Hope-Filled Engagement through Mattering, Gray Poehnell  

Stockholm, Oct. 27, 2016  

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How you start does not pre-determine how you will finish.
My great great grandparents
Abraham Belanger (1849-1917),
Philomene Delorme (1870-1927) and family

My Métis heritage

me & my brother

Gray is not very interested in late. He does not pay attention. I still don’t think his eyes need a doctor’s attention.

Gray has difficulties in visual discrimination.
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BOXED IN:
A Crisis of Imagination

A box may be a building block of hope

HOPELESSNESS

BOXED IN:
An Opportunity for Imagination

A box may be the starting point of new possibilities

No Hope!
No Faith!
No Imagination!
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Hardwired for Hope!

Environment

Engagement

Imagination

faith

HOPE

FEAR

Hope

Engagement Environment

Hardwired for Hope!

Environment

Engagement

Imagination

faith

HOPE

FEAR

Hope

Engagement Environment

Hardwired for Hope!

Environment

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faith

HOPE

FEAR

Hope

Engagement Environment

1

HOPE-FILLED

ENGAGEMENT

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“CAREER STUFF” CAN SEEM HOPELESS TO CLIENTS AND PRACTITIONERS

AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

HOPE-FILLED ENVIRONMENT
beliefs people have, whether right or wrong, that they matter to someone else, that they are the object of someone else’s attention, and that others care about them and appreciate them.

MATTERING, Amundson, Active Engagement
"what difference does it make?"
"so what?"
"who cares?"
"that's just the way it is"
"what's the use?"
"what's the point of trying?"
"why bother?"
"I can't make a difference"

MATTER
substance
tangible

VISIBILITY

MATTERING
substance
tangible

VISIBILITY & RECOGNITION
INVISIBLE TO THEMSELVES & TO OTHERS
WE SEE WHAT MOST DON’T

WE HELP PEOPLE TO SEE WHAT THEY CAN’T SEE
I HAVE VALUE!

WHAT I DO MAKES A DIFFERENCE!

3 BUTTERFLY EFFECT

every decision we make and everything we do no matter how small has a profound effect on the world around us

BUTTERFLY EFFECT
Sensitive Dependence on Initial Conditions

**BUTTERFLY EFFECT**

even small and seemingly insignificant changes at the start of a process can produce significantly different results

**BUTTERFLY EFFECT**

**WHAT SMALL CHANGES COULD YOU MAKE?**
4 SMALL CHANGES
BIG DIFFERENCE

Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results.

Albert Einstein

We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.

Albert Einstein
Cross-training gives greater breadth and depth by stimulating fresh insight and potential solutions from others who have faced similar issues.

CROSS-TRAINING
ACCESSIBILITY?

Beautiful but what about a wheelchair?

Value all people and accept diversity; recognize barriers to accessibility, and provide alternative structures, tools, and processes.

ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL

HOPELESS
ACCESSIBLE?

Invisible People

LIFE ME

CHALLENGES

Diversity?
Starting Points?
Positive focused self-reflection?
Enculturated humility?

CAREER WORLD

goals

skills, etc

ACCESSIBLE?

language tools processes concepts

LIFE ME

CHALLENGES

Diversity?
Starting Points?
Positive focused self-reflection?
Enculturated humility?

CAREER WORLD

goals

skills, etc

ACCESSIBLE?

LIFE ME

CHALLENGES

Diversity?
Starting Points?
Positive focused self-reflection?
Enculturated humility?

CAREER WORLD

goals

skills, etc

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People need to know:
1. where to start
2. what to look for
3. how to look for it
4. how to talk about it

Career Conversation

2
LEARNED
OPTIMISM
the giving-up reaction, the quitting response that follows from the belief that whatever you do doesn’t matter.

LEARNED HELPLESSNESS
Seligman, Learned Optimism

the manner in which you habitually explain to yourself why events happen

EXPLANATORY STYLE
Seligman, Learned Optimism

explanatory style stems directly from your view of your place in the world—whether you think you are valuable and deserving, or worthless and hopeless

EXPLANATORY STYLE
Seligman, Learned Optimism
Learned helplessness can be unlearned. How can I help people find more hopeful explanations for the life experiences that have taught them that they don’t matter.

ALTERNATIVE EXPLANATIONS

PRACTICAL EXAMPLES
1
ENgage people
Where they are
Engaged in life

Favourite Things Collage
Grade 10 boy
Northern Territories, Australia

What do you see?

2
Multiple Perspectives
What do you see?

**HAT**

**SOMBRERO**

Enable people to look at themselves and their lives from multiple perspectives, especially the hopeful ones.

**MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES**

Shifting people’s orientation from problems to possibilities enables them to see new choices and find new hope.

**POSSIBILITIES**
Create experiences in which people are surprised by what they have in their lives and by what they can do.

SURPRISE EXPERIENCES
CAREER

is about you,
is about your world and your part in it,
is about your journey in this world,
is about crafting the life you really want to live
on your journey in this world.

4
The POTENTIAL
of WEAKNESS

But what if this very perspective
is part of the problem?

But what if it blinds to the
potential of weakness?

But what if weakness does not
inevitably doom people
to failure?
But what if my weaknesses are just as much a part of me as my strengths?

“Which contributes more to the area of a rectangle, its height or its width?”

What if different levels only suggest different possibilities/limitations?

What if both high and low have the potential to succeed or fail?

What is a “skill”?

SKILL
“strength, good at”

HOPELESS
NO SKILL
Finding Hope in Grades

“The problem lies in our evaluation policies and practices where we interpret value (the root of evaluation) in measurable, standard, competitive ways that always guarantee that many people will not be valued much at all.”

Dr. Carl Leggo
Department of Language and Literacy Education
University of British Columbia

What is a “skill”?**

**SKILL**
“strength, good at”

**HOPELESS**
**NO SKILL**

**HOPE-FILLED**
“something you do”

“How well?”
“Who needs this at this level?”

Potential

What if it’s not just what we have but what we do with what we have?

What if it’s not just what happens to us but how we respond to what happens to us?

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WE SEE
WHAT MOST DON’T

WE HELP PEOPLE TO SEE
WHAT THEY CAN’T SEE

I HAVE VALUE!
WHAT I DO MAKES A DIFFERENCE!
To the question whether I am a pessimist or an optimist, I answer that my knowledge is pessimistic, but my willing and hoping are optimistic.

Albert Schweitzer

Be the change that you wish to see in the world.

Mahatma Gandhi