

OF NOTE

[Zen and the Art of EQ](#)

Search Inside Yourself: The Unexpected Path to Achieving Success, Happiness (and World Peace), by Chade–Meng Tan

Cynics will have to see beyond the title to recognize that this mindfulness course trains attention, develops self-knowledge and self-mastery. Here is a text that juxtaposes three items of current interest: Google, Emotional Intelligence, and work resilience. What constitutes (or impedes) success in a high IQ environment? How can we apply Daniel Goleman's work to our workplace using the values of meditation? "Search Inside Yourself" is a free course Google provides employees designed to teach emotional intelligence by means of a practical (and portable) real-world meditation. The program, created in collaboration with Daniel Goleman, is described in *Search Inside Yourself: The Unexpected Path to Achieving Success, Happiness (and World Peace)*. We already know that EQ is a differentiating factor in a high IQ environment. Might those using this book as a resource help increase well-being and empathy, heighten focus and creativity, and enhance resilience? And, of course, find the elusive qualities of peace, compassion and happiness while doing so?

Rekha Puri, The School at Columbia, NY

Harper Collins, 2012

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ARTICLES, BLOGS, AND OTHER MEDIA



[Demystifying the Art of Persuasion](#)

The Power to Persuade, by Ken Dutton

In this lively article about the psychology of persuasion, Dutton identifies the "super persuaders," strategies that apparently comprise a formula for effective persuasion in both visual and spoken domains. Cultivating a perception of self-interest, uses of empathy and humor, simplicity, and incongruity (an element of surprise or counter-intuition) are among these qualities. Dutton, a research fellow at Cambridge, derives eclectic examples from the animal kingdom, property theft, and shopping; in part, it is the rich detail of the article that constitutes its lively tone. Still relevant though published two years ago, the article is of particular use for teaching writing, media studies, or public speaking and debate. In any case, work that demystifies the function of marketing and the subtle control it exerts will add to our store of teaching tools.

Peter Herzberg, The Brearley School, NY

Scientific American, April, 2010



[Racial Bias in Assessing Student Work?](#)

When Teachers Overcompensate for Racial Prejudice, by Brian Resnick

This short but thought-provoking piece in The Atlantic reminds us of the complexities and surprises of racial prejudice—especially our own. Citing a recent study in the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, Resnick describes the phenomenon of white teachers judging minority students' work less harshly than that of white students. Eager to "do the right thing," teachers who participated in blind studies grading essays which they were given with "black" sounding names and "white" sounding names gave higher grades to the same quality work if students were black. The impact on minority students, though, was negative; students feel denigrated by positive bias. Resnick endorses high expectations and consistent feedback for all our students without directly suggesting that we assess student work anonymously—though perhaps this is implied. This dense, punchy, fraught article invites us to reexamine our assessment practices and to challenge our students fairly.

Meghan Tally, The American School in London, England

The Atlantic Magazine, May 10, 2012



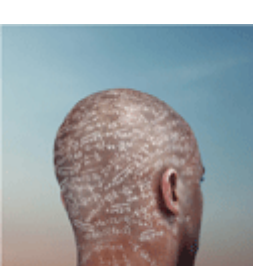
[Why is Asking Good Questions so Hard?](#)

How to Ask a Question, by Peter Wood

Peter Wood, in his article on "How to Ask a Question," refers to posing a good question as a lost art. Audience members, debaters, bloggers and students ask questions even if the questions are irrelevant and out of context. Peter Wood offers advice about how to ask questions that contribute to the quality of discussions which have already begun and how good questions have the capacity to draw something more and perhaps unexpected out of both speaker and audience. He places great emphasis on using the interrogative pronouns "who, what, where, why, when" as a way to avoid rhetorical, pontificating questions, or tedious forays into autobiographical detail. Boiling down inquiry to a single point and being conscious of whether you are trying to assert a point or call attention to yourself—these fundamental considerations underlie productive questions. At times, silence is a person's best friend; few want to hear the story of your life; even brevity can't repair a truly dull question. Knowing the difference between powerful concision and powerless rapidity is a matter of discernment. The difference can move a discussion forward, or stall it.

