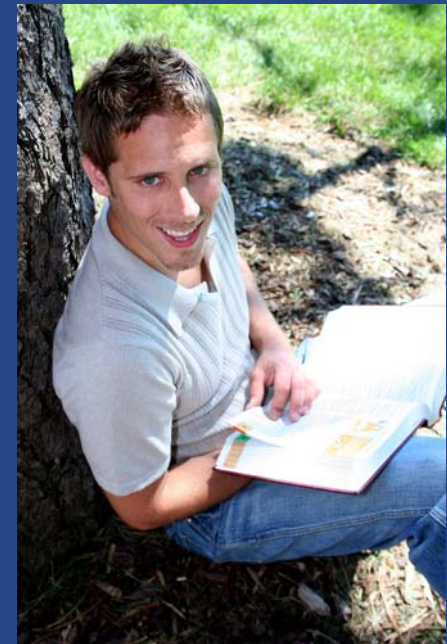


Natural teacher – Natural child



Never in human history have so many people
been through formal education systems, or
knowledge been so freely available

There is a recognition, however, that this concentration on knowledge has all too often been at the expense of other qualities that make us fully human

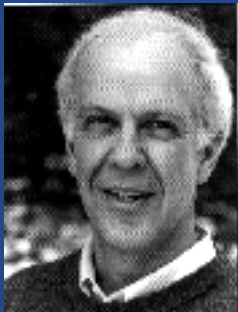
And that we have a need to restore a more natural balance and wisdom to educational systems

We are beginning to understand that we are all uniquely different, and that we need to fulfil our innate qualities and potentials to grow as happy healthy and creative individuals

and that we are social beings that function in dynamic connectivity and relationship with others



The call to recognise the need for change is coming from all over the world



September 12th 2006 Letter sent to the UK papers from a group of concerned leading academics and educators

Modern life leads to more depression among children

Sir - As professionals and academics from a range of backgrounds, we are deeply concerned at the escalating incidence of childhood depression and children's behavioural and developmental conditions. We believe this is largely due to a lack of understanding, on the part of both politicians and the general public, of the realities and subtleties of child development. ..

This is a complex socio-cultural problem to which there is no simple solution, but a sensible first step would be to encourage parents and policy-makers to start talking about ways of improving children's well-being. We therefore propose as a matter of urgency that public debate be initiated on child-rearing in the 21st century. This issue should be central to public policy-making in coming decades.

August 6th 2006 article in the Daily Telegraph, Australia,

"Not too many decades ago we saw education as a process of turning out well-rounded, thoughtful human beings with useful skills. Now secondary and tertiary education is often focused on marketable skills.

We are creating a nation of highly educated fools who might be skilled at accounting or IT, but who know nothing about themselves or the world. They're good at making money but helpless at being members of their community

So we need to encourage a broader curriculum that values communication and social skills as well as marketable skills, and places an emphasis on community, morals and values - not just letters after one's name.

Over the last fifty years experts around the world
have been exploring the nature of human
learning and potential

We now know much more about human
development and modern research is showing
us just how diverse and sensitive individual
learning processes are

We know that we have multiple intelligences,
that we process information in different ways
and that our emotions are critical factors in our
learning



When we are relaxed and happy we learn quickly
and well

When we are anxious and fearful we learn
slowly and poorly



We are also beginning to appreciate that the simple acquisition of knowledge is not enough

And that what we really need is the wisdom to use our knowledge responsibly



Science tells us that there are natural forms and forces inherent in nature that optimize energetic flow and hence growth



These natural laws reveal that relationship, meaning and connectivity are essential elements to ensure the well-being of any system



They show that no one element of the system is any more important than the other and that it is only by maximising the potential of each element that any system fully flows



So it seems that nature may have designed every one of us to play an important part in maintaining a healthy system

Each one of us has different things that excite and inspire us and we know that excitement and creative curiosity are the key elements for successful learning



Whether adult or child we are designed to be
lifelong creative explorers and natural learners

And should be recognised and
celebrated for our differences

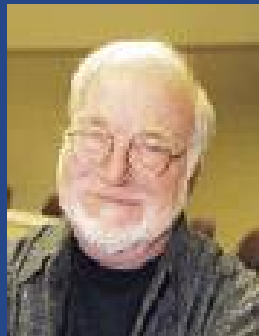
Not our sameness

' We know that children are capable of peak experiences and that they happen frequently during childhood.

We also know that the present school system is an extremely effective instrument for crushing peak experiences and forbidding their possibility'

Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

Mihalyi is a professor and former chairman of the Department of Psychology at the University of Chicago who has devoted his life's work to the study of what makes people truly happy, satisfied and fulfilled. He is currently a Director of the Quality of Life Research Centre.



Uncovering the deeper wisdom of the learner

Remember that you are a totally unique individual with a special role and purpose in the world

Just like everyone else

The challenge

How to we create learning systems that excite,
challenge and fulfill both adults and children?



Follow the child

A dynamic natural learner lies within us



Concentration
Flow
Risk-taking
Creativity



Honour the teacher

The health and well-being of the teacher
is essential to the child



Passion
Sensitivity
Spontaneity
Creativity
Inspiration



What happens when our individual spontaneity and creativity is taken away?

Depressive disorders affect approximately 18.8 million American adults or about 9.5% of the U.S. population age 18 and older in a given year.

Everyone, will at some time in their life be affected by depression -- their own or someone else's, according to Australian Government statistics.

Pre-schoolers are the fastest-growing market for antidepressants. At least four percent of preschoolers -- over a million - are clinically depressed.

The rate of increase of depression among children is an astounding 23% p.a. *'Overall, approximately 20% of youth will have one or more episodes of major depression by the time they become adults'*

According to the World Health Organization depression is the second largest killer after heart disease by 2020--and studies show depression is a contributory factor to fatal coronary disease.

[1] NIMH. "The Numbers Count: Mental Illness in America,"

[2] Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 1998. "National Health Priority Areas Mental Health: A Report Focusing on Depression." Depression statistics in Australia are comparable to those of the US and UK.

[3] Study published in *Psychiatric Services*, April 2004.

[4] Harvard University study reported in *Harvard Mental Health Newsletter*, February 2002./National Alliance on Mental Illness 2003

[5] World Health Organization (WHO) report quoted in BBC-Online January 9, 2001.

‘Stress has led half of all teachers to consider leaving the profession, according to YouGov research, commissioned by UK Teachers TV. The poll, published to coincide with Teachers TV Stress Week, reveals long hours, little support from management, and discipline problems are all factors driving up teachers stress levels’.

UK Teachers TV February 2007

Every year, US schools hire more than 200,000 new teachers for that first day of class. By the time summer rolls round, at least 22,000 have quit...about 30% of new teachers flee the profession after just 3 years, and more than 45% leave after five.

USA Edutopia Magazine, February 2005

'All human beings have a purpose, a reason for being.

Most of us believe that there is something more important than what you can buy, acquire, or market.

The passion at the heart of every great undertaking comes from the deep longing of human beings to make a difference, to have an impact. It comes from what you contribute rather than what you get.'

Peter Senge

Dr. Peter M. Senge is the founding chairperson of the Society of Organizational Learning (SOL) and is a senior lecturer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He has been named as one of the 24 people who have had the greatest influence on organizational strategy over the last 100 years.

We cannot afford to let the damage
continue

Add your name to the call for change

www.teachersunite.com

A website

A forum

A place to share hearts and minds

A voice for change

Please click on the back button to return to the site