

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

World Class. Face to Face.

Building Successful Learning Communities



Educator's Handbook

2017 Edition



Washington State University

World Class, Face to Face

As a land-grant institution, Washington State University represents a partnership between the federal government and the State of Washington. The purpose of this partnership is to provide cutting edge research that will benefit the people of the state.

WSU Extension

As the educational outreach unit of the university, WSU Extension's purpose is to take the research done at the university back out to the public, where it can best be put to use. We strive to help people develop leadership skills and use research-based knowledge to improve their economic status and quality of life. We believe in the people of Washington and the importance of investing in their capacity to face the challenges and opportunities of today's changing world.

College of Education

While WSU's College of Education has emerged as a leader in the field of education, local Extension programs have been delivering high quality education for over a hundred years.

Our experiential trainings offer the key ingredients to second order change. The research based approach targets three main objectives for developing successful youth:

- **Reducing risk factors**
- **Increasing protective factors**
- **Improving readiness to learn**

If you have any questions about the 'Building Successful Learning Communities' trainings, please contact the program trainer below:

Scott VanderWey, Associate Professor and Director, 4-H Adventure Education
vanderwey@wsu.edu

<http://extension.wsu.edu/4h/youth/4-h-adventure-education/building-successful-learning-communities/>

Our programs and services are available to all without discrimination.

Building Successful Learning Communities



The intention of this program is for each participant to acquire the necessary skills and experiences they need in order to integrate the following principles and practices into their learning communities.

Learning Community

Principles

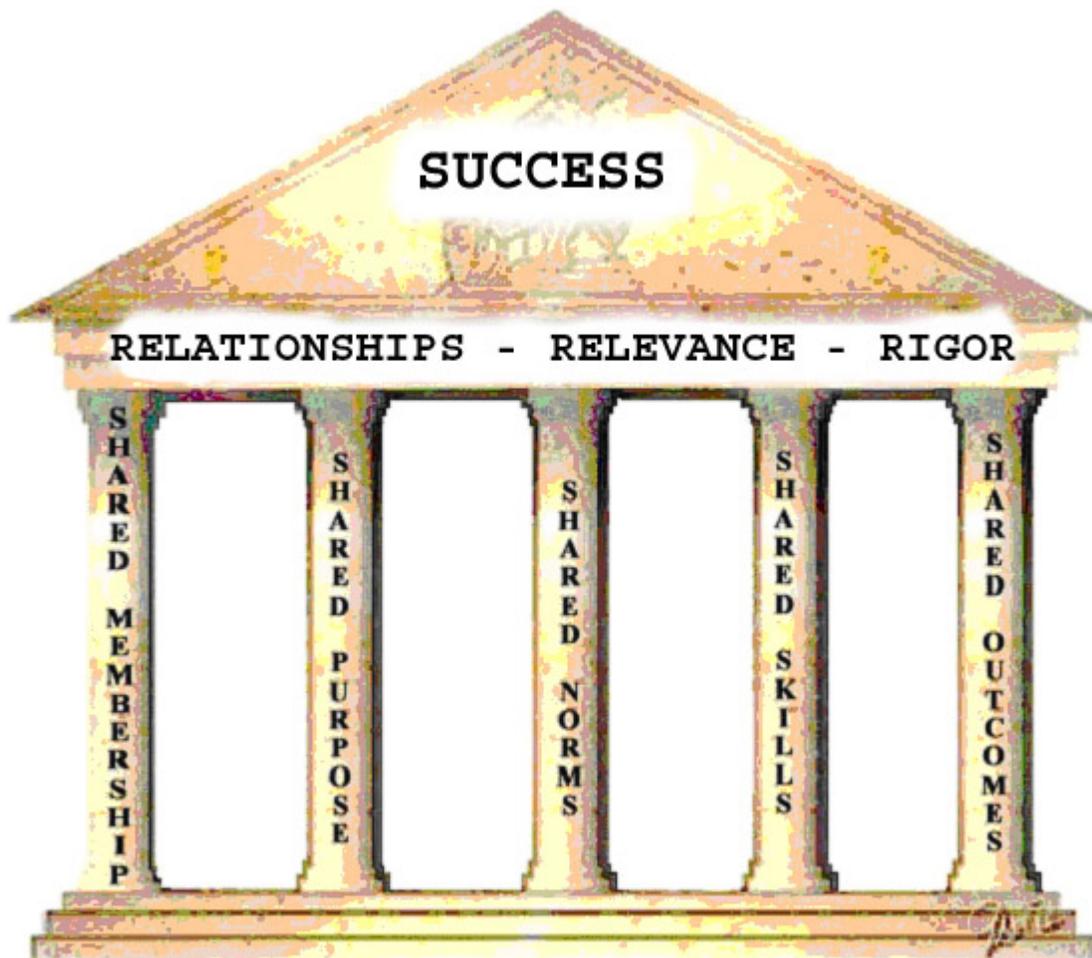
- **Relationship Centered:** Every situation offers us a chance to build strong relationships.
- **Partnership Minded:** Our true potential lies in having power with another, not power over another.
- **Intentional:** Our capacity is found in our reasons for being together.
- **Affirmative:** The qualities we affirm in others will nurture and grow.
- **Changing:** Improvement can only happen through change.

Learning Community

Practices

- **Shared Membership:** Creating a sense of belonging is the essence of any community.
- **Shared Purpose:** Creating a meaningful reason for being together is vital to the success of the community.
- **Shared Norms:** Creating the behavior expectations sets the culture of the community.
- **Shared Skills:** Creating the social and emotional skills needed to be successful.
- **Shared Outcomes:** Creating meaningful goals and objectives to reach together

Learning Community Model^(C)



A 'Successful Learning Community' is a group of individuals that intentionally create the above shared qualities in order to achieve the relationships, relevance, and rigor they need to discover their full potential.

Learning Community Model



Shared Membership

In a community, it's important that everyone feels welcome and included. If individuals don't feel accepted and valued for who they are, they are unlikely to take healthy risks and try new things. Furthermore, they are unlikely to fully contribute to the best of their ability. How might you create shared membership in your learning community?



Shared Purpose

As a community, a shared mental model about why we are together as a group is important. This can be created as a motto, a mission statement, or something more symbolic like a Mandala, or a community puzzle. Each member of the community should be able to recognize the relevance behind the lesson or activity.



Shared Norms

As a community, deciding how we are going to behave together is vital. Taking time to create shared norms allows safety to grow and nurtures the willingness to take risks into the unknown areas where learning takes place.



Shared Skills

As a community, we need to share a set of skills that will allow us to be successful. The intentional teaching and practice of social and emotional skills is foundational to the success of the community and their goals together.



Shared Outcomes:

As a community, a common understanding the goals and outcomes we are trying to achieve together increases our level of success. Just like in sports, if we don't know what goal to shoot for, it's hard to be successful!