Bernadette Andersson, Ed.M. candidate, Klingenstein Center
Teachers College, Columbia University, NY

The Chronicle of Higher Education, March 30, 2012



[Games and Fluid Intelligence](#)

Can You Make Yourself Smarter? by Dan Hurley

As the fields of cognition and technology increasingly gain traction in K-12 circles, educators know that not all online content is created equal. How learning occurs and how technology can support that endeavor are central questions today. This fascinating NY Times article looks at the efficacy of gaming and the surrounding debate between working memory and fluid intelligence, the ability to reason and to solve new problems independent of previously acquired knowledge. The implications for developing fluid intelligence through student-friendly games are far reaching. In one example, the author, Dan Hurley, wonders, "Might children with A.D.H.D. receive working-memory training rather than stimulant drugs like Ritalin?" This provocative article serves as a helpful survey of contemporary research by leading neuroscientists whose aims are to help teachers and learners work smarter and have fun doing it.

Duncan Lyon, Carey School, CA

New York Times, April 18, 2012



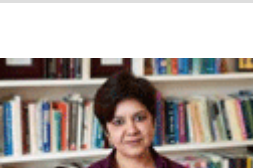
[A Gender Workplace Study](#)

Unlocking the Full Potential of Women at Work, by Joanna Barsh and Lareina Yee

This study of how women advance to the highest levels in the corporate sector is instructive for independent schools where women represent only 31% of all school heads and where these statistics are complicated further by the fact that a number of these are in lower schools. Conducted by McKinsey, a leading management consultant firm, the study describes how a small number of Fortune 500 companies are succeeding in advancing female executives, demonstrating that barriers preventing advancement can be overcome. While there is no silver bullet, the research conducted through interviews with senior executives revealed an integrated approach to addressing the barriers that hold women back. There must be a hands-on and visible commitment to achieving gender diversity goals and leaders must be held accountable for results. Just as in schools, fewer women than men in the corporate sector aspire to make it to the highest levels, but the researchers place responsibility on the companies to motivate highly talented women by building their confidence to take the next step. What sets those women apart who have made it to the top is their success in building relationships with sponsors and others, their robust work ethic, their ability to inspire teams to achieve goals and their growth mindset. They are persistent in asking for feedback and seek to continually improve their own performance.

Pearl Rock Kane, Klingenstein Center, NY

McKinsey, 2012



[Myths and Truths about Affluenza](#)

Are Affluent Youth Truly at Risk? by Suniya Luthar and Samuel Barkin

In their paper, "Are affluent youth truly at risk? Vulnerability and resilience across three diverse samples," Teachers College Columbia psychology professor, Suniya Luthar, and graduate student, Samuel Barkin, engage the issue of the impact of wealth on youth behavior and parental style. While emphasizing that their data counters any presumptions of poor parenting in wealthy communities, Luthar and Barkin focus on rates of negative behaviors in wealthy youth, finding that depression and substance abuse rates in this sample are higher than the national norms. By way of explanation, some myths about "affluenza" are soundly debunked, however. For example, in their sample, stress from over-programming of activities is not a major vulnerability factor. On the other hand, lax parenting with few consequences was correlated strongly with negative behaviors in teens. This research report makes us look and think again at assumptions about wealth and its effect on student vulnerability and strength.

Elizabeth Morley
Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School

Development and Psychopathology, Cambridge University Press, May 2012



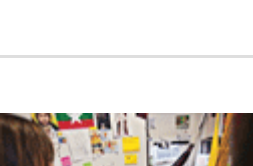
[Flipping Further](#)

TED Test

TED has developed an education specific Beta test that, along with similar experiments on YouTube, may break new ground for those interested in utilizing the "flipped" classroom or just making the most of the fascinating talks the conference generates. The lessons already online rely on clever animation to communicate material and include standard but well-organized sets of activities (multiple choice, open ended questions, further resources). Not only does the site organize education-friendly TED talks into easily navigable categories, but it allows the teacher or student to alter what is already there, Wikipedia style, in order to create interactive and customized lessons for the videos on the TED-Ed site AND for any video on YouTube. The new wave of the flipped lesson is taking hold, and TED joins the likes of Khan Academy and YouTube to promote the next incarnation of online learning.

