

GREETINGS, SAC & SCE FACULTY COLLEAGUES!

Many of you will recall learning about “Habits of Mind” (HoM) at Spring 2019 Convocation. Mary Funaoka, Department Co-Chair of Child Development and Educational Studies, sent out weekly HoM emails that spring to CDES faculty. She agreed to share these with all of us as well. Enjoy this opportunity. Thanks, Mary!

Here is the context Mary provided to CDES faculty:

The first week of Spring 2019 is under way! As some of you are aware, the college is rolling out Guided Pathways, a student-centered approach to increase success and close equity gaps. At last Friday's convocation, we learned how the "Habits of Mind" can increase our awareness and build our capacity as institutional agents to best serve our students. "The 16 Habits of Mind are habits of thought and action that help people manage uncertain or challenging situations. They can help people take action when there is no known solution to a problem. The Habits support thoughtful and intelligent action."

Each week, I will pose a series of questions to help us all reflect on one of the habits. There is no response required, it's just an opportunity to pause and reflect on our own practice and commitment to serving students. Additionally, I'll include a resource that can be applied in the classroom.

Habit #1 –

Persisting: Persevering in task through to completion; remaining focused. Looking for ways to reach your goal when stuck. Not giving up.

Reflection: Question #1 - What are the ways in which you personally stay focused to achieve your desired goals? What are some of your best practices in helping students do the same?

Resource: [Habits of Mind Resource](#)

Habit #2 –

Managing Impulsivity: Take your time! Thinking before acting; remaining calm, thoughtful and deliberative.

Reflection: In our busy lives, how do we intentionally slow down to act with purpose and thoughtfulness? When a student is chronically late or misses assignments, how might we create space to be deliberate in reaching out to the student and better understand his/her situation?

Resource: [Habit of Mind Teacher's Companion](#)

Habit #3 –

Listening with understanding and empathy: Devoting mental energy to another person's thoughts and ideas; Make an effort to perceive another's point of view and emotions.

In Chapter 3 of *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Atticus said, “You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view . . . until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.” (p.39) To what extent do you believe this quote to be true? How does our ability to understand and empathize manifest itself in our classroom behaviors and language?

Resource: [Habits of Mind Class Activities](#)

Habit #4 –

Thinking Flexibly: Being able to change perspectives, generate alternatives, and consider options.

Reflection: Do you remember the Gumby character? I've learned that “Gumby” is a person “capable of changing shape, who is so malleable or directionless that his is putty in the hands of others; a person lacking spine, structure, or permanence.” When I first read that, I wasn't exactly thrilled to connect our role as educators to this green putty. However, after thinking more about it, I thought of the word “adaptability” and how we as

educators have to be able to be flexible to address the diverse needs of students we serve. In what classroom and life instances are you thinking flexibly? And when you don't, how does that affect the outcome?

Resource: [Critical Habits of Mind: Exposing the Process of Development](#) article by Jennifer Fletcher (Association of American Colleges & Universities)

Habit #5 –

Thinking about Your Thinking: Being aware of your own thoughts, strategies, feelings and actions and their effects on others

Reflection: In what ways do we create a safe space in our classes for students to speak their truth and put down their guards while also being respectful and mindful of others?

Resource: ["How to Teach 'Thinking About Your Thinking'"](#) article (ASCD, 2017)

Habit #6 –

Striving for Accuracy - always doing your best; setting high standards; checking and finding ways to improve constantly

Reflection: Did you know that in all the research done on teacher effectiveness the number one factor is **high expectations**? This means that the teacher maintains high expectations for **ALL** students in the classroom and differentiates instruction to best serve the diverse needs of students. I often give my student the analogy that if I gave every student a pair of size 7 shoes, only a handful would be able to wear them. The same idea applies in teaching. If we teach in only one modality and target only a few students, the rest are left behind. In what ways do we as instructors persist in always doing our best in spite of redundancy, politics, fatigue, and everyday life? How might we better model to our students the notion of “growth” mindset so that together we can be better, stronger, and more prepared for the next step?

Resource: [Habits of Mind animations - striving for accuracy](#)

Habit #7 –

Questioning and problem posing: Having a questioning attitude; knowing what data are needed and developing questioning strategies to produce those data; finding problems to solve

Reflection: Many times in conversation, it's not what we are asking, but rather *how* we are asking our questions. As facilitator for Cognitive Coaching training, there are a couple of best practices I've learned that allow us to pose better questions and thereby build our ability to become better listeners:

1. Paraphrase someone's response after you ask a question and hear their response. By doing this, you are checking for understanding of what you heard and are listening with the intention to understand, not to respond.
2. When posing questions, use plural, exploratory, and open-ended questions. For example, compare these two questions: a) What strategy are you using to study for your mid-term? versus b) What *might* be some strategies you are considering using as you study for your mid-term? It might be a small nuance in language, but impactful because the way the question is posed for the latter example, there isn't necessarily a right answer.

