Action, Creativity and Learning for Healthy, Sustainable, Regenerative Futures and Wellbeing

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Editor

This is the first time that Lifewide Education and Creative Academic have worked together on an inquiry and magazine and it has been a most creative / co-creative experience. We are building on work undertaken by Lifewide Education to explore how our lifewide learning and development might be used to co-create a better future not just for ourselves and our families but for humanity and the planet. This issue of the magazine shares the results of a number of action learning based inquiries aimed at developing a better understanding of the way we live our lives in the context of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

The idea that we need to take seriously the UN's Sustainable Development Goals is hard for some people to grasp. While the world around us seems, at the best of times, to be socially, politically and economically turbulent from time to time, we are largely cocooned from a future that is hard to imagine. But once we become conscious of the fragility of our world, hardly a day goes by without some manifestation of a world in rapid formation caused by human activity. We have only to look to the drought conditions that have seriously affected people, agriculture and the natural environment across the whole of Europe and, as I write, the devastating floods in Pakistan to see the effects of the long term climatic changes we have set in motion, and the war in Ukraine and the effects that is having on global energy markets and the economic impacts on people across the world.

From our comfortable lives in 2022 it is all too easy to dismiss futurists with their doom-laden forecasts. It is also difficult for higher education institutions, driven by the educational needs for the present to pay attention to the educational needs for the future. But the tide is turning, more and more future predictions can be based on science and big data gathering and processing that model the future in terms of best, worst and most likely scenarios and we ignore these at the peril of our children and grandchildren's future lives.

If education is to embrace fully and systematically the sustainable development goals in our everyday lives, we need a compelling and shocking vision of how we are damaging and changing our world to make people act upon the urgency of our situation. With this in mind we selected an article by Jonathan Watts the Guardian's Global Environment Editor to provide a Foreword for this issue of our magazine to set the scene for our own collaborative efforts to learn how we might live a life for a more sustainable and regenerative future. We are very grateful to Jonathan for giving us permission to republish his article.

Foreword
Jonathan Watts

Jonathan is Global Environment Editor of the Guardian and the author of the eco-travelogue, *When a Billion Chinese Jump*. He has is an experienced, award-winning journalist who previously served as correspondent in Japan (1996-2003), China (2003-2012) and Brazil (2012-2017). He has written extensively on climate change, deforestation, pollution and the trade in environmental stress on travels that have taken him from the Amazon and Andes to the Gobi and Himalayas. In his article he asks, **What [will] the world will look like in 2050 if we continue to burn oil, gas, coal and forests at the current rate?**

I write this imaginary forecast with an apology to Tim Radford, the former Guardian science editor, who used the same device in 2004 to open a remarkably prescient prediction on the likely impacts of global warming on the world in 2020.

Journalists generally hate to go on record about the future. We are trained to report on the very recent past, not gaze into crystal balls. On those occasions when we have to venture ahead of the present, most of us play it safe by avoiding dates that could prove us wrong, or quoting others.

Radford allowed himself no such safe distance or equivocation in 2004, which we should remember as a horribly happy year for climate deniers. George W Bush was in the White House, the Kyoto protocol had been recently zombified by the US Congress, the world was distracted by the Iraq war and fossil fuel companies and oil tycoons were pumping millions of dollars into misleading ads and dubious research that aimed to sow doubt about science.

Radford looked forward to a point when global warming was no longer so easy to ignore. Applying his expert knowledge of the best science available at the time, **he predicted 2020 would be the year when the planet started to feel the heat as something real and urgent.**

"We're still waiting for the Earth to start simmering," he wrote back in that climate-comfortable summer of 2004. "But by 2020 the bubbles will be appearing."

The heat of the climate movement is certainly less latent. In the past year, the world has seen Greta Thunberg's solo school strikes morph into a global movement of more than six million demonstrators; Extinction Rebellion activists have seized bridges and blocked roads in capital cities; the world has heard ever more alarming warnings from UN scientists, David Attenborough and the UN envoy for climate action, Mark Carney; dozens of national parliaments and city councils have declared climate emergencies; and the issue has risen further to the fore in the current UK general election than any before it. With only weeks to go until 2020, the bubbles of climate anxiety are massing near the surface.

Radford's most precise predictions relate to the science. Writing after the record-breaking UK heat of 2003, he warned such scorching temperatures would become the norm. "Expect summer 2020 to be every bit as oppressive." How right he was. Since then, the world has sweltered through the 10 hottest years in history. The UK registered a new high of 38.7C this July, which was the planet's warmest month since measurements began.

He also correctly anticipated how much more hostile this would make the climate – with increasingly ferocious storms (for the first time on record, there have been category 5 hurricanes, such as Dorian and Harvey, for four years in a row), intensifying forest fires (consider the devastating blazes in Siberia and the Amazon this year, or California and Lapland in 2018) and massive bleaching of coral reefs (which is happening with growing frequency across most of the world). All of this has come to pass, as have Radford's specific predictions of worsening floods in Bangladesh, desperate droughts in southern Africa, food shortages in the Sahel and the opening up of the northwest passage due to shrinking sea ice (the huge cruise liner, Crystal Serenity, is among the many ships that have sailed through the Bering Strait in recent years – a route that was once deemed impossible by even the most intrepid explorers).

