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A HUMAN LEARNING ECOSYSTEM FOR OUR TIMES: *Bringing simplicity and system to the learning business*

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This talk discusses the creation and development of The Common Ground Curriculum. The Common Ground Collaborative (CGC) is a global non-profit network of schools and individuals united in a common purpose expressed in our simple mission: *Everybody Learns*. We work together in schools and school systems to build an interconnected *human* context for learning, comprising Learning Cultures and Learning Communities. Within that human context, we create a complete, connected Learning Curriculum, framed by Five Elements that together build towards a fully coherent Learning Ecosystem, designed to provide a school with everything it needs for consistent, high-quality planning, teaching, leading and assessing for learning. We co-create with every school a shared *Learning Culture* supported by all learning stakeholders in an inclusive *Learning Community*. Within this very human context we co-create a coherent Learning Curriculum. Everything is connected. It's a *Human Learning Ecosystem for Our Times*. We are flexible and friendly and radically non-bureaucratic. We don't compromise on quality and we are guided unfailingly by our Mission, *Everybody Learns and by our Principles*.

We set out to develop learning experts. Experts have a deep understanding of the central concepts of their field and the relationships among them. Experts are highly skilled in the competencies of their field. More than ever, we surely need expert human beings with strong, positive moral character. These insights led to our Definition of Learning as the consolidation and extension of Conceptual understanding, Competency and Character. Three kinds of learning, always interacting. A triple helix, the DNA of learning. W.Edwards Deming said, 'If you can't explain what you are doing as a process, then you don't know what you're doing' (Common Ground Collaborative, (n.d.)). We agree, so our definition focuses on the process of learning, so that it can drive the process of teaching. We provide, for each of our '3Cs', a simple, accessible, 3-stage learning/teaching process supported by a comprehensive toolkit for teachers. These processes are embedded in our Learning Modules and have field-tested, proven success in supporting deep learning.

In this session I will talk about how schools are notoriously complex, compartmentalized and slow to change. This interactive professional learning conversation suggests that the reason we frequently fail to make sustained progress is that we tinker with the parts instead of re-imagining a new 'whole'. The Common Ground Collaborative (CGC) is co-creating change with schools all over the world by building a new, coherent Learning Ecosystem. The system is driven by 5 Questions, each of which drives the development of one key element in the system:

DEFINE: What *is* learning?

DESIGN: What's *worth* learning?

DIVERSIFY: How does *everyone* access learning?

DELIVER: How do we build learning *cultures*?

DEMONSTRATE: How do learners provide *evidence* of learning?

As we unpack this system together, we'll also be learning about how this approach builds and sustains culture, curriculum and community. In case this sounds like 'theory', the CGC is led by practitioners. Everything we discuss today is working 'in the field'. CGC is grounded in practice.

Common Ground Collaborative. (n.d.). Purpose: Practices. Retrieved February 12, 2023, from <https://www.commongroundcollaborative.org/purpose/practices-clone>