

What can we do to foster the love of learning that is the birthright of every child?

- Intellectual curiosity
- Thinking skills
- Ownership
- Track assets rather than deficits



# Hardwired to Connect

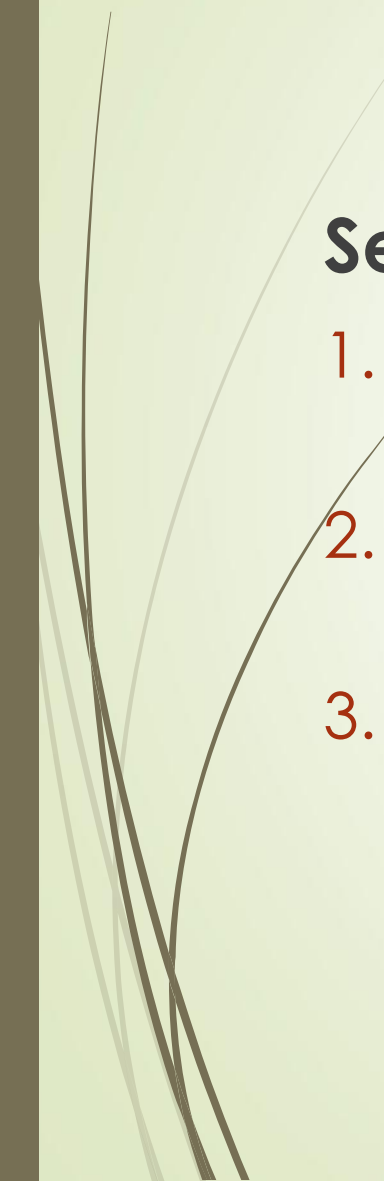
**Children are hardwired to connect in two specific ways:**

- They need close, positive connections to other people
- Need to form meaning from their experiences



# Shift in Thinking

## **Seligman refocused on three points:**

1. Positive experiences; joy, fulfillment, happiness
  2. Positive individual traits; talent, values, interests
  3. Positive institutions or communities; families, school, business
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# Gallup's research

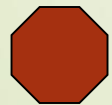
Not everybody can do everything... trying to make everyone learn to do everything only produces mediocrity.

Being able to recognize the areas of competence in which we are especially gifted and that gives us energy are key elements to creating a sense of meaning, vibrancy and effectiveness in adult and children.

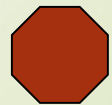
Gallup describes these signature strengths as an individual inherent and unique mental capacities ... such as focus, analysis, empathy, future orientation

# Have Children

- Draw a picture of something they were good at or smart about.
- Every child knew that there was something of worth inside him or her, something that only they could contribute to the world.