Application Ideas

Shared Membership

How do you build shared membership in your classroom?
How do you help everyone learn each other's name and build connection to the group?
What tools do you use to help make this happen?

Examples include: nametags, name games, name bingo, group t-shirts, check-in, buttons

Shared Purpose

How do you build a sense of shared purpose within your classroom learning community?
How do you help all participants understand and co-create the reason for participating?

Examples include: Group Constitution, Group Motto, Purpose Shield, Mission Statement

Shared Norms

What processes do you use to build positive relationships around behavior norms?

Examples include: Full Value Contract, Ideal Team, Recipe for Success

Shared Skills

What experiences do you use to build social and emotional life skills that students need for academic success?

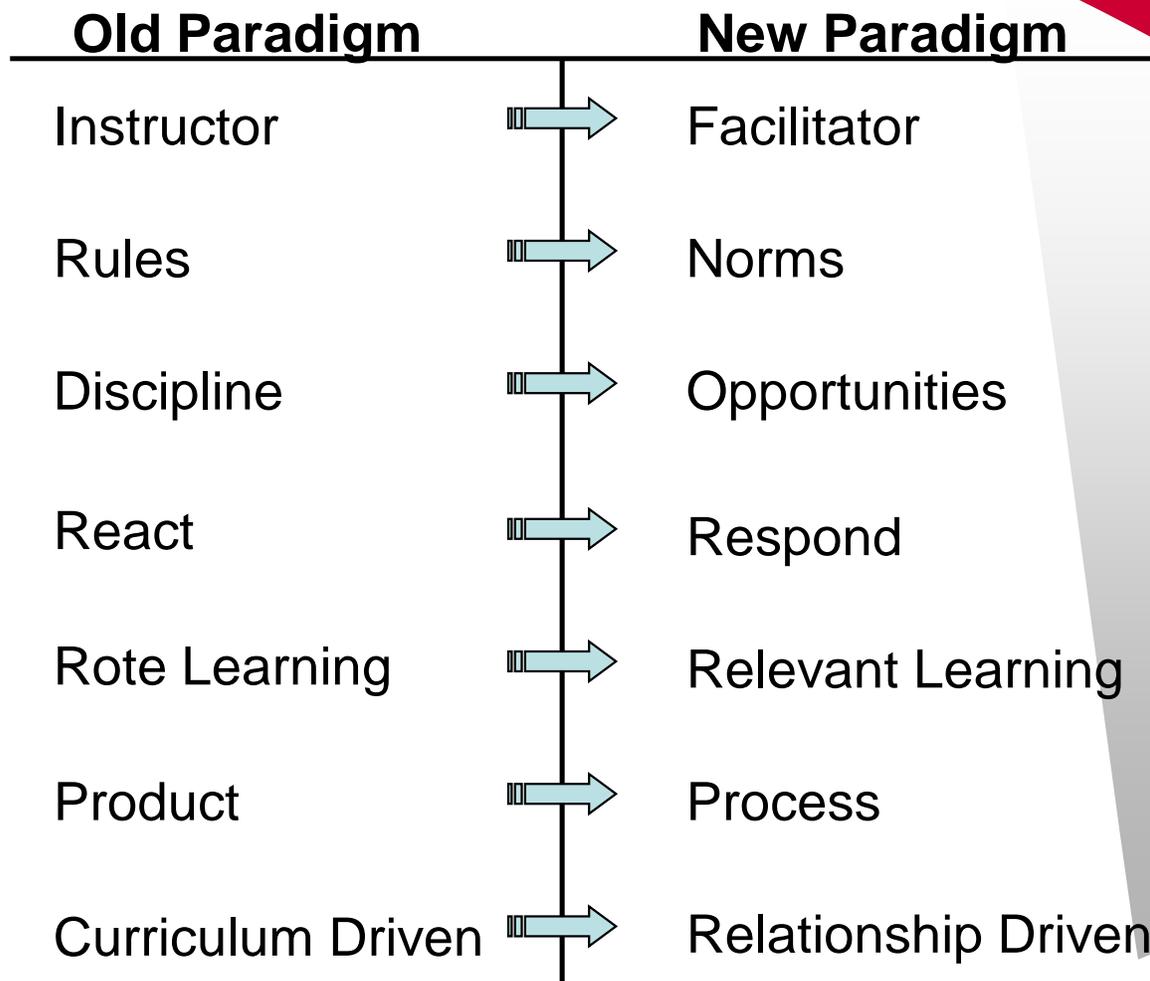
Examples include: Discussion Circles, Back to Back, Snowball Fight, Gotcha, Beach Ball Reflection, Mock Trials, Public Speaking, Group Research, etc.

Shared Outcomes:

What community building process do you use to build relationships and awareness around your learning outcomes?

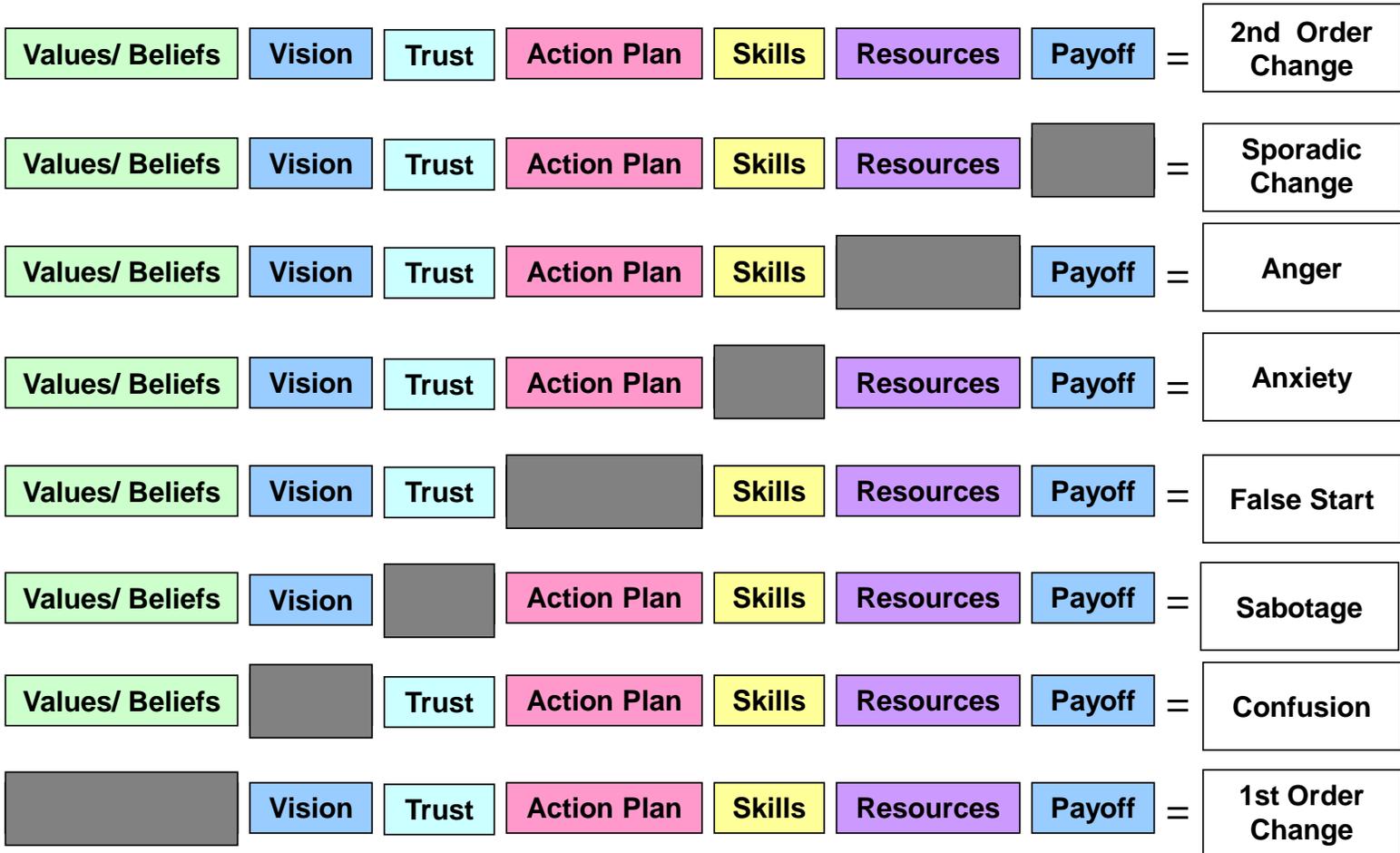
Examples include: Posting desired outcomes on the board for students to read and understand, referring to the outcomes throughout the lesson, using clear rubrics (when appropriate, created by the students).

