational thinking). Η
ικανότητα, δηλαδή, να συνδέει κανείς στοιχεία, φαινομενικά άσχετα μεταξύ τους, τα
οποία προέρχονται από διαφορετικούς κλάδους και χώρους, και να δημιουργεί ιδέες.
Εξάλλου, οι επιχειρηματίες που έχουν προβεί σε σημαντικές καινοτομίες σπάνια
εφηύραν κάτι εντελώς νέο. Συνήθως οι ιδέες τους αποτελούν σύνθεση ιδεών που
προϋπάρχουν.

Είναι χαρακτηριστικό ότι οι έρευνες για τις απεικονίσεις των εγκεφαλικών λειτουργιών
ομολογουμένως προκαλούν, ανθρώπων δείχνουν ότι οι εγκέφαλοι τους μοιάζουν
σαν να έχουν «πάρει φωτιά» – με την έννοια ότι δημιουργούν περισσότερες νευρικές
συνάψεις από τον μέσο όρο του πληθυσμού. Για να βελτιωθεί η συγκεκριμένη
ικανότητα είναι σημαντικό να εκτίθεται κανείς σε γνώσεις και πληροφορίες από
dιαφορετικούς χώρους και κλάδους. Είναι, οι παιχνίδια lego: όσο περισσότερα και
dιαφορετικά τουβλάκια δίνεις σε ένα παιδί, τόσο πιο πρωτότυπες κατασκευές θα
φτιάχνει.

**Οι πρακτικές των επιτυχημένων**

Πέρα από τους ανοιχτούς ορίζοντες, οι επιχειρηματίες και τα στελέχη που έχουν
αποδεδειγμένο προχωρήσει στην υλοποίηση καινοτόμων ιδεών και έχου μελετήσει
eπιστημένως, συγκεντρώνουν τέσσερα χαρακτηριστικά:

*Δείχνουν μεγάλο πάθος για ερωτήσεις, με σκοπό να ανακαλύψουν νέες ιδέες,
πιθανότητες και κατευθύνσεις. Εξάλλου, οι ερωτήσεις βοηθούν να ανατραπεί το status
quo και στην συνέχεια να δημιουργηθούν πρωτότυπα και ριζοσπαστικά προϊόντα,
υπηρεσίες, ακόμα και επιχειρήσεις.

*Παρατηρούν διαρκώς τον κόσμο, με στόχο να εντοπίσουν λεπτομέρειες που θα τους
dώσουν ώθηση να ανακαλύψουν νέες ιδέες. Χαρακτηριστικό «τέκνο» της
παρατήρησης; To Starbucks. O Howard Shultz, κατά την διάρκεια ενός επαγγελματικού
tαξιδιού στο Μιλάνο, παρατηρώντας τα χαρακτηριστικά των ιταλικών espresso bars
σκέφτηκε ότι δεν υπάρχει κάτι αντίστοιχο στις ΗΠΑ, που να προσφέρει καλό καφέ σε
συνδυασμό με την άνεση και την ευχάριστη ατμόσφαιρα.
Πειραματίζονται διαρκώς, εξετάζουν υποθετικά σενάρια, επισκέπτονται διαφορετικά μέρη, αναζητούν καινούργιες πληροφορίες και αρέσκονται στο να μαθαίνουν νέα πράγματα. Κατά κοινή ομωλογία είναι άνθρωποι που δεν μένουν κλεισμένοι στο καβούκι τους. Χαρακτηριστικό παράδειγμα ο Richard Branson, CEO της Virgin, ο πρώτος που σκέφτηκε την οργάνωση τουριστικών ταξιδιών στο διάστημα (Virgin Galactic). Οι πειραματισμοί του έχουν οδηγήσει στη δημιουργία 340 νέων εταιρειών!

Αφιερώνουν χρόνο στο να συζητούν τις ιδέες τους με ένα δίκτυο ανθρώπων που διαθέτουν διαφορετικό μεταξύ τους τρόπο σκέψης, αλλά και υπόβαθρο. Αυτό δεν σημαίνει απλώς κοινωνική δικτύωση, αλλά πραγματική συζήτηση με άτομα που έχουν να προσφέρουν διαφορετική οπτική των πραγμάτων.