**Pattern of successes** ...lists of interests, ...description of talents



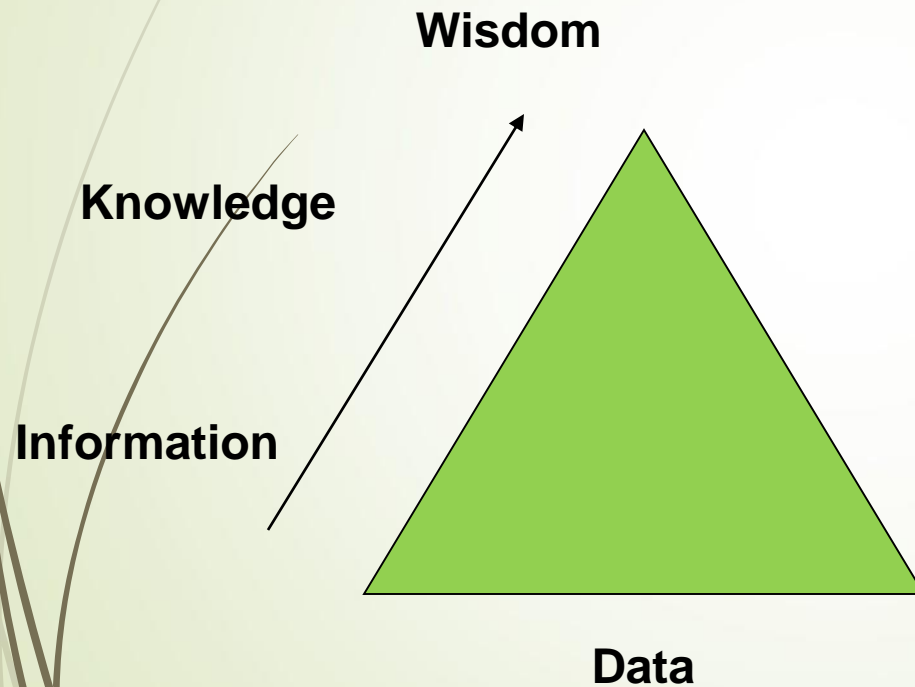


# Learning is so much more than a transfer of information

- It can mean wholeness, empowerment, actualization, liberation
  - Children naturally follow their interests and rhythms
  - Consider mistakes as information rather than something wrong.
  - Learning is discovering that something is possible.
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It's not failure to fall short of realizing all that we might dream. The failure is to fall short of dreaming all that we might realize

... **Dee Hock**



**Need to step back from the data;**

Pondering, discussing, wondering, contemplating, musing, reflecting ... all of which is needed to notice patterns, stories, relationships and interactions.

# Creative Infrastructure ..

Richard Florida

- How to think originally or innovatively
- How to think collaboratively

## New 3 R's

- Reorganizing
- Reengineering
- Reinventing

LEGOs



Kits for LEGOs

No Instructions

No Imagination



# Dean Greenberg ... Sudbury Valley

- Children must grow up in an environment that stresses self-motivation and self-assessment.
- Ability to communicate with others.
- Technology now makes it possible for individuals to learn and responsibility for their own learning and educational timetable.
- School must become far more tolerant of individual self-initiated activities.



# Environment for Learning... Dan Siegel

- **Stability** .. Feeling of belonging Connecting all into an integrated whole
- **Adaptability** ... ride the waves of change
- **Flexibility** .. Open mind and be influences by external & Internal forces.
- **Energy** ... sense of aliveness and spontaneity that exists within the environment.

# Stuck in Time

We live in a time when many of our institutions seem to be stuck in rigidity, standardization, and sameness.

We are afraid our children will be left behind. Becoming rigid is how we habitually respond to fear.

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If on the other hand, we widen our periphery, we begin to recognize our uniqueness, which leads us to question **what our unique dreams and purpose are.**



# Moving Forward

- ✓ Curiosity drives Optimism
- ✓ Optimist recognizes that most bad things are temporary and looks for opportunities to change circumstances for the better through new efforts or strategies.

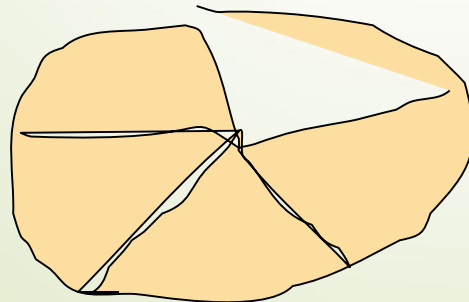
# Focus on the “Norm”

- ▶ We all have aspects of ourselves that are different from the norm. It is what makes us human.
- ▶ We all try to normalize all differences, as if it was something to improve, fix, isolate the standard mold.
- ▶ What result is a loss of vibrancy, vitality, and life energy. When we loss any sense of our uniqueness and difference, we become another cog in the wheel, and lose any sense of life purpose.

# Spider Women ... Navajo

Who emerges from the center of the earth in times of powerful transition. She pulls away the old threads and spins new ones to join all nations, tribes and worlds in her web.

**She is in all of us, stringing together experiences, events and people into a life of meaning.**





# Learning environment

How safe is it to make a mistake?

Since learning is increased through experimentation, and experimentation requires making mistakes, an environment that humiliates, judges, corrects, embarrasses, or labels a child for making mistakes is one that interferes with natural capacity.

# Track Assets rather than Deficits

A child tracks success and discards failures.

In schools we track failures. As a consequence, we tend to deskill our children, train them in their incompetence, and interfere with their natural passion to learn.

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We teach child to be aware of all the things that are wrong with them.



# “So, how did we do?”

- Assessment should reflect learning goals of project: science content, awareness of design process.
- Grade should not depend *only* on success of final design; kids can still learn important science even if prototype doesn't work perfectly.
- Students can share in assessment process with teacher. Lets teams reflect on their group learning. This gives them ownership of their achievement.