A couple of his predictions were slightly premature (the snows on Kilimanjaro and Mt Kenya have not yet disappeared, though a recent study said they will be gone before future generations get a chance to see them), but overall, Radford's vision of the world in 2020 was remarkably accurate, which is important because it con-firms climate science was reliable even in 2004. It is even more precise today, which is good news in terms of anticipating the risks, but deeply alarming when we consider just how nasty scientists expect the climate to become in our lifetime. Unless emissions are slashed over the next decade, a swarm of wicked problems are heading our way.

How wicked? Well, **following Radford's example, let us consider what the world will look like in 2050 if humanity continues to burn oil, gas, coal and forests at the current rate.**

The difference will be visible from space. By the middle of the 21st century, the globe has changed markedly from the blue marble that humanity first saw in wondrous colour in 1972. The white northern ice-cap vanishes completely each summer, while the southern pole will shrink beyond recognition. The lush green rainforests of the Amazon,   Congo and Papua New Guinea are smaller and quite possibly enveloped in smoke. From the subtropics to the mid-latitudes, a grimy-white band of deserts has formed a thickening ring around the northern hemisphere.

Coastlines are being reshaped by rising sea levels. Just over 30cm at this stage – well short of the 2 metres that could hit in 2100 – but still enough to swamp unprotected stretches of land from Miami and Guangdong to Lincolnshire and Alexandria. High tides and storm surges periodically blur the boundaries between land and sea, making the roads of megacities resemble the canals of Venice with increasing frequency.

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On the ground, rising temperatures are changing the world in ways that can no longer be explained only by physics and chemistry. The increasingly hostile weather is straining social relations and disrupting economics, politics and mental health. Generation Greta is middle aged. Their teenage fears of the complete extinction of the human race have not yet come to pass, but the risk of a breakdown of civilisation is higher than at any previous time in history – and rising steadily. They live with a level of anxiety their grandparents could have barely imagined.

The world in 2050 is more hostile and less fertile, more crowded and less diverse. Compared with 2019, there are more trees, but fewer forests, more concrete, but less stability. The rich have retreated into air-conditioned sanctums behind ever higher walls. The poor – and what is left of other species – is left exposed to the ever harsher elements. Everyone is affected by rising prices, conflict, stress and depression.

The great fear climate scientists have is that a warming planet could create feedback loops that will make everything much worse. But there has not been enough study of economic and political feedback loops: How drought in China puts pressure on the Amazon to produce more food and clear more forest. Or how powerful business interests will choose a dictator over a democrat if it means easing environmental controls that threaten their ability to meet quarterly growth targets.[1]

This is a doorway into peak climate turbulence. Global heating passed the 1.5C mark a couple of years earlier and is now accelerating towards 3C, or possibly even 4C, by the end of the century. It feels as if the dial on a cooker has been turned from nine o'clock to midnight. Los Angeles, Sydney, Madrid, Lisbon and possibly even Paris endure new highs in excess of 50C. London's climate resembles Barcelona's 30 years earlier. Across the world, droughts intensify and extreme heat becomes a fact of life for 1.6bn city dwellers, eight times more than in 2019. For a while, marathons, World Cups and Olympics were moved to the winter to avoid the furnace-like heat in many cities. Now they are not held at all. It is impossible to justify the emissions and the world is no longer in the mood for games.

Extreme weather is the overriding concern of all but a tiny elite. It wreaks havoc everywhere, but the greatest misery is felt in poorer countries. Dhaka, Dar es Salaam and other coastal cities are hit almost every year by storm surges and other extreme sea-level incidents that used to occur only once a century. Following the lead set by Jakarta, several capitals have relocated to less-exposed regions. But floods, heatwaves, droughts and fires are increasingly catastrophic. Healthcare systems are struggling to cope. The economic costs cripple poorly prepared financial institutions. Insurance companies refuse to provide cover for natural disasters. Insecurity and desperation sweep through populations. Governments struggle to cope.

"By 2050, if we fail to act, many of the most damaging, extreme weather events we have seen in recent years will become commonplace," warns Michael Mann, the director of the Earth System Science Center at Pennsylvania State University. *"In a world where we see continual weather disasters day after day (which is what we'll have in the absence of concerted action), our societal infrastructure may well fail … We won't see the extinction of our species, but we could well see societal collapse."*

Adding to the anxiety is the erratic temperature of the planet. Instead of rising smoothly it jolts upwards, because tipping points – once the stuff of scientific nightmares – are reached one after another: methane release from permafrost; a die-off of the tiny marine organisms that sequestered billions of tonnes of carbon; the desiccation of tropical forests. People have come to realise how interconnected the world's natural life-support systems are. As one falls, another is triggered – like dominos or the old board game, Mouse Trap. In some cases, they amplify one another. More heat means more forest fires, which dries out more trees, which burn more easily, which releases more carbon, which pushes global temperatures higher, which melts more ice, which exposes more of the Earth to sunlight, which warms the poles, which lowers the temperature gradient with the equator, which slows ocean currents and weather systems, which results in more extreme storms and longer droughts. It is also now clear that positive climate feedbacks are not limited to physics, but stretch to economics, politics and psychology. The Amazon is turning into a savannah because the loss of forest is weakening rainfall, which makes harvests lower, which gives farmers an economic motivation to clear more land to make up for lost production, which means more fires and less rain.

On our current course, carbon concentrations in the atmosphere will pass 550 parts per million by mid-century, up from around 400ppm today. Katharine Hayhoe, an atmospheric scientist and director of the Climate Science Center at Texas Tech University, explains how this stacks the odds in favour of disaster.

"By 2050, we'd be seeing events that are far more frequent and/or far stronger than we humans have ever experienced before, are occurring both simultaneously and in sequence."