Shifting Paradigms



Shifting Paradigms, Using a frame of Positive Behavioral Supports and Response to Intervention, by the use of Evidence Based Practices.

Creating Second Order Change



First order change is a temporary change.
 Second order change is lasting change!

Objective Evidence

Why Learning Communities?

“In a case study estimating the relative influence of 30 different categories of educational, psychological, and social variables, the learning community exerted the most influence on academic performance.”

-Herbert Walberg (Psychology and Educational Practice)

“The most promising strategy for sustained school improvement is developing the ability to function as a Learning Community.”

-Richard DeFour (Learning communities at work)

“The difference between successful students and troubled students is the presence the 40 Developmental Assets. “

-Search Institute (what kids need to succeed)

“At best, IQ contributes 20 % to the factors of success, which leaves 80% to Emotional Intelligence (EQ).”

-Daniel Goleman (Emotional Intelligence)

“Emotional resources are the most important of all resources.”

- Ruby Payne (Poverty Frameworks)

“No significant learning occurs without a significant relationship.”

-Dr. James Comer (Leave no child behind)

“The single factor to every successful change initiative is that relationships improved.”

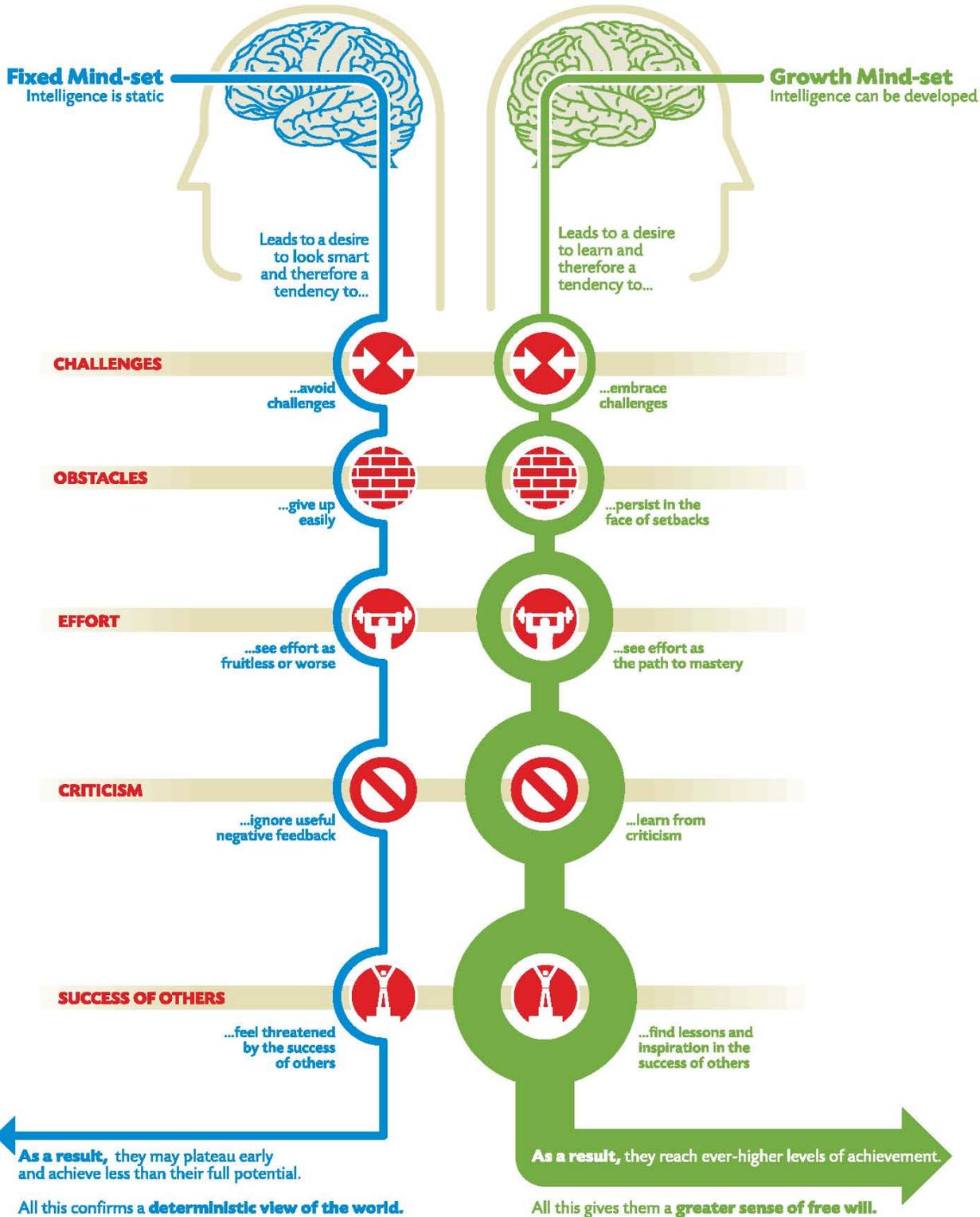
-Michael Fullan (Leading in a culture of change)

“Learning is only possible after a student’s social, emotional, and physical needs have been met.”