Resource: [10 Types of Questions for Diversifying Classroom Discussions](#)

Habit #8 –

Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations: Accessing prior knowledge; transferring knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned

Reflection: “We do not learn from our experiences; we learn by reflecting on our experiences,” by John Dewey.

The above quote gives fuel for this habit of mind and weekly reminder to *pause* and *reflect*. For those who have worked closely with me, you can attest that I move at 100 mph and that I only feel effective when my

plate is piled high. And after being diagnosed with cancer, I feel like I'm moving even faster (maybe 107 mph!) so that I don't miss a moment or opportunity. However, upon reflecting on this, I've realized that in my speed, I sometimes miss the small moments . . . the small moments that make up the big things. These moments are especially limited with my little ones and starting today (or maybe tomorrow), I need to start practicing what I preach because in the blink of an eye, these valued moments will be lost.

In your own personal and professional life, consider the ways in which you are reflecting on past knowledge and experiences and ultimately you are transferring it to new learning. What are some things you are noticing?

Resource: Graphic of ["13 Things Mentally Strong People Won't Do"](#)

Habit #9 –

Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision: Strive to be clear when speaking and writing; Strive to be accurate when speaking and writing; Avoid generalizations, distortions, minimizations and deletions when speaking, and writing.

Reflection: Recently I picked up a new hobby . . . listening to audio books (Audibles). The most recent one I listened to was Brene Brown's *Dare to Lead*. The following is an excerpt and reflection questions about communicating in the work place. "The special courage it takes to experience true belonging is not just about braving the wilderness. . . We're going to need to intentionally be with people who are different from us. . . We're going to have to learn how to listen, have hard conversations, look for joy, share pain, and be more curious than defensive, all while seeking moments of togetherness."

What opportunities do you have at work to be with and listen to people whose experiences and opinions are very different than yours? What does your team do, what do you do, to make it safe for people to share their opinions and/or disagree? What other steps would you like to take to make it safer?

Resource: Habits of Mind Posters in Spanish - [Habits of Mind Spanish Posters](#)

Habit #10 –

Gather Data Through All Senses: Pay attention to the world around you; gather data through all the senses: taste, touch, smell, hearing and sight.

Reflection: One of my favorite quotes from artist/writer Brian Andreas is "Time stands still best in moments that look suspiciously like ordinary life." Who/what are the people, things, and ideas to which you pay attention to most? How do those priorities manifest themselves in your work or passions?

Resource: Article from the Harvard Business Review, "[What Captures Your Attention Controls Your Life](#)"

Habit #11 –

Creating, Imagining, and Innovating: Generating new and novel ideas, fluency and originality

Reflection: Sir Ken Robinson is a British writer, public speaker, and international adviser in education. This is an excerpt of one of his Ted Talks title "Do schools Kill Creativity?"

. . . kids will take a chance. If they don't know, they'll have a go. "Am I right? They're not frightened of being wrong. I don't mean to say that being wrong is the same things as being creative. What we do know is, if you're not prepared to be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original – if you're not prepared to be wrong. And by the time they get to be adults, most kids have lost that capacity. They have become frightened of being wrong. And we run our companies like this. We stigmatize mistakes. And we're now running national education systems where mistakes are the worst thing you can make. And the result is that we are educating people out of their creative capacities.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with his statement? Another important question he asks is "Why are we putting kids to sleep when we should be waking them up?" In what ways do you try to "wake up" your students to the beauty, opportunities, and possibilities that await them?

Resource: [Ted Talk, Sir Ken Robinson, Do Schools Kill Creativity?](#)

Habit #12 –

Responding with Wonderment and Awe: Finding the world awesome, mysterious and being intrigued with phenomena and beauty

Reflection: I tried googling "beautiful picture" and came across a wide range of images. I then decided that what I should, or rather, what we ALL should be looking at is in fact a mirror. We may sometimes forget our beauty that lies within and underestimate the ways in which that beauty manifests itself in passion, purpose, and commitment to empowering the lives of others.

When the world around us sparks our interest and ignites our sense of wonder, we are inspired to learn to explore, to imagine possibilities. How can we, as teachers, as educational leaders, provide experiences that trigger that sense of amazement for our students to help them develop a lifelong habit of responding with wonderment and awe? (from ASCD blog)

Resource: [Rediquet - Wonderment](#)

Habit #13 –

Taking Responsible Risks: Being adventuresome; living on the edge of one's competence; try new things constantly

"We should not let our fears hold us back from pursuing our hopes." -John F. Kennedy

Reflection: I believe that we all have fears . . . both surface (Do I try this new food or sing a karaoke song?) and deep-seated (What if I've chosen the wrong career or what if my health doesn't improve?). Pause for a moment to reflect on those fears and then let them go, even if only momentarily. What risks have you taken lately? What risks do you encourage in the classroom for yourself and for your students?