Mike Eckert, Blair Academy, Blairstown, NJ

TED.com



[Innovation, Education and Conflict of Interest](#)

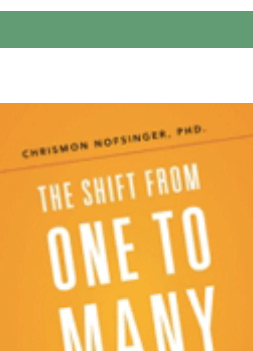
Get Rich U. There are no walls between Stanford and Silicon Valley. Should there be? by Ken Auletta

What are schools, the actual brick and mortar buildings, for? Thinking through this question is probably not practical in the slog of the school year itself, but with summer on the horizon, we can turn to such lofty ponderings with the help of Ken Auletta's recent *New Yorker* piece. In many ways, the Stanford it describes models the kind of relentless innovation toward which many independent schools aspire. As Stanford fearlessly breaks down disciplinary boundaries in its Institute of Design, however, it also promotes business partnerships that muddy the waters of intellectual inquiry and the disinterested pursuit of knowledge – often thought of as the foundation of the college experience. According to the article, additional melodrama unfolds at Stanford as the English teachers wonder about their future in an educational model largely thought to promote "careers or targeted education"; a popular professor – Sebastian Thrun – peels off from the university to pursue online education full time; and the President of the University himself looks into the future and says, "There's a tsunami coming." Thought provoking beach reading for the Ed. crowd, indeed.

Stephen J. Valentine, The Montclair Kimberley Academy

The New Yorker, April 30, 2012

BOOKS



[The Challenges of Distributing Leadership](#)

The Shift From One to Many, A Practical Guide to Leadership, by Chrismon Nofsinger

Organizational behavior consultant and executive coach Chrismon Nofsinger has written a small book with valuable advice. Only 55 pages long, it takes the reader through Chrismon's four stages of leadership development (me, us, letting go, and transferring) with the working premise that "leadership is about facilitating the output of others and giving them recognition." Such a premise about distributed leadership is not original in itself, but Chrismon makes a practical argument for why leadership is difficult and why successful leaders will find that it's lonely at the top even as they learn not to micromanage decisions. By now, readers should have a healthy skepticism in approaching the myriad books on leadership; it is often true that there is little new under the sun. Yet here is a practical approach that also addresses with warmth and simplicity the human element of leadership, worth reflecting upon as we wind down the school year.

Jim Kubacki, Eastside Catholic School, OH

Live Oak Book Company, 2011



[Can We Be Reflective Learners and Teachers in a Reflexive World?](#)

Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life, by Karen Armstrong

Karen Armstrong's *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life* is a tremendous gift to all teachers striving to be thoughtful, life-long learners who long for their teaching to actively heal and re-make the world — starting with their own. Her reflections upon the gathered wisdom of the world's philosophic and religious traditions will challenge all of our classrooms to go a lot slower, a lot deeper, and invite all of us to become more reflective in our practice rather than reflexive. The text grew out of a Charter created and signed by adherents of many religions and traditions, so the book is anything but narrow and doctrinaire, but rather liberating, intellectually stimulating, and appealing whether one sees oneself as a person of faith or not. There is much here to teach us how to live bravely.

Rev. Kevin Day, Episcopal High School, FL

Alfred Knopf, Random House, 2010



[Bridging the Proposition and the Delivery](#)

Understanding Michael Porter – The Essential Guide to Competition and Strategy, by Joan Magretta

Michael Porter, distinguished Harvard Business School professor, is a globally respected authority on competition and strategy. He has also founded three successful non-profits focused on philanthropy and economic development in distressed areas. Perhaps it took one of his colleagues to distill his complex ideas down to the comprehensible. Enter Magretta. At the core of the book are two concepts: the Value Proposition and the Value Chain. The former refers to the unique offer that a company (or school) markets to its clients. (The more one-of-a-kind the offer, the better.) The latter speaks to the critical activities that deliver that offer. Porter, via Magretta, argues that effective and successful companies and non-profits are those that not only have a clear understanding of both concepts but are also able to execute the relationship between them. The book offers numerous examples of corporations and organizations that have negotiated this relationship effectively as well as some that have not. Least one dismays this as simply another "business book," this text might offer a better than usual catalyst for group analysis. There would be value in having groups of administrators and teachers read the book and devote time to discuss the Value Proposition and Value Chain.

Malcolm Gauld, Hyde School, ME

Harvard Business Review Press, 2012

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