Σε γενικές γραμμές, οι δημιουργικοί άνθρωποι διαθέτουν σε μεγάλο βαθμό τα παραπάνω στοιχεία. Αυτό δεν σημαίνει ότι υπάρχει μία μοναδική συνταγή της επιτυχίας. Άλλοι επιχειρηματίες βασίζουν τις καινοτομίες τους περισσότερο στον πειραματισμό και τις ερωτήσεις και άλλοι στο κοινωνικό τους δίκτυο. Γι’ αυτό, παρομοιάζω την συγκεκριμένη ικανότητα με το DNA –γιατί κάθε δημιουργικός άνθρωπος έχει τα δικά του μυστικά.

Καινοτομία και ηγεσία

Στις περισσότερες επιχειρήσεις, η καινοτομία και η δημιουργικότητα θεωρητικά ενθαρρύνονται, στην ουσία όμως ανατίθενται από τους επιχειρηματίες και τους ηγέτες στις χαμηλότερες βαθμίδες. Αν παρατηρήσει φθινόπωρος εκείνης της ημέρας, θα δει ότι πολλές επιχειρήσεις δεν έχουν πράγματι καινοτομήσεις τόσο οι Jobs (Apple), Bezos (Amazon), Omidyar (eBay), Lazaridis (Research in Motion), δεν υποστηρίζουν απλώς την καινοτομία, την εφαρμόζουν οι ίδιοι.

* Εκτελεστικός διευθυντής του Leadership Center του MIT, συγγραφέας σημαντικών βιβλίων για την καινοτομία.
Nuevas pistas para desarrollar la herencia más preciada: la inteligencia
Por Adiario Oaxaca| mayo 4, 2018

“Es igual de inteligente que su papá”, dice una abuela emocionada, mientras observa a su nieto de diez años participar en un concurso de robótica. El niño la mira de reojo avergonzado, pero la
mujer no puede disimular el orgullo, lanzando sus pensamientos en voz alta justo en el momento en que el proyecto científico del pequeño empieza a movilizarse en medio del auditorio.

Más allá de la subjetividad amorosa de la abuela, qué es realmente la inteligencia y de qué forma se interrelacionan ambiente y genética en ella.

A lo largo de la historia, el estudio de la inteligencia siempre ha formado parte de las discusiones de una sociedad que ha utilizado el término como símbolo de la evolución que jerarquiza las capacidades para aprender, decidir y solucionar problemas.

Es así que el hombre desarrolla estas habilidades adaptativas que cambian conforme a las necesidades o exigencias de su entorno.

El pedagogo francés Alfred Binet (1857-1911) propuso un método mediante el cual se calculaba el rendimiento cognoscitivo sobre la base de ejercicios que exigían comprensión, capacidad aritmética y dominio del vocabulario, entre otras cosas; de tal forma que introdujo un concepto que más adelante el psicólogo norteamericano Lewis Terman definiría como Cociente Intelectual (CI), también conocido como Coeficiente Intelectual. Bajo estas premisas se consideraron diversos parámetros para medir las características de inteligencia general, en donde se considera 100 como la media del CI, mientras que la obtención de 130 en este tipo de pruebas mostraría una superdotación intelectual.

Sin embargo, Howard Gardner, uno de los más reconocidos científicos sobre el tema en la actualidad, desafió el concepto cuestionando si realmente se puede medir la inteligencia con un número establecido por el CI. Para él, la capacidad de ordenar los pensamientos y coordinarlos directamente con las acciones, no corresponde a un solo tipo de inteligencia, sino a un sistema de inteligencias múltiples cuya comprensión puede ser más útil para estimular las potencialidades de un individuo que sólo evidenciar sus carencias o limitaciones, sobre todo según las premisas de un nuevo siglo.

Educación de Harvard, así como profesor de Neurología en la Facultad de Medicina de Universidad de Boston. Precisamente Proyecto Zero trabaja en una serie de proyectos de investigación vinculados a la educación y a la psicología educativa, tales como El Laboratorio de Innovaciones en el Aprendizaje- LILA (Learning Innovations Laboratory) y el Proyecto del Buen Juego (The Good Play Project), entre otros.