- Council on Adolescent Development

“The studies that compare the performance of students in cooperative classrooms verses traditional ones, show significant academic gains favoring students in cooperative classrooms.”

-Spencer Kagan (Cooperative Learning)



GRAPHIC BY NIGEL HOLMES

40 Developmental Assets™

Search Institute™ has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring, and responsible.



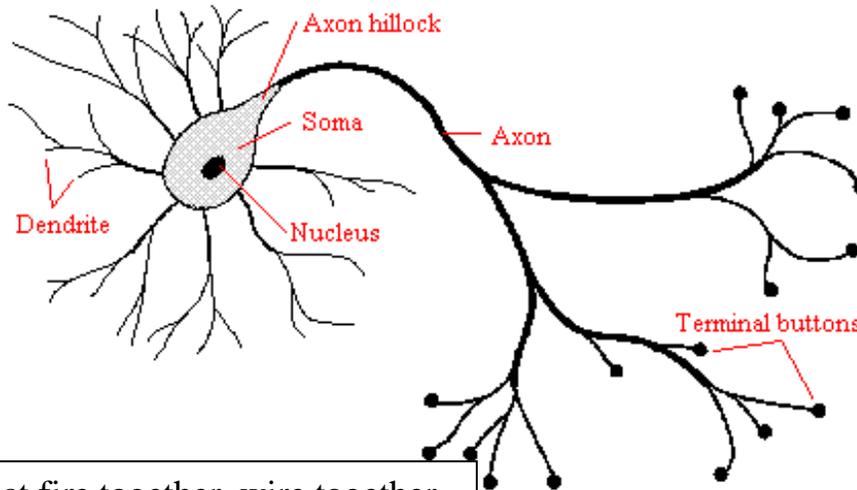
| Category | Asset Name and Definition | |
|------------------------|---|---|
| External Assets | Support <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family Support-Family life provides high levels of love and support. 2. Positive Family Communication-Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents. 3. Other Adult Relationships-Young person receives support from three or more nonparent adults. 4. Caring Neighborhood-Young person experiences caring neighbors. 5. Caring School Climate-School provides a caring, encouraging environment. 6. Parent Involvement in Schooling-Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school. | |
| | Empowerment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Community Values Youth-Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth. 8. Youth as Resources-Young people are given useful roles in the community. 9. Service to Others-Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week. 10. Safety-Young person feels safe at home, school, and in the neighborhood. | |
| | Boundaries & Expectations <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 11. Family Boundaries-Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person's whereabouts. 12. School Boundaries-School provides clear rules and consequences. 13. Neighborhood Boundaries-Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior. 14. Adult Role Models-Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior. 15. Positive Peer Influence-Young person's best friends model responsible behavior. 16. High Expectations-Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well. | |
| | Constructive Use of Time <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Creative Activities-Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts. 18. Youth Programs-Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community. 19. Religious Community-Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution. 20. Time at Home-Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week. | |
| | Internal Assets | Commitment to Learning <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 21. Achievement Motivation-Young person is motivated to do well in school. 22. School Engagement-Young person is actively engaged in learning. 23. Homework-Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day. 24. Bonding to School-Young person cares about her or his school. 25. Reading for Pleasure-Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week. |
| | | Positive Values <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 26. Caring-Young person places high value on helping other people. 27. Equality and Social Justice-Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty. 28. Integrity-Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs. 29. Honesty-Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy." 30. Responsibility-Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility. 31. Restraint-Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs. |
| | | Social Competencies <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 32. Planning and Decision Making-Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices. 33. Interpersonal Competence-Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills. 34. Cultural Competence-Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds. 35. Resistance Skills-Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations. 36. Peaceful Conflict Resolution-Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently. |
| | | Positive Identity <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Personal Power-Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me." 38. Self-Esteem-Young person reports having a high self-esteem. 39. Sense of Purpose-Young person reports that "my life has a purpose." 40. Positive View of Personal Future-Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future. |

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Rewiring the Brain

One of the most comprehensive research bodies that support the Building of Successful Learning communities is Brain Research. This relevant information reveals how the brain learns and grows, and is fundamental to understanding your role as a 'facilitator'.



Neurons that fire together, wire together.

brin rules

Dr John Medina Quotes

"If you wanted to create an education environment that was directly opposed to what the brain was good at doing, you probably would design something like a classroom."

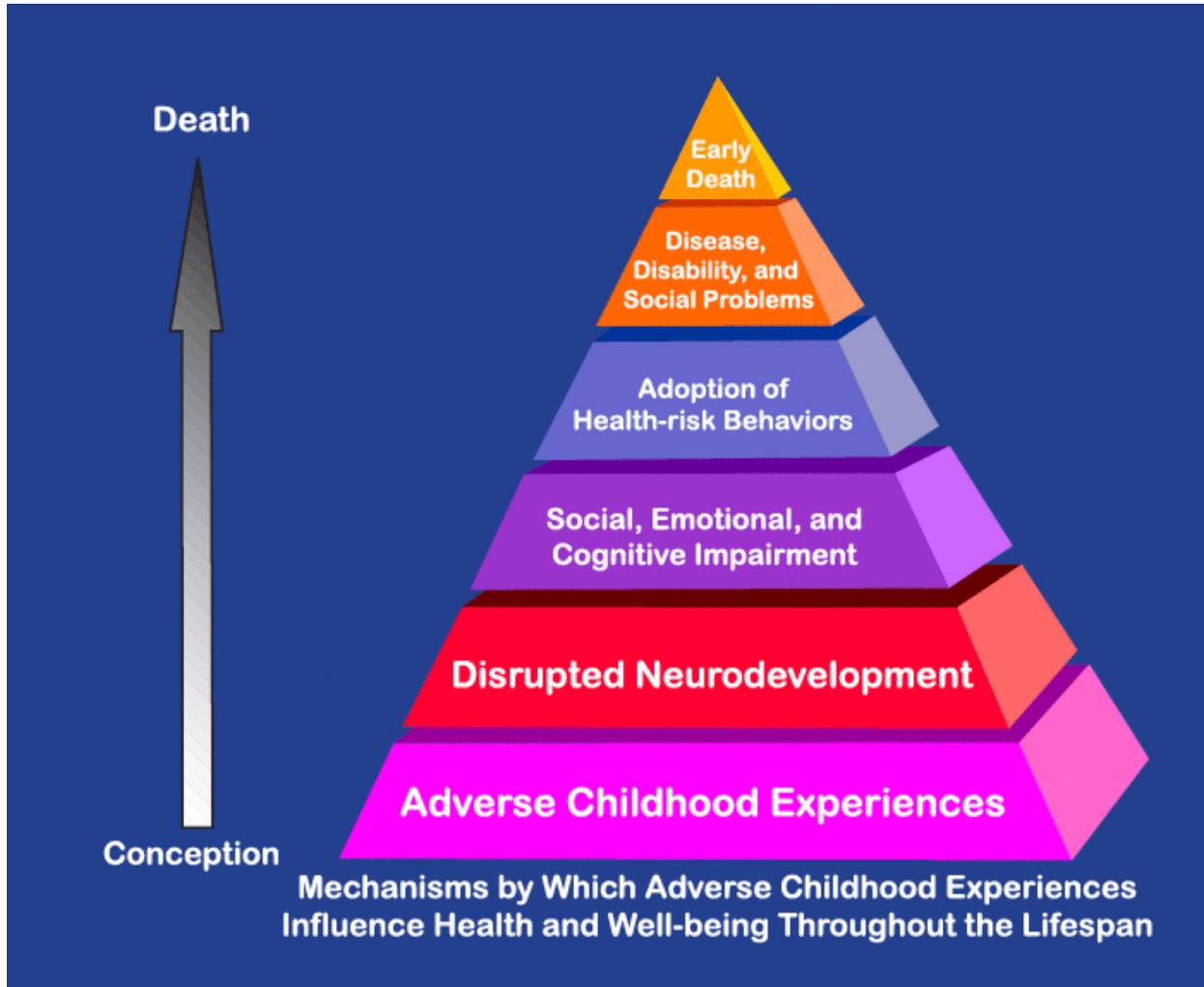
"I wish classrooms were designed with the brain in mind."