Her greatest concern is that food production and water supply systems could buckle under the strain, with dire humanitarian consequences in areas that are already vulnerable.

Generation Greta live with a level of anxiety their grandparents could barely have imagined

Hunger will rise, perhaps calamitously. The United Nations' International Panel on Climate Change expects food production to decline by 2% to 6% in each of the coming decades because of land-degradation, droughts, floods and sea-level rise. The timing

could not be worse. By 2050, the global population is projected to rise to 9.7 billion, which is more than two billion more people to feed than today.

When crops fail and starvation threatens, **people are forced to fight or flee**. Between 50 and 700 million people will be driven from their homes by mid-century as a result of soil degradation alone, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) estimated last year. Fires, floods and droughts will prompt many others to migrate within and across borders. So will the decline of mountain ice, which is a source of meltwater for a quarter of the world's population. The poorest will be worst affected, though they have the least responsibility for the climate crisis. For the US author and environmentalist, Bill McKibben, this injustice will make the greatest impact in 2050.

"Forcing people to move from their homes by the hundreds of millions may do the most to disrupt the world. And, of course, it's a deep tragedy, because these are precisely the people who have done the least to cause the problem," he says.

In 2050, climate apartheid goes hand-in-hand with increasingly authoritarian politics. Three decades earlier, worried electorates voted in a generation of populist "strongmen" in the hope they could turn back the clock to a more stable world. Instead, their nationalism made a global solution even harder to achieve. They preferred to focus on the immigration consequences of global heating rather than the carbon-capital causes. When voters realised their mistake, it was too late. The thugocracy refused to give up power. They no longer deny the climate crisis; they use it to justify ever-more repressive measures and ever-wilder efforts to find a technological fix. In the past 20 years, nations have tried volcano mimicking, cloud brightening, albedo modification and carbon dioxide removal. Most were expensive and ineffective. Some made weather circulation even less reliable. Powerful countries now threaten rivals not just with nuclear weapons, but with geo-engineering threats to block sunlight or disrupt rainfall patterns.

This is not an inevitable future. Unlike Radford's prediction for 2020, this vision of 2050 factors in human behaviour, which is more volatile and less predictable than the laws of thermodynamics. Many of the horrors above are already baked into the climate, but our response to them – and each other – is not predetermined. When it comes to the science, the dangers can be substantially

> **At some point, people will realise - that ecological stress is at the core of the world's current woes.** The aha! moment may be when water grows prohibitively expensive, or crops fail owing to successive heatwaves, or the refugee crisis sparks war, or a virus shuts down the global economy, but at some point the weakness of the strongmen will be apparent, and people will seek change.[1]

reduced if humanity shifts decisively away from business-as-usual behaviour over the next decade. When it comes to the psychology and politics, we can make our situation better immediately if we focus on hope in shared solutions, rather than fears of what we will lose as individuals.

That means putting faith in institutions, warning one another about risks, and treasuring shared eccentricities and traditions – a bit like the shipping forecast.

A storm is certainly brewing. The science is clear on that. The question now is how we face it.

Introduction to Action, Creativity and Learning, for Healthy, Sustainable, Regenerative Futures
Norman Jackson (Editor)

Norman is the founder of Lifewide Education and the Editor of Lifewide Magazine.

Background

In January 2021 Lifewide Education and Creative Academic / #creativeHE began exploring the Sustainable Development Goals[1] (SDGs) and what it might mean to live in ways that are more likely to create a future that is more sustainable and regenerative[2,3]. The idea that people have the agency and creativity to generate new ways of behaving and to regenerate aspects of the world that have degenerated is core to this exploration. We have conducted two collaborative inquiries which examine the nature of our own lifewide learning as we try to engage with one or more of the SDGs. In March 2022 a small band of explorers began a new collaborative inquiry using an action learning methodology to explore the relationships and interdependencies between action, creativity and learning for healthy, sustainable, regenerative futures and individual's health, wellbeing and personal development.

"There can be no learning without action, and no action without learning" Reg Revans[4]

Collaborative Action Learning Inquiry

The inquiry took place between early March and early June 2022 and the overall approach is shown in (Figure 1).

Figure 1 Our plan for the action learning-based collaborative inquiry process

Jan/February	March	April	May	June
	Rough Plan please post by March 9th			**Inquiry finishes June 1st**
	Ongoing discussion in Linked in space	Ongoing discussion in Linked in space	Ongoing discussion in Linked in space	
	Progress Report 1 Last week of month each AL project leader provides an update on behalf of their group. Activities, learning achievements &	**Progress Report 2** Last week of month each AL project leader provides an update on behalf of their group. Activities, learning achievements &	**Progress Report 3** Last week of month each AL project leader provides an update on behalf of their group. Activities, learning achievements &	**Synthesis Article** for publication in special issue Lifewide & Creative Academic Magazine
ZOOM MEETINGS First Wednesday of month	March 2nd Launch meeting	April 6th	May 4th	**June 1st Virtual Conference?**

Each participant agreed to undertake their own Action Learning Project (ALP) in collaboration with others, aimed at developing themselves and or some aspect of their world in ways that were healthier, more sustainable and regenerative.

Action learning (AL) is a problem-solving strategy and experiential learning approach where a small group of people formulate and try to act on and solve problems that have real meaning to them learning together from the process and the results. People learn by doing and then reflect on what's been learned to inform future actions. A useful summary is provided here.[4]

Sustainability & Regeneration were core themes for action and related inquiry and we hoped our inquiry would contribute to UNESCO's Future of Education initiative. Participants were invited to identify one of more of UNESCOs 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[5] and form their own Action Learning Project around something that was relevant and meaningful in their own life. The scope and focus for individual projects, how they would be conducted and who would be involved, would be determined by the individuals concerned and the people they were collaborating with.

