



Learning and Well-Being

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First Principles

- ▶ To be alive, is to always be in the process of striving to enhance well-being.
- ▶ If this statement is true, and life is all about enhancing well-being, then learning, like all human behaviors, can be understood as a process designed to support “well-being”.
- ▶ Thus, an understanding of Well-Being is fundamental to supporting successful and equitable learning experiences.
- ▶ So, what do I mean by well-being?

How I Define Well-Being?

- ▶ There are currently many ways of defining well-being, though most academics use positive psychological definitions based upon Euro-centric world views.
- ▶ I believe a better definition frames well-being as a never-ending, survival-related phenomenon related to achieving BALANCE with the world.
- ▶ From this perspective, well-being is culturally defined and personally constructed and lived.

People Learn as a Means for Enhancing their Whole Well-Being

Personal Intellectual Social Physical



People Say a Valuable Learning Experience is one where:

Personal

Well-Being

- Discover new things about themselves and the world
- Feel a sense of awe and/or amazement
- See things usually don't; feel special
- Inspires creativity and new ideas

Intellectual

Well-Being

- Satisfies curiosity
- Able to learn about things they find to be particularly interesting
- Gain new perspectives
- Empowers new actions
- Learn new skills & abilities

Social

Well-Being

- Learn from others
- Joy of working collaboratively
- Build friendship & relationships
- Learn about others
- Reinforces sense of belonging to a team/group

Physical

Well-Being

- Feel safe and security
- Stimulates senses
- Allows non-verbal connections
- Authenticity
- Supports physical and mental health



Well-Being

- ▶ Is an essential **Pre-Requisite** for learning to be successful.
- ▶ Is also a key **Outcome** of any successful learning experience.

Supporting equitable, quality, learning experiences requires:

- ▶ Being respectful and solicitous of how diverse individuals and communities define and actualize well-being.
- ▶ Understanding the incoming well-being-related needs of both learners and educators.
- ▶ An awareness of how the affordances and constraints of the educational context will support or detract from all participants' long-term well-being.

Ten Well-Being Principles for Creating Quality Educational Experiences

- 1. Accommodate Learner's Entering Physical Needs**
- 2. Connect Learning Experience to Learner's Life**
- 3. Maximize Learner Choice & Control**
- 4. Surprise and Delight the Learner**
- 5. Make Experience Culturally Safe and Reinforcing**
- 6. Design for Social Interaction**
- 7. Make Learning Experience Personally Challenging**
- 8. Give Learners a Reason to Do It Again**
- 9. Connect Learners to Subsequent Experiences**
- 10. Extend Experience by Creating Opportunities for Sharing and Comparing**

Exercise:

Well-Being and Practice

- ▶ Briefly discuss with your tablemates what you see as the pros and cons of using a well-being lens for thinking about educational practice.
- ▶ As a group, or individually, describe how you would accommodate into your educational practices each of the two Well-Being Principles for Quality Educational Experiences assigned to your table.
- ▶ Be prepared to share with the whole group.



Thank You

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