"If we started over, curiosity would be the most vital part of both demolition crew and reconstruction crew."

brain rules

-  **EXERCISE | Rule #1:** Exercise boosts brain power.
-  **SURVIVAL | Rule #2:** The human brain evolved, too.
-  **WIRING | Rule #3:** Every brain is wired differently.
-  **ATTENTION | Rule #4:** We don't pay attention to boring things.
-  **SHORT-TERM MEMORY | Rule #5:** Repeat to remember.
-  **LONG-TERM MEMORY | Rule #6:** Remember to repeat.
-  **SLEEP | Rule #7:** Sleep well, think well.
-  **STRESS | Rule #8:** Stressed brains don't learn the same way.
-  **SENSORY INTEGRATION | Rule #9:** Stimulate more of the senses.
-  **VISION | Rule #10:** Vision trumps all other senses.
-  **GENDER | Rule #11:** Male and female brains are different.
-  **EXPLORATION | Rule #12:** We are powerful and natural explorers.

Adverse Childhood Experiences

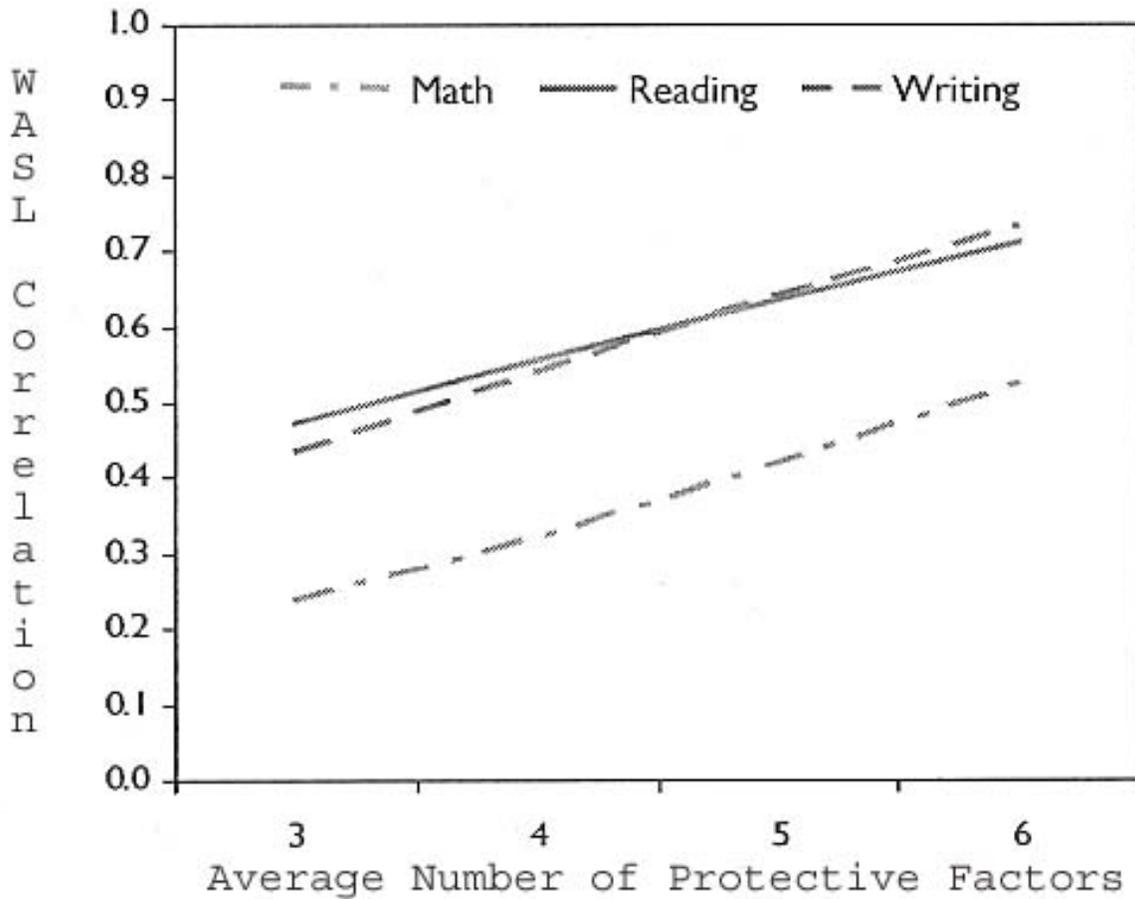


The prevalence and consequences of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and toxic stress have a harmful effects to health later on in life.

We measured the prevalence of eight adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), consisting of whether the child ever:

1. Lived with a parent or guardian who got divorced or separated
2. Lived with a parent or guardian who died
3. Lived with a parent or guardian who served time in jail or prison
4. Lived with anyone who was mentally ill or suicidal, or severely depressed for more than a couple of weeks
5. Lived with anyone who had a problem with alcohol or drugs
6. Witnessed a parent, guardian, or other adult in the household behaving violently toward another (e.g., slapping, hitting, kicking, punching, or beating each other up)
7. Was ever the victim of violence or witnessed any violence in his or her neighborhood
8. Experienced economic hardship “somewhat often” or “very often” (i.e., the family found it hard to cover costs of food and housing).