Healthier world

We used the idea of health – our own health and the health of the world around us as a focus for our action learning. Figure 2 offers a framework for grouping the SDGs based on their intended outcomes using HEALTH as an organising principle[5] (health of humans, families, communities, organisations, plants, animals, ecosystems, environments and planetary systems). In our collaborative inquiry we suggested that if we created conditions for sustainable regenerative futures we are also creating healthier environments, and conditions for people and other living things to flourish.

Figure 2 A framework for grouping the SDGs based on their intended outcomes using HEALTH as an organising principle.[5]

UN Sustainable Development Goals[1] (1) No Poverty, (2) Zero Hunger, (3) Good Health and Well-being, (4) Quality Education, (5) Gender Equality, (6) Clean Water and Sanitation, (7) Affordable and Clean Energy, (8) Decent Work and Economic Growth, (9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, (10) Reducing Inequality, (11) Sustainable Cities and Communities, (12) Responsible Consumption and Production, (13) Climate Action, (14) Life Below Water, (15) Life On Land, (16) Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions, (17) Partnerships for the [Sustainable Development] Goals.
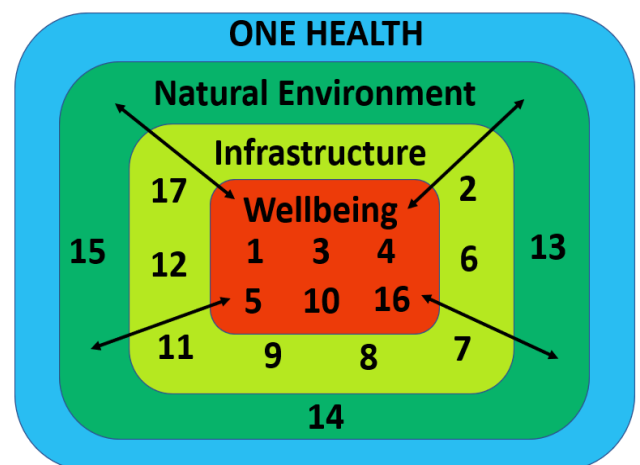
This way of framing the SDGs as the means of creating a healthier world, with concerns for the planet and all living and non living things as well as human health, provided a useful way of framing our own Action Learning Projects. Effectively we were imagining and creating our own problems to try to solve using the SDGs and the notion of a healthier world to guide our framing of the problem we were tackling and to interpret effects.

Inquiry process

Participants were invited to draw up a rough plan that provided a context, set out a *vision* for the way they and their world might be changed, together with some intended actions and the people who would be involved. Plans also identified the particular SDG or SDGs that were being addressed. Each participant tried to find or form a group of people to work with and implemented their plan according to their own timescales and circumstances.

During the last week of each month the leader of each ALP was invited to prepare a short report outlining key activities and achievements with some reflections on what has been learnt. The report was shared with other participants in the Lifewide Learning R&D Forum.

Figure 3 Facilitation team and key infrastructure

Infrastructure

The inquiry was supported by a team of facilitators who will also participants in the process. We made use of the "lifewide learning research and development group forum" on the Linked In platform for sharing reports and discussion. There was also a short zoom meeting on the first Wednesday of every month to enable participants to meet each other and share their experiences. At the end of the process we convene an Open Mic conference on Zoom for participants to share their experiences and learning in a creative way.

Potential learning

We recognised that the collaborative inquiry had potential for learning in three areas.

- **Individual participants:** The first priority was the learning and development of individuals and the opportunities afforded for creative self-expression and enhancements in wellbeing. Above all we are interested in the positive effects that individuals, acting with others, have on their world. Because the projects will span at least three months there is the possibility of recognising the development of individuals as they live the changes they are seeking.
- **The collective:** The second priority was the collective learning of the group through an ongoing process of sharing what has been learnt via posts in the Linked In R&D or #creativeHE forums, monthly zoom meetings and a final virtual conference for participants. The strength of a collaborative inquiry is the space it affords for discussion, alternative perspectives, reflection, mutual appreciation and inspiration.
- **The wider world**: our third priority was to share our learning by curating and disseminating what has been learned through a joint publication of Lifewide / Creative Academic Magazine. The magazine will be our synthesis contribution to the UNESCO Futures of Education Initiative.

Figure 4 This illustration by Brenna Quinlan captures the spirit of our collaborative inquiry https://www.brennaquinlan.com/

Underlying Theory for Change

Underlying our ALPs are the unarticulated theories of change that we have, through experiencing and engaging in change, have become embodied in what we do. There are many theories to explain how change happens bu the ADKAR framework for change proposed by Jeff Hiatt[6] seems to be broadly consistent with our approach. ADKAR is an acronym that represents the five building blocks of successful change for an individual. They include:

- Awareness of the need for change (changes the way we see and understand the world)
- Desire to encourage, participate in and support change (includes decision to act)
- Knowledge of what to do to bring about change (usually based on previous experiences of trying to accomplish change)
- Confidence and ability to realize or implement change as required (again this comes from previous experiences of trying to accomplish change)
- Reinforcement to ensure the results of a change continue (may include new strategies to bring about more change)