Partiendo de la idea de las inteligencias múltiples, este último proyecto estudia la relación entre los nuevos medios de comunicación digitales y el sentido de identidad, intimidad e imaginación de los niños y jóvenes. A partir de 2017, después de diez años de desarrollo del proyecto, El Buen Juego entró en una fase de investigación basada en la necesidad de crear otras herramientas pedagógicas que apoyen a los ciudadanos digitales que navegan en cambiantes océanos de conocimiento.

Los investigadores son conscientes de que los estímulos del entorno son decisivos en las formas en que moldeamos y desarrollamos nuestras inteligencias. La diversidad de medios para comunicarnos marcan diferentes premisas para realmente potencializar nuestras capacidades intelectuales. Los programas englobados en Proyecto Zero también buscan examinar la naturaleza de la creatividad no sólo como herramienta de supervivencia individual, sino social, en donde la multiplicidad de conocimientos pueda provocar adaptaciones en grupo.

GENES Y NEURONAS

El desarrollo de habilidades que realmente funcionen para solucionar problemas cotidianos, de menor o mayor complejidad, en una realidad global y cambiante, también tiene que ver con la carga hereditaria, cuyo análisis, por cierto, parece haberse intensificado en la última década a través de diferentes trincheras.

Diversos estudios científicos brindan importantes pistas sobre cómo se asocian las habilidades intelectuales con los factores genéticos. La investigación conductual genética puede incluso ayudar a identificar más eficazmente el potencial educativo y profesional de un individuo. El año pasado, investigadores de la Universidad Libre de Amsterdam publicaron un estudio basado en
una muestra de casi 80 mil individuos donde identificaron 52 genes que tienen una relación directa con el desarrollo de la inteligencia o inteligencias, según el concepto de Gardner.

Por otra parte, un estudio recientemente publicado en la revista Nature y encabezado por la doctora Delilah Zabaneh, especialista en genética estadística del King’s College en Londres, sugiere que un gen que codifica un miembro de la familia de proteínas ADAM (metaloproteasas-desintegrinas) tiene variantes relacionadas con las capacidades cognoscitivas en la población con una capacidad intelectual extremadamente alta.

Este tipo de investigaciones no sólo abren nuevos caminos para indagar las causas y consecuencias de las variantes genéticas que determinan la inteligencia, sino que también podrían ayudar a identificar los senderos biológicos que regulan mejor funciones cognoscitivas tanto en un organismo sano como en otro deteriorado por la enfermedad.

**LA INTELIGENCIA ARTIFICIAL ES MÁS REAL**

Hace cuarenta años salió a la luz pública que el cerebro de Albert Einstein había sido diseccionado y fotografiado poco después de su muerte por el patólogo Thomas Harvey. El ánimo por entender el origen de la inteligencia pareció ubicarse en un terreno sombrío, sin embargo, estas imágenes han servido para que con nuevas técnicas se pueda indagar en diversos detalles sobre la inteligencia del genio con algunas otras pistas sobre la inteligencia en general.

En uno de los trabajos al respecto, un equipo de investigadores, liderados por el científico chino Wei Wei Men, publicó en la revista Brain el artículo El cuerpo calloso del cerebro de Albert Einstein: ¿otra clave para su inteligencia? Las imágenes que tomó el patólogo Thomas Harvey, y que se encontraban resguardadas en el Museo Nacional de Salud y Medicina de los EU, fueron analizadas principalmente en la estructura que se encuentra en lo profundo del cerebro y que conecta los hemisferios cerebrales, derecho e izquierdo, coordinando las funciones mediante un haz de fibras nerviosas.

Se emplearon imágenes de alta resolución del interior del cerebro de Einstein y se codificó el espesor de los haces de fibras nerviosas. Utilizando muestras comparativas de grupos de control,
las conclusiones fueron que los hemisferios cerebrales del físico estaban mejor conectados que la media estudiada. Ni el peso del cerebro (que de hecho en el caso de Einstein era un poco más pequeño que la media de su edad: 1230 gramos), ni la cantidad de neuronas parecen tan determinantes como las conexiones que se establecen mediante ellas.