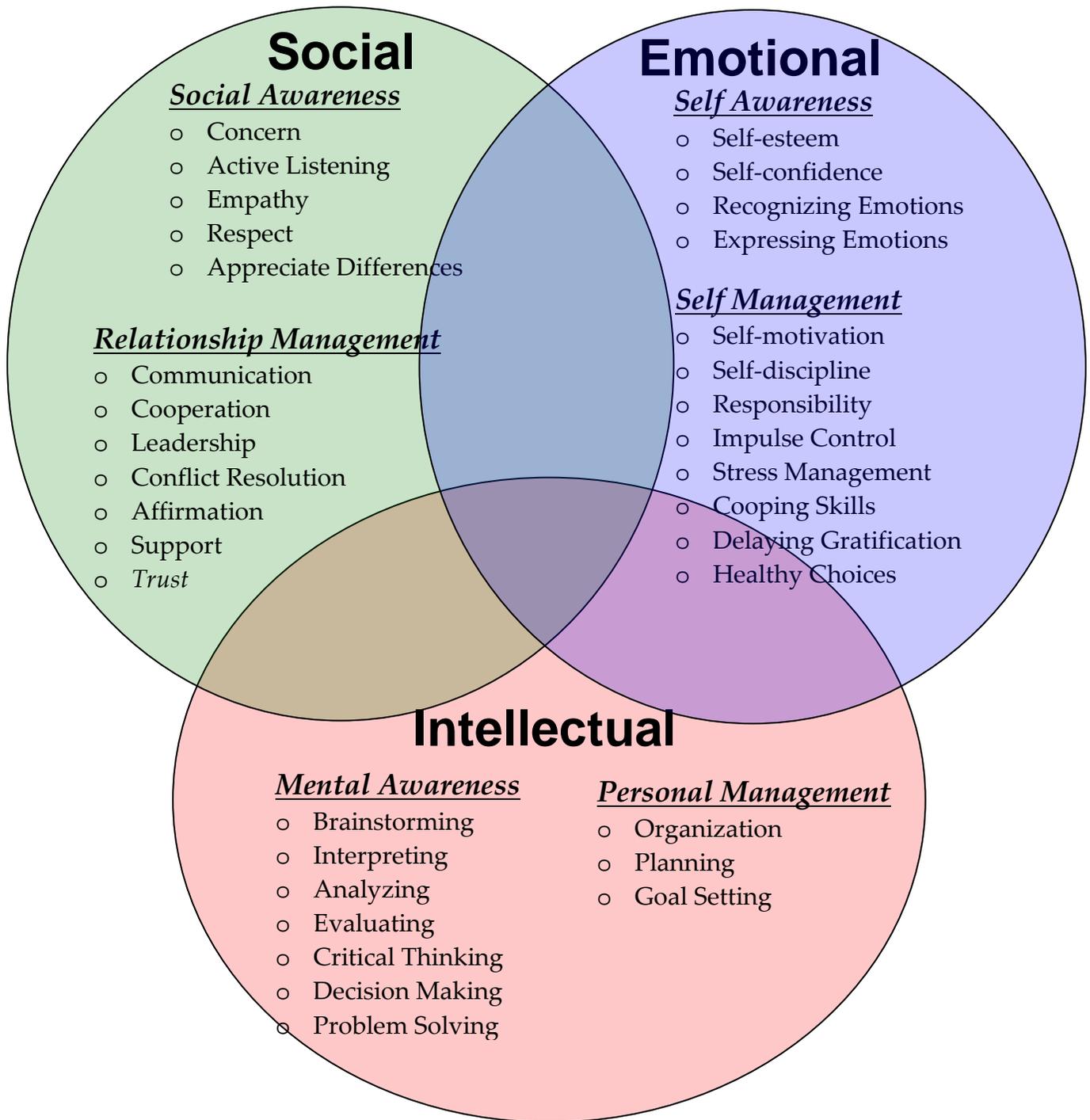
WASL Correlation



Michael Arthur, PHD University of WA in collaboration with OSPI

The more developmental assets that can be built in young people, the more “Protective Factors” they have that lead to their overall success in school and in life.

Life Skills



Growth Circles

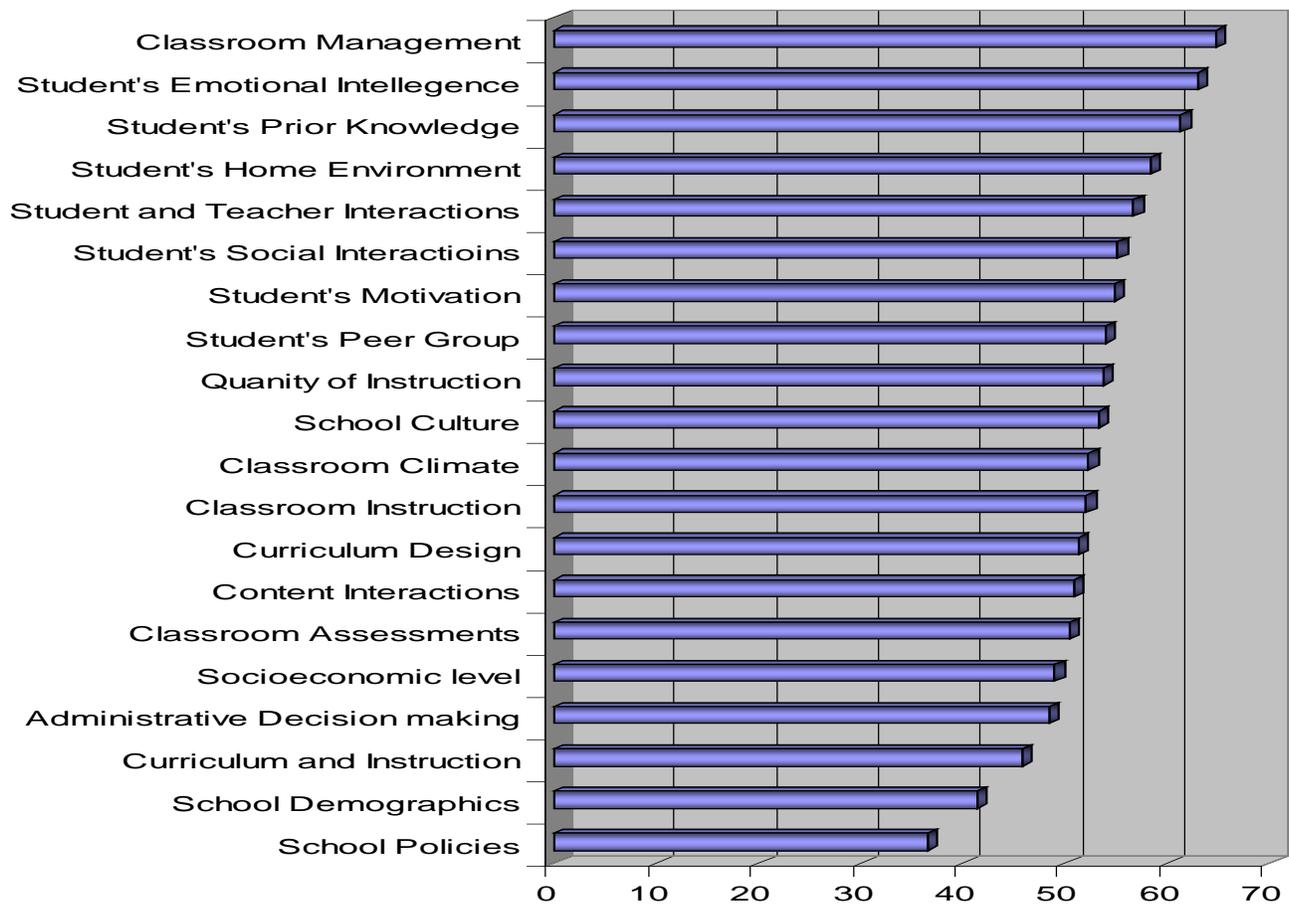
Growth circles allow us to see that we all have a target area for growth in every experience.

The Growth Circle concept is based on the idea that we are all individuals with unique strengths and weaknesses. We each have things that are easy for us (things within our comfort circle) and we have things that are not easy or comfortable, things that stretch and challenge us (our growth circle). It is in this growth circle that learning occurs.

If we wish to grow mentally, socially and emotionally as human beings, we cannot simply repeatedly do the things that are easy. We must confront the things that are difficult and uncomfortable. We must learn to step outside our comfort zone and risk the dis-ease of our growth zones. This is often referred to as 'pushing our growing edges.' Fortunately, as we push our growing edges with increased frequency, we become accustomed to the dis-ease, and suddenly we find our comfort circles have expanded. Once stretched to new limits our comfort circle never regains its original form.

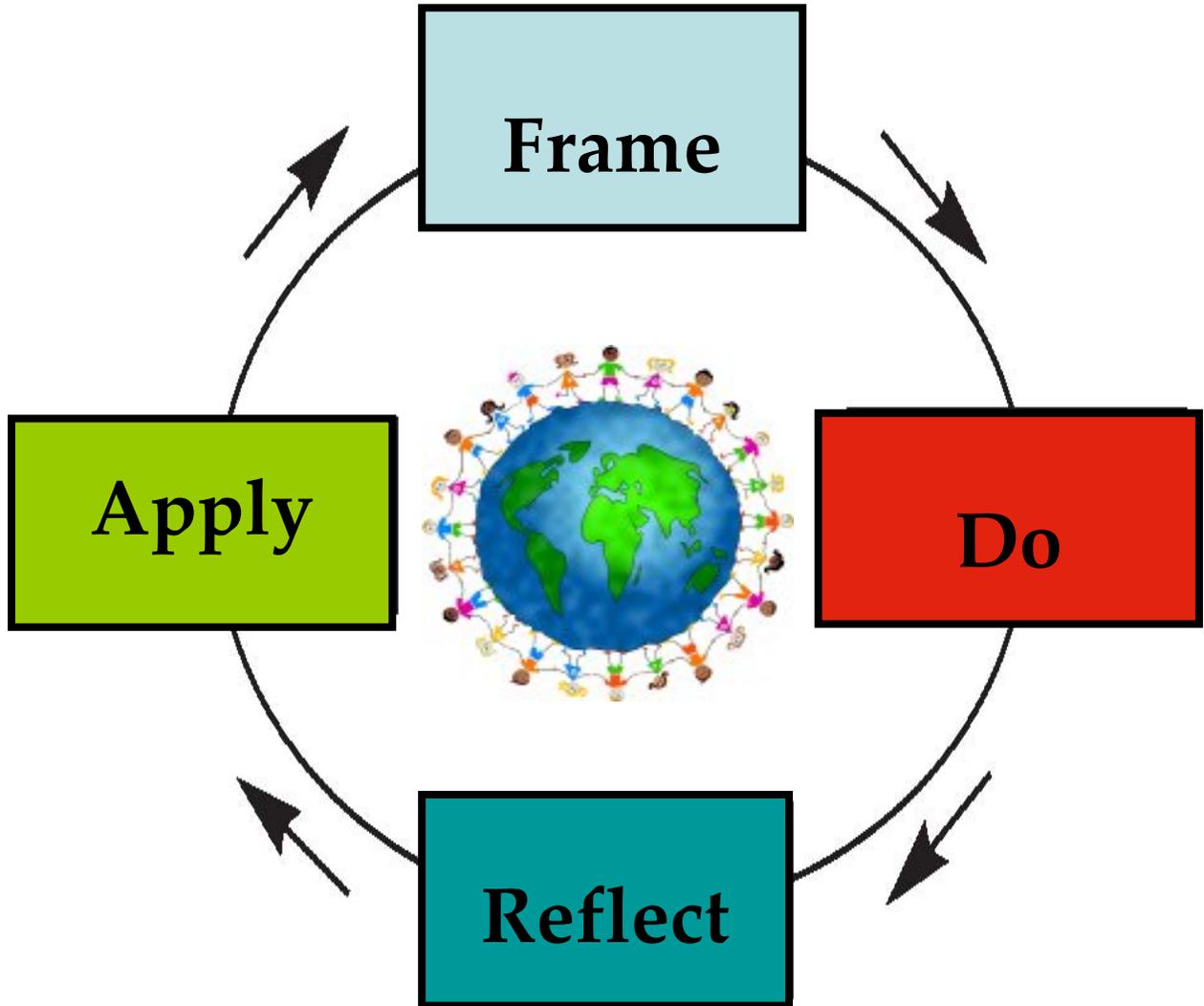


What Influences Learning?



Research from:
'Psychology and Educational Practice'
By Harbert and Walberg

The Learning Community Method



Step 1: Frame

Create a context of why you are doing what you are doing.

Step 2: Do

Allow the community to take an active role in the learning experience.

Step 3: Reflect

Structure an intentional way to reflect on the experience.

Step 4: Apply

Allow for meaningful application of what was learned as a community.

Framing

Introduction

How many times have you heard a student say, "What's the point?" or, "Why are we doing this?" Students need to have a premise for why they are engaging in an activity in order for it to be relevant to them.

Framing creates a sense of excitement, fun, and relevance. It also focuses the group on the upcoming task. It is the facilitator's opportunity to paint a common picture for the group, giving them the information they will need in order to meet the given objectives.

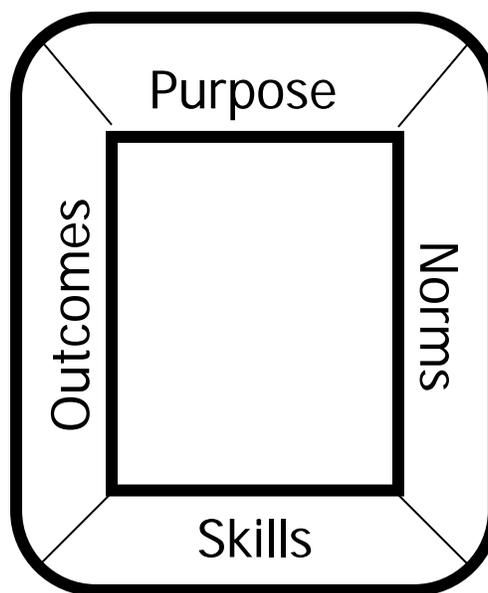
Building the Frame

Use the frame to outline the basic elements of the Learning Community.