Figure 5 Hiat's five building blocks of successful change[6] for an individual
and for groups of people working together to bring about change[10]
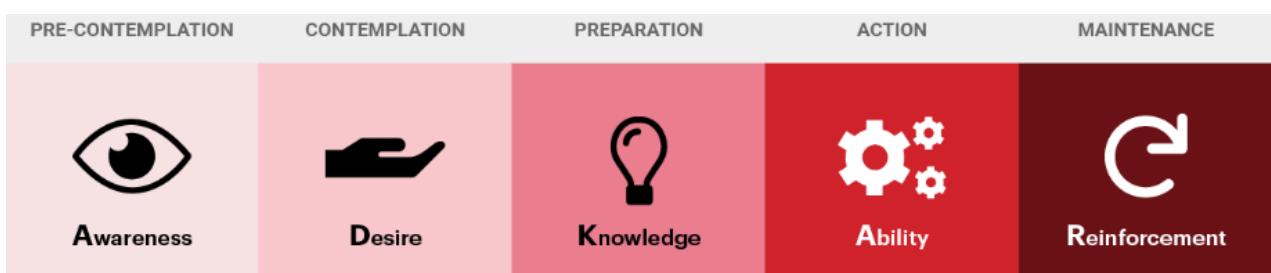
While Hiat's model of change is focused on the individual trying to bring about change in their life and environments it is also a useful heuristic at the level of a team or group of people working collaboratively to accomplish change in a community, organisation or other environment.

When using this model of change we should be mindful of the fact that awareness and desire combine forces to create the *commitment* necessary to change that lead to actions to try to change. John Dewey explains that experience is always a dynamic two-way process, "An experience is always what it is because of a transaction taking place between the individual and, what at the time, constitutes the environment" [7 p. 43]. "When we experience something we act upon it, we do something; then we suffer or undergo the consequences. We do something to the thing and then it does something to us in return" [8 p.104] Dewey suggests that experience involves both 'trying' and 'undergoing'. 'Trying' refers to the outward expression of intention or action, "doing becomes trying; an experiment with the world to find out what it is like". Through action an attempt is made to have an impact on the world. 'Undergoing', the other aspect of the 'transaction' in experience, refers to the consequences of experience on the individual. In turn, in attempting to have an impact, the experience also impacts on us. Undergoing is concerned with learning and changes in understanding, growth and development of new ways of being. It also highlights the continuously unfolding ontological journey of becoming. This transactional view of experience involving people situated in and interacting with their environment in order to accomplish something, and changing their environment and themselves in the process, provides the foundation for the ecological perspective on learning, practice and change.[9]

Figure 6 John Dewey's model of experience and how it effects changes in us and our environment.
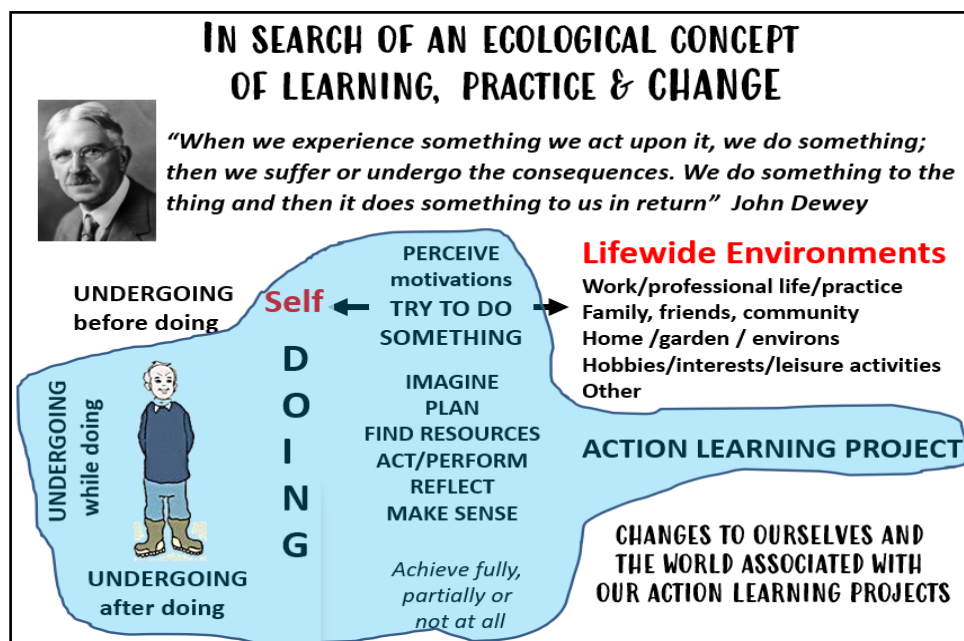
Our Inner Development Goals

Hiatt realized that change often fails because people do not understand the need for change. Also, they often don't know how to successfully implement change or have the necessary skills and agency to engage in change or inspire others to change. The Inner Development Goals Framework[11] (reproduced in this issue of the magazine[12]) seek to address this matter. The framework is an ongoing initiative to identify skills and qualities that individuals and organizations need to develop in order to successfully work with the complex societal issues mapped by the UNs 17 Sustainable Development Goals. These goals are founded on the assumption that humanity is not living in a way that will lead to a sustainable regenerative future for humankind and all other life on our planet. So we need to change our behaviours and habits and we will only do this if we can bring about *inner change* – changes to beliefs, values and understanding that influence our motivations to do something and the skills and capabilities to think and practice in ways that will, with time, help co-create a more sustainable regenerative future. The IDGs map key dimensions of human development – qualities, skills and motivational forces that are considered, by the designers of the framework, to be necessary for bringing about change relevant to achieving the SDGs. The IDG framework (reproduced in Figure 7 is organised around five headings - Being; Thinking; Relating; Collaborating and Acting.