Resource: Taking Responsible Risks video - I suggest playing it before class begins so students can watch it as they walk in! [Taking Responsible Risks](#)

Habit #14 –

Finding Humor: Finding the whimsical, incongruous and unexpected; being able to laugh at one's self

Reflection: Kids say the darnedest things . . . they really do! Here are three of my favorites from my oldest son:

- Elias at age 2 . . . Me: "Who told you that you could get a snack?" Elias: "Jake. Jake from State Farm."
- Elias at age 3 asked me while shopping at Target, "Are we retuning Mila?" (his 1-year-old sister)
- Elias at age 4 to his preschool teacher: "We shouldn't wash our hands for 20 seconds. There is a drought in California."
- Elias as age 5 . . . Elias: "I want to go to school." Me: "What kind of school?" Elias: "Traffic school"

What are the funniest things you've heard children say? Refresh your memory and then take a moment to laugh out loud!

Habit #15 –

Thinking Interdependently: Being able to work in and learn from others in reciprocal situations; team work

Reflection: Is your desire to teach less than, greater than, or equal to your desire to reciprocally learn from the students you teach?

Resource: Last spring, our SAC students had an opportunity to attend OCDE's conference titled, "Saving Our Most Vulnerable Boys and Young Men." Three of our male students (including Chantal Lamourelle's son!) participated in a panel in which they shared their reflections on the powerful role of our institutions and institutional agents in maximizing their potential and success. [Please take a moment to learn from these](#)

students! (4:30 mark - SAC Education Students – Brayan and Tony and Jason, Chantal's son, share their perspectives.)

Resource: [48 Classroom Projects about Humor and Laughter](#)

Habit #16 –

Remaining Open to Continuous Learning: learn from experience, having humility and pride when admitting we don't know; resisting complacency

Reflection: During spring convocation breakouts last year, we were asked to identify our top 3 habits of mind and #16 was my top choice. I hope that through these weekly emails, I have been able to model my own learning and resistance to complacency in both thinking and reflecting. As you begin winter break, what might your learning look like, sound like, and feel like? What opportunities might you take advantage of to further learn?

Resource: Yourself - you are your own best judge, critic, motivator, and teacher...may your summer bring forth new experiences and opportunities to grow! After all, isn't experience the best teacher?



1. Persisting

Stick to it!
Persevering in task through to completion; remaining focused. Looking for ways to reach your goal when stuck. Not giving up.



2. Managing Impulsivity

Take your time!

Thinking before acting; remaining calm, thoughtful and deliberative.



3. Listening with understanding and empathy

Understand others!

Devoting mental energy to another person's thoughts and ideas; Make an effort to perceive another's point of view and emotions.



4. Thinking flexibly

Look at it another way!

Being able to change perspectives, generate alternatives, consider options.



5. Thinking about your thinking

(Metacognition)

Know your knowing!

Being aware of your own thoughts, strategies, feelings and actions and their effects on others.



6. Striving for accuracy

Check it again!

Always doing your best. Setting high standards. Checking and finding ways to improve constantly.



7. Questioning and problem posing

How do you know?

Having a questioning attitude; knowing what data are needed & developing questioning strategies to produce those data. Finding problems to solve.



8. Applying past knowledge to new situations

Use what you learn!

Accessing prior knowledge; transferring knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.



9. Thinking & communicating with clarity and precision

Be clear!

Strive for accurate communication in both written and oral form; avoiding over-generalizations, distortions, deletions and exaggerations.



10. Gather data through all senses

Use your natural pathways!

Pay attention to the world around you Gather data through all the senses. taste, touch, smell, hearing and sight.



11. Creating, imagining, and innovating

Try a different way!

Generating new and novel ideas, fluency, originality



12. Responding with wonderment and awe

Have fun figuring it out!

Finding the world awesome, mysterious and being intrigued with phenomena and beauty.



13. Taking responsible risks

Venture out!

Being adventuresome; living on the edge of one's competence. Try new things constantly.



14. Finding humor

Laugh a little!

Finding the whimsical, incongruous and unexpected. Being able to laugh at one's self.



15. Thinking interdependently

Work together!

Being able to work in and learn from others in reciprocal situations. Team work.



16. Remaining open to continuous learning

Learn from experiences!

Having humility and pride when admitting we don't know; resisting complacency.