Precisamente estas conexiones son las que los expertos en Inteligencia Artificial (IA) tratan de imitar. Desde un teléfono hasta un auto, ambos capaces de recibir órdenes y ejecutarlas, son apellidados con la palabra inteligente, ¿pero realmente los objetos pueden integrarse bajo un concepto que parecería referirse sólo a virtudes humanas? La respuesta es positiva y parece aproximarse cada vez más a nuestra realidad cotidiana.

La IA puede definirse como el medio por el cual diversos dispositivos realizan tareas que normalmente requieren de la inteligencia humana, como solucionar problemas, discriminar entre distintos objetos y responder efectivamente a órdenes verbales. Las llamadas redes neuronales son un campo muy importante dentro del desarrollo de la Inteligencia Artificial. Inspirándose en el comportamiento del cerebro, principalmente el concerniente a las neuronas y sus conexiones, se tratan de crear modelos artificiales que le solucionen problemas a los humanos, como dirigir un auto, regular la luz de una habitación o realizar una búsqueda rápida en internet.

Basados en la investigación de las redes neuronales humanas se busca imitar el funcionamiento del cerebro y se utilizan técnicas algorítmicas convencionales parecidas a los procesos inductivos y deductivos del cerebro humano. El crecimiento en este tipo de investigaciones está avanzando a toda velocidad.

Según el libro El Futuro Calculado: la Inteligencia Artificial y su rol en la sociedad, lanzado por la compañía Microsoft a principios de este año, en 2038, los asistentes personales digitales estarán entrenados para anticiparse a nuestras necesidades, organizar nuestra agenda, preparar reuniones, ayudarnos a planificar nuestra vida social, contestar y orientar comunicaciones, y conducir coches. La inteligencia de las máquinas le brindará otro bien preciado a la inteligencia humana: tiempo.
Howard Gardner "Necesitamos flexibilidad, pero nos resistimos al cambio"

Por Sofía Beuchat | 17 de julio de 2018

Conocido por la teoría de las inteligencias múltiples, que presentó en 1983, hoy Howard Gardner -quien vendrá a Chile en agosto- está enfocado en cómo poner estas inteligencias al servicio del aprendizaje, no solo en la etapa formativa, sino a lo largo de todo el ciclo vital. El desafío de hoy, asegura, está en vencer la resistencia al cambio, que se funda en prejuicios y se fortalece en la era de las redes sociales.

La agenda de viajes de Howard Gardner -Doctor en Psicología de la Universidad de Harvard, conocido internacionalmente por su teoría de las inteligencias múltiples y autor de más de 30 libros- estuvo congelada por seis años: una investigación relacionada con la educación superior había restringido su posibilidad de dictar conferencias, sin importar cuánto se lo pidieran. Pero ahora, con los datos ya recopilados y el proceso de conclusiones en curso, abrió un espacio para venir a Chile: el 22 de agosto estará en el Hotel W, invitado por Seminarium Certificación, para hablar sobre cómo cambiar las mentes en función de un mejor aprendizaje. Un tema vinculado con la investigación que lo ha tenido ocupado en estos últimos años, pero ha sido objeto de su interés desde hace varias décadas.

-Ahora tengo algo de tiempo para respirar y viajar. Felizmente, me acompañará mi esposa, Ellen Winner, quien dará una charla sobre artes y educación el lunes 20 en la Universidad de los Andes -cuenta con entusiasmo desde su oficina en Harvard, donde codirige el Proyecto Zero, centro de investigación sobre procesos de aprendizaje, y The Good Project, iniciativa que busca promover la excelencia, el compromiso y la ética en el ámbito de la educación.

En su clase magistral, adelanta Gardner, hablará sobre el cambio mental, tema que es el eje de su libro "Mentes Flexibles: El arte y la ciencia de saber cambiar nuestra opinión y la de los demás" (última edición, 2011). Tener una mente capaz de ajustar sus paradigmas y adaptarse a escenarios diferentes se vuelve cada vez más necesario en un mundo tan cambiante y rápido como el de hoy, asegura, pero no por ello se da con facilidad. Al revés: pareciera ser algo crecientemente difícil.
-El cambio mental es una meta complicada, porque los seres humanos tendemos a subestimar nuestra resistencia al cambio -opina.

Según el psicólogo, los seres humanos creemos que somos más flexibles y adaptables de lo que en realidad somos. Pero nuestras teorías, construidas desde la niñez en torno a la mente, la vida, el mundo físico o las otras personas, se levantan como un bastión difícil de derribar, por muy erróneas que puedan ser.

Parte de la responsabilidad de esto está, según Gardner, en la disonancia cognitiva, que se produce cuando habitan en la mente ideas contradictorias o incompatibles, o cuando nuestras creencias no están en armonía con lo que hacemos.

-Esta disonancia llena la mente con evidencia contradictoria que no hace más que fortalecer los prejuicios y creencias previas- acota.

Las redes sociales, agrega, son el caldo de cultivo perfecto para que estos prejuicios no solo se mantengan, sino que además crezcan, se fortalezcan y multipliquen. Esto, a su juicio, es una "tendencia alarmante".

-Las redes y el auge de las noticias falsas hacen que sea más complejo averiguar qué es lo que está pasando realmente y qué es efectivamente confiable, lo que abre la puerta a creencias que no son ciertas -explica.

Gardner cree que el único antídoto contra esto es contar con una educación de excelencia, que entregue herramientas que permitan a las personas tener más filtros y más recursos para entender el mundo sin una mirada sesgada o prejuiciosa. Por eso, en el último tiempo ha centrado su área de investigación en el aprendizaje, siempre usando como base su famosa teoría de las inteligencias múltiples, difundida por primera vez en el libro "Estructuras de la Mente", de 1983. Según esta teoría, los individuos expresan su inteligencia en ocho maneras distintas -como la música o lo emocional- y no solo, como se trabajaba hasta entonces, a través del C.I. o Coeficiente Intelectual, que se basa únicamente en la lógica y el pensamiento matemático-lingüístico.

-Como psicólogo por más de 50 años, por supuesto que me interesa cómo funciona la mente y cómo esta se puede cambiar. Apenas empecé a hacer clases en una escuela de educación, hace ya casi 40 años, me empecé a interesar particularmente en el aprendizaje temprano, ese que se da durante la primera década de la vida. Pero hoy es claro que, en el futuro, el aprendizaje necesitará estar presente a lo largo del ciclo de la vida, por lo que en el último tiempo me he enfocado más en el aprendizaje adulto. Yo mismo tengo 75 años, ¡y espero seguir aprendiendo!

-¿Qué ha cambiado en el entendimiento del aprendizaje desde que su teoría de las inteligencias múltiples se hizo conocida a nivel mundial?

-Aunque muchos psicólogos no han sido muy entusiastas sobre esta teoría, este trabajo, y otros similares (como el de Daniel Goleman en torno a la inteligencia
emocional) han entrado en el léxico popular y en el conocimiento popular. La pluralidad de inteligencias es hoy reconocida por educadores, expertos y personas a cargo de la selección y promoción de personal. Desde mi experiencia, puedo testificar que una mirada plural de la inteligencia es estimulante para muchos individuos, especialmente para aquellos que no rinden bien en cierto tipo de pruebas.

-¿Cómo pueden los sistemas educacionales estandarizados adaptarse a las inteligencias múltiples de los estudiantes?

-Incluso cuando se necesiten pruebas y evaluaciones estandarizadas, no hay razón por la que se deba enseñar de una sola manera. Los profesores debieran individualizar tanto como les sea posible, enseñando en función de las fortalezas y tendencias de cada estudiante, y a la vez pluralizar, lo que significa enseñar conceptos y habilidades de múltiples maneras. Todo esto es más fácil, por supuesto, cuando las políticas educativas del país son flexibles, los profesores están bien entrenados y motivados.

En esta línea, Gardner rescata también la importancia de lo que llama "aprendizaje disciplinario", concepto que implica aprender a mirar, en cada disciplina, su sentido más trascendente y aplicable a otras áreas de la vida. Quien aprende historia, según Gardner, aprende también que cada historiador tiene para los mismos hechos explicaciones diferentes, y que esa mirada plural es importante para dimensionar los alcances de los hechos actuales. Así, quien realmente comprende, puede aplicar los conocimientos adquiridos de manera apropiada en nuevas situaciones.

Lo bueno y lo malo de las App

Junto a Gardner viene también la joven Katie Davis, quien realizó dos magísteres y un doctorado en desarrollo humano y educación, y en 2015 fue nombrada Rising Star por la Asociación para la Ciencia Psicológica en Estados Unidos. Es coautora de Gardner en su último libro, "La Generación App: Cómo la juventud de hoy navega con la identidad, la intimidad y la imaginación en el mundo digital", publicado en 2013, donde analiza el impacto de las nuevas tecnologías en las generaciones futuras.

Muchos consideran este volumen como lectura obligatoria para padres, educadores y responsables de políticas educativas, porque enciende una alarma sobre cómo los teléfonos inteligentes están afectando la creatividad y capacidad analítica de miles de personas en todo el mundo, además de crear individuos cada vez más solos y menos empáticos. Pero el libro no está exento de críticas: The Washington Post apuntó que los autores caían en el error de "atribuir todo lo que no les gusta de la gente joven a las apps" y que "su tono alarmista sugiere que alcanzaron sus conclusiones por adelantado".

-Esta es una crítica completamente equivocada. ¡Cuesta creer que el crítico siquiera haya leído el libro! -se defiende Gardner. -El principal concepto en el libro es que las aplicaciones pueden ser habilitantes, en el sentido de ayudar a los individuos a hacer
nuevas cosas y comportarse más flexiblemente, o bien dependientes, al hacer que los estudiantes dejen de insistir cuando no pueden llevar a cabo una tarea rápidamente. (...) Hemos visto que cuando la información no está disponible de manera inmediata, los estudiantes se sienten frustrados con facilidad y se rinden o asumen que el asunto simplemente no es importante.

Que ocurra una cosa o la otra, dice Gardner, depende de cómo se hagan las Apps, de qué instrucciones se den para aprovecharlas, de cómo se observe a otros utilizarlas y también de cómo la sociedad, en tanto usuaria, decide relacionarse con ellas.

-¿Quién está a cargo? ¿Las aplicaciones o nosotros? -pregunta el psicólogo.

-¿Podrían las nuevas tecnologías llegar a desarrollar un tipo de inteligencia que se sume a las ocho descritas por usted en su teoría de inteligencias múltiples?

-Pienso que no. La tecnología saca provecho de las inteligencias lógicas, cinéticas y lingüísticas. Las redes sociales, por otro lado, invocan la inteligencia interpersonal. Si estas inteligencias no pudieran explicar algunas conductas y competencias, entonces consideraría la posibilidad de que existieran nuevos tipos de inteligencias. Pero la evolución trabaja muy lentamente.

-¿Cuál es su visión sobre la inteligencia artificial?

-Me agrada cuando nos ayuda a llevar a cabo ciertas tareas de manera más eficiente y equitativa. Espero que tengamos una buena comunicación y colaboración entre esta inteligencia y los humanos. Pero sería una pesadilla que nos llegara a reemplazar completamente (...) En una era en la que tantas tareas pueden ser llevadas a cabo por computadores y por la inteligencia artificial, las habilidades sociales y emocionales, las capacidades que son distintivamente humanas (como la empatía, el compañerismo y la capacidad de hacer juicios sobre otros) son cada vez más importantes.

-Muchos piensan que ahora que la información está fácilmente disponible, ya no se necesita aprender datos, sino flexibilidad y herramientas emocionales. ¿Está de acuerdo?

-Buena pregunta. Está claro que hoy la información, entendida como hechos o datos, está al alcance de los dedos: no tenemos que buscar por horas o incluso días. Pero, ¿qué datos debiéramos buscar y por qué? ¿Y cómo reunimos esa información de manera que sea razonable y que ilumine al mundo, en vez de ofuscarlo? Por otro lado, la flexibilidad, que es la apertura al cambio y al cambio mental, es más importante hoy que hace cien años, pero siempre ha sido valiosa y siempre ha caracterizado a las sociedades más exitosas y productivas, ya en sea en la Antigüedad o en el siglo pasado.