Figure 7 Inner Development Goal Framework : Qualities of character, motivatins & skills necessary to engage with and implement the Sustainable Development Goals[11,12]

1 BEING *Relationship to self*	2 THINKING *Cognitive skills*	3 RELATING *Caring for others & the world*	4 COLLABORATING *Social skills*	5 ACTING *Driving change*
Inner compass	Critical thinking	Appreciation	Communication skills	Courage
Integrity & authenticity	Complexity awareness	Connectedness	Co-creation skills	Creativity
Openness & learning mindset	Perspective skills	Humility	Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence	Optimism
Self-awareness	Sense making	Empathy & compassion	Trust	Perseverence
Presence	Long term orientation and visioning		Mobilisation skills	

Our collaborative inquiry also follows the logic that by trying to engage in change with other people that is relevant to one or more SDGs we will gain deeper understandings into how we enact and facilitate change with other people in the context of trying to co-create a more sustainable regenerative future. Our collaborative action learning projects therefore provide a good environment for using and evaluating the IDG framework. We developed a simple analytical tool from the IDG framework (Figure 8) and some participants used it to reflect on their experiences and identify those aspects of the framework that were relevant and aspects of their practice that were not represented in the framework. We summarize the results of this evaluation in a synthesis article.[13]

Figure 8 Inner Development Goal Framework Mapping Tool used in our evaluation. To what extent did my action learning project require these qualities of character, motivations and skills, and provide opportunities for further development?

1 BEING *Relationship to self*	2 THINKING *Cognitive skills*	3 RELATING *Caring for others & the world*	4 COLLABORATING *Social skills*	5 ACTING *Driving change*
Inner compass *a deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values & purposes relating to the good of the whole*	**Critical thinking** *Skills in critically reviewing the validity of views, evidence and plans*	**Appreciation** *Relating to others & to the world with a basic sense of appreciation, gratitude and joy.*	**Communication skills** *ability to really listen to others, to foster genuine dialogue, to advocate own views skilfully, to manage conflicts constructively and adapt one's communication to different groups*	**Courage** *Ability [and willingness] to stand up for values, make decisions, take decisive action and challenge and disrupt existing structures & views*
Integrity & authenticity *Commitment & ability to act with sincerity, honesty and integrity*	**Complexity awareness** *Understanding of and skills in working with complex and systemic conditions and causalities*	**Connectedness** *Having a keen sense of being connected with and/or being part of a larger whole, such as a community, humanity or global ecosystem*	**Co-creation skills** *skills & motivation to build, develop and facilitate collaborative relationships with different stakeholders, characterized by psychological safety and genuine co-creation*	**Creativity** *ability to generate/ develop original ideas, to innovate, & willing to disrupt conventional patterns*
Openness & learning mindset *mindset of curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable, to embrace change & grow*	**Perspective skills** *Skills in seeking, understanding and actively making use of insights from contrasting perspectives.*	**Humility** *able to act in accordance with the needs of the situation without concern for own importance.*	**Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence** *willingness and competence to embrace diversity and include people & collectives with different views and backgrounds*	**Optimism** *ability to sustain and communicate a sense of hope, positive attitude and confidence in the possibility of meaningful change.*
Self-awareness *ability to be in reflective contact with one's own thoughts, feelings and desires; having a realistic self-image & ability to regulate oneself*	**Sense making** *Skills in seeing patterns, structuring the unknown and being able to consciously create stories*	**Empathy & compassion** *ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness, empathy/compassion and to address related suffering*	**Trust** *ability to show trust and to create and maintain trusting relationships*	**Perseverence** *ability to sustain engagement and stay determined & patient even when efforts take a long time to bear fruit*
Presence *Ability to be in the here and now, without judgment and in a state of open-ended presence*	**Long term orientation and visioning** *Long-term orientation and ability to formulate and sustain a commitment to visions relating to the larger context eg SDG-related problems*		**Mobilisation skills** *skills in inspiring and mobilizing others to engage in shared purposes*	

Partnerships for the SDGs – finding and swimming with like minded fishes

SDG 17 talks about partnerships in support of the SDGs and this was at the heart of our collaborative action learning based inquiry. This was the third inquiry that members of our lifewide research and development group have undertaken and in some respects it was the most challenging because each member had to develop a set of relationships with other people and negotiate and adapt our ideas so what emerged through a process of co-creation, was sometimes very different to what we had imagined.

We realise that through out sustainable regenerative futures initiative, we ourselves are acting as a collective working for the SDGs. Our commitment to naturalistic experiments with our own lives enables us to explore how we might engage with the in our everyday contexts and situations. The insights we gain not only inform our own thinking and practises they also feed into our understandings of how lifewide learning, development and education might be used to support achievement of the SDGs.

Our monthly zoom meetings provided a forum for sharing our experiences and the insights we were gaining and the group provided a great source of emotional support and inspiration. In our final zoom meeting we tried to search for metaphors that captured something of how we felt about the collaborative process and the metaphor of finding and swimming with like minded fishes emerged. Rather than gathering people around us and guiding or cajoling them to accept our vision for action we seemed to be finding people who already shared our values and beliefs either in the workplace, in our educational institution or in our local community, and then co-creating our vision and actions. The process was fundamentally relational and acts of thinking and doing together brought about deeper and more enduring relationships. The metaphor of finding and swimming with other like minded fishes seemed appropriate for our collective experiences.