1. What's the **purpose** of this activity?
2. What **norms** will be important?
3. What **skills** (life skills & GLRs) will we be developing?
4. What will the **outcome** look like and how will we evaluate success?

Methods for Framing

There are several different methods for framing an activity. The most basic approach is to directly tell the students what the purpose, norms, skills and outcome will be. This method may be appropriate with younger students or when time is limited. However, you can also teach the students to identify the purpose, norms, skills and outcomes themselves.



Reflecting

Introduction

The ultimate goal of the facilitator is to assist students in learning from their experiences. When we intentionally ask participants to reflect on their experiences and identify what they have learned, we create opportunities for growth to take place. When we then provide opportunities for students to apply what they have learned to a new situation, we create new behavior patterns. Ultimately, we want to help students learn how to apply the skills, concepts, and attitudes they have learned to future real life situations.

Methods

Here are several different methods for debriefing any lesson or activity:

Large Group Reflection

- Pass the knot
- Talking object
- Inside-out
- What Clicked
- Kodak Moment
- Compliment Circle
- Processing Cards

Small Group or Individual Reflection

- Discussion Circles
- Popcorn Sharing
- Mentor Circle
- Processing Cards
- Dice Reflection
- Processing ball
- Scooch
- Back-to-back, front to front
- Journal
- Text a friend

Apply the Method

Choose one lesson and explore how you might incorporate the Experiential Learning Community method into the activity?

Name of Activity:

Learning Community Pillar Targeted (Objective):

| Experiential Learning Element | Guiding Questions | Comments |
|--|---|----------|
| Frame- | How will you set up the activity to create a sense of excitement and fun? What is the purpose? (Relevance) What norms will be important? What skills will we be developing? What will the outcome look like and how will we evaluate success? | |
| Do- (Rigor & Relationships) | What will young people do during the activity? What is your role during the activity? | |
| Reflect- (Reflection) | What questions might you use to help people reflect? What methods might you use? | |
| Apply- (Relevance) | How might you help students see how they could apply what they learned to other areas of their life? | |

Community Building Tools

Check-Ins: Use Check-Ins to build relationships and awareness on how people around you are feeling.

- Weather Report
- Scale of 1-10
- Thumb Meter
- Car Tune-Up
- Dr. Report
- Fist of Five
- Cartoons
- Ice Cream Flavor
- Animal
- Colors
- High-low

Name Games: Use name games to build relationships and awareness of the names within your community.

- Name Toss
- Zip, Zap, Zoom
- Whaump' Um
- Peek-a-who
- Duck
- Animated Name
- Name stretch
- Warp speed

Shared Norms: Use processing tools to build positive relationships around behavior norms in the community.

- Ideal Family
- Recipe for Success
- Full meal deal
- Power to Be
- Team Contract

Energizers: Use energizers to build relationships and awareness through energy and fun.

- Group Juggle
- Speed Rabbit
- Smaug's Jewel
- Giants, Elves, Wizards
- Evolution
- Toe-To-Toe
- Foul Play
- Close Pin Tag
- Everybody's It
- Screaming Ninjas
- If you knew me
- Inside out
- Triangle Tag
- Snowball fight
- Gotcha

Initiatives: Use initiatives to build relationships and awareness through structured team building activities.

- Acid River
- All Aboard
- Balancing Pole
- Balloon Towers
- Balloon Trolleys
- Blind Polygon
- Clay Sculptures
- Coney Island
- Electric Fence
- Everybody Up
- Frisbee Grab
- Helium Hula Hoop
- Hula Hoop Pass
- Human Knots
- Human Ladder
- Jelly Roll
- Jump Rope
- Key Punch
- Knot In a Rope
- Marble Role
- Minefield
- Moon Ball
- Parachutes
- Pass the Can
- Porcupine
- Silent Opera
- Star Wars
- Spider's Web
- Structures
- Magic Carpet
- Toxic Waste
- TP Shuffle
- Traffic Jam
- Transporter
- Trolleys
- Tug-a-war
- Yurts Circle



Opportunity Form

1. Where do you have an opportunity to grow and get better?

2. What positive things could come out of you growing in this area?

3. How can we support you in this growth?

Signed _____ Date _____

Support Person _____ Notes _____



Community Building Ideas

- Do a check-in each day and greet participants by name
- Do at least one community-building activity at each meeting/event
- Attend related professional development opportunities
- View 'opportunities' with members and leaders as your most important work
- View your trainings and workshops within the learning community framework
- Focus on positive relationships
- Create a safe place for honest feedback
- Model with language and actions the culture you wish to create
- Give affirmations on a regular basis
- Teach and practice social and emotional skills
- See challenges as an opportunity to learn and grow
- Frame activities with meaningful purpose
- Build trust in community so people will step in their growth circles



Community Building Websites:

<http://extension.wsu.edu/4h/youth/4-h-adventure-education/building-successful-learning-communities/>

<http://extension.wsu.edu/4h/youth/4-h-adventure-education/locations/>

www.responsiveclassroom.org

www.search-institute.org

www.training-wheels.com

www.casel.org

www.teamworkandteamplay.com

www.aee.org

www.tribes.com

www.co-operation.org

www.consciousdiscipline.com

- Challenge Course Resources
- Classroom Resources
- Developmental Asset Resources
- Experiential Learning Resources
- Social and Emotional Resources
- Team Building Resources
- Professional Development
- Learning Community Resources
- Cooperative Learning Resources
- Conscious Discipline Resources



Community Building Books:

| | |
|--|------------------|
| <u>The Journey to the Caring Classroom</u> | Laurie Frank |
| <u>Brain Rules</u> | John Medina |
| <u>Learning to TRUST</u> | Marilyn Watson |
| <u>A Teachable Moment</u> | Jim Cain |
| <u>What Kids Need to Succeed</u> | Peter L Benson |
| <u>Professional Learning Communities</u> | Richard DuFour |
| <u>Masterful Facilitation</u> | Glenn Kiser |
| <u>Multiple Intelligences</u> | Thomas Armstrong |
| <u>Processing the Experience</u> | John L. Luckner |
| <u>Teaching with the Brain in Mind</u> | Eric Jensen |
| <u>Tribes</u> | Jeanne Gibbs |
| <u>Beyond Discipline</u> | Alfie Kohn |
| <u>A Healthy Classroom</u> | Michael Grinder |
| <u>Brain Matters</u> | Patricia Wolfe |
| <u>Cooperative Learning</u> | Spencer Kagan |

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Notes

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