Acknowledgements

Sources

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Dear Grandchild – our letter to the future
Melissa Shaw with the help of Grandmothers United

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Background

The United Nations (UN) refers to sustainable development using a definition from the 1987 Brundtland report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, which asserted that "Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."[1]

In Autumn 2021 I participated in the Lifewide Learning research and develop group's Sustainable Futures Inquiry during which we were encouraged to reflect on the ways in which the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals[2] connected with our own everyday life. At the end of this Inquiry I wrote, "I seem to feel less defeated by the enormity of the challenge for us in tackling climate change, its causes and consequences, and more engaged with others across the globe in a common cause, and a little more optimistic, and hopeful about making a difference." [3] p44

I resolved to carry on trying to be more mindful of living in ways that tried to honour the SDGs and, in the Spring of 2021, I joined the Action, Creativity and Learning for Healthy, Sustainable, Regenerative Futures Inquiry. This Inquiry emphasised collaboration, and I turned to a group of women friends of similar age to me, with whom I have longstanding, trusting relationships and many shared interests and concerns. There was good support for and interest in the idea of working together on the Inquiry and we united around the common concern of wanting to make sure of a good future for the generations who come after us. After discussing the UN's Strategic Development Goals for 2030, as a group, we decided to focus primarily on the goal of "Responsible consumption and production", Goal 12. We agreed and believed that by finding out and acting on what we can do to try to live more responsibly and sustainably, and sharing this in conversations, we might encourage and persuade friends and family also to try more sustainable living.

After the Inquiry was over all participants were encouraged to share their experiences and insights through a contribution to an online Open Mic conference. We were encouraged to use our imaginations and creativity. After sharing ideas within our group, we decided to contribute in the form of an open letter to our grandchildren and future generations. A video recording of the reading of this letter can be found at: https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/healthy-futures.html at 5mins 20sec.

Our letter

I wrote on behalf of our united group of grandmothers :

Dear Grandchild,
Please save this letter to read when you are older. I hope that you read it at a point when you have started to think about the world, the future, and how you want to live your life.

I wonder if you will be curious to know what your Grandmother was doing to reduce the negative impacts of climate change for the world that you, your children, and their children inherit? I hope that you see that my generation took the chance to try to

improve the future possibilities for life on earth. I hope that you don't have to judge us harshly for not doing enough and soon enough.

We must all be leaders

In our letter, we acknowledge that we had been reluctant to start conversations about climate and sustainability with friends and family, as we often felt that if we did, we would need to have in depth knowledge and ready answers to fix enormous problems. However, as we came together as a group, we agreed that we cannot wait to open this sort of conversation to prompt action. The foreword to the 2021 progress report to the Climate Change Committee[4] asserts "Leadership is required, detail on the steps the UK will take in the coming years, clarity on tax changes and public spending commitments, active engagement with people and businesses across the country. These steps are essential, so people can see opportunity in climate-positive choices. We cannot rely on good will alone."

As a group, we recognised that we have a role as family 'leaders', and believe that, as well as changing our own behaviours, we can, acting together, pressurise organisations and government to better lead on and support sustainable living. The foreword to the 2021 report goes on to say "COVID-19 casts a long shadow, but there are three broad lessons from the pandemic: first, we have seen the critical importance of effective planning for high-impact eventualities; second, we have experienced the ability of government to act with pace and scale when it is required; and third, we have learned that people are willing to support change when they have the information before them". Our letter to our grandchildren represents our attempt to show how we felt empowered by our roles as grandmothers to share information we had garnered, and to discuss this with our families to support change.

A sense of regret

We reflected on ways we collectively have lived our lives; ways that did not consider the interests of future generations, so that now, the task we face of unravelling these ways of living is daunting. Our letter acknowledges this:

How we lived in the 20th and early 21st Centuries, taking our opportunities to work, travel, learn, and entertain ourselves, did not truly count the cost of our choices for others and for the planet. Life was built around fossil fuels, plastics, intensive farming to produce cheap food, and many things that have damaged the planet, and the plants and animals we share it with. Evidence of the damaging effect that humans have on the planet has been ignored, and even dismissed. Then, as the consequences of our way of life became even more evident and alarming, it seemed an enormous challenge to undo our habits and our ways of coping with life, as individuals, and even harder to shift the accepted foundations of living for communities, economies, and societies.

But it's never too late to act

We described some of the activities we have been involved in as a group, and some of the challenges we face. As a group, we agreed we would work together with a focus on our purchasing choices and the need for disposal and recycling of the waste our purchases create. We acted on the local guidance for recycling the packaging which comes into our own household and started conversations with friends and family about how they recycle their household waste. We also realise that we cannot trust that items we carefully separate to recycle are properly recycled by our local councils. Reports have emerged of some councils using cheaper ways to get rid of supposedly recycled waste by burning it, or simply shipping it to another country so that it becomes another country's problem. In the light of this, one of our group directly contacted her local council about their recycling processes and guidance and particularly questioned their plans for the future, urging them to keep improving what they do. Some of us joined in The Big Plastic Count[5], a national survey of household plastic waste, monitoring, recording, and categorising every item of plastic disposed of during one week in the summer of 2022, and then submitting the information. The combined results of the whole survey of almost 100,000 UK households, will inform government about action that companies and supermarkets must take to reduce the amount of plastic being produced, which then becomes household waste. We spoke to friends and family about what we had found out and done.

We explored and discussed the concept of greenwashing "when a company markets something as sustainable when it's actually not" as so simply explained in a sustainability blog from The Modern Milkman[6]. We consulted family members and friends to see what they knew about ways companies use techniques to inflate their "green" image. We experimented, directly contacting some retailers and manufacturers to complain to them about the unnecessary plastic in their packaging and products and quizzing them about how they were planning to reduce their use of plastic. We see the positive role that law and regulation plays, requiring producers to meet environmental standards for production, manufacturing, selling, and distribution, but we concluded that, in addition, we should use our own power as informed consumers, to persuade companies to act more sustainably. We recommended this strategy to our families and friends.

Frustrated by complexity

From what we learned, it seems that there are no simple, easy answers for how to live more sustainably. Complexity thwarts us as we try to change our lives to cause less harm to the planet. This understanding makes encouraging others to join us to make this change even more daunting, as we know that we need to persuade them to make their daily life more complicated. Some of our family members seem to be too busy and stretched to tackle the complexity and find out how to make changes. Some are in their early careers, busy with their small children, or simply grappling with learning, earning and living. Others are elderly and feel reluctant to make changes. On top of this, many of the necessary changes in habits we must make turn out to be less convenient and more expensive. However, we hope that by joining with our families and friends, so that we are learning together, and together finding ways to change our behaviours, we might all make progress. Realising that younger children learn about climate change and sustainable living at school, since it is included in the primary national curriculum, we hope that our grandchildren might be our welcome allies in these family conversations.

Finding partners

As we are focused on the potential power of talking with family and friends to create change, we contacted Reboot the Future[6], a charity which asserts that "conversations have the power to transform the world – connecting people to the values that they hold most dear, to the people around them, and to the planet". Our contact at the charity was interested in our ideas and acknowledged that they had not previously considered that there is a role for grandparents in their campaigns. We have been invited to join the charity's unofficial network of individuals to be approached to speak or to write an article, so our perspective might be included in their work from now on.

Empowering ourselves & each other

Maybe, because of what we have been trying to do as a group, our thinking about ourselves seems to have shifted. We seem to be more energised and feel more positive about possibilities for our roles as grandmothers in our families and more widely. Perhaps the most significant thing we have learned over these few months is that, as grandmothers, we have opportunities to actively encourage, help and join with our families and friends, to explore how and act to live more sustainably. It might be a slow route, but worthwhile. We are encouraged by what Zeke Housefather said in a recent BBC broadcast, "I think by focusing on the things that we can do, particularly in the near term, we empower people. We can give a sense that we are slowly moving things in the right direction, and it's easier to further bend those curves once you've started bending them, if that makes sense? By showing that there is progress, that we are having these easy wins, it gets easier to move on to the harder things down the road".[7]

Inner Development Goals

During the months of our work as a group, in concert with others involved in the Healthy, Sustainable and Regenerative futures Inquiry, we encountered the idea of Inner Development Goals[9], a framework for the transformational skills and qualities needed to tackle complex issues, such as sustainable development. The framework was co-created with the focus "to educate, inspire and empower people to be a positive force for change in society, in their own lives and those around them, and at the same time find purpose and meaning in their lives." Hopefully, our feelings of energy and positivity are symptoms of empowerment and purpose to fuel our efforts in the time ahead. When we look back, even in the short time we have

collaborated as a group of grandmothers, we have faced and navigated a range of significant life events, responsibilities, and challenges in our personal and family lives: this seems to be the territory for our generation, at this time in our lives. We hope that family leadership on sustainable living can be a part of our repertoire.

As a contribution to the Lifewide Learning R&D collective's evaluation of the IDG framework I used it to reflect on the qualities, skills and motivations that I felt were involved in my attempt to create a partnership for the SDGs (Appendix 1) in the form of our collaborative project as a group of grandmothers. As you see from my ratings on the grid below, in my experience all the IDG qualities, character and skills were drawn upon for our work, perhaps because of the particular focus for our work, the nature of our group, and the fact that we collaborated with others across the globe for the Inquiry as a whole. I feel that a range of my own existing skills were drawn upon, but that I, and we, also learned more about influencing, and about the need to take a long-term perspective, engaging with our "characters" as older women and grandmothers.

I very recently found this definition on the BBC Future site, "**Longtermism** is the view that positively influencing the long-term future is a key moral priority of our time. It's about taking seriously the sheer scale of the future, and how high the stakes might be in shaping it. It means thinking about the challenges we might face in our lifetimes that could impact civilisation's whole trajectory, and taking action to benefit not just the present generation, but all generations to come." William MacAskill[10].

I wonder, if I had not been part of this project, would I have been looking for this perspective, which I think offers me purpose, motivation and a sense of fulfilment. I had previously come across the Effective Altruism[11] community, where this definition of longtermism was proposed, via my work with the National Trust, whose own work chimes well with this, "as a guardian of the past, and for the future, to uphold its duty to maintain and enhance what has been entrusted to its care"[12]. I was delighted to come across this perspective described in this way, reflecting the key focus of our work as a group, and I plan to investigate further. My engagement with the Inquiry, and our project, provided opportunities for both my/our development and has seed-ed my own further development, feeding my curiosity.

In terms of how the IDG framework might be further developed and strengthened, I think that our project required a degree of change and project management skills (keeping a focus on realistic actions and timescales, coordinating and reporting), and people management skills (especially maintaining others' confidence). I would see these skills as extending the existing framework, to relationships with the task and with others as individuals and collaborators.

Our hope
We end our letter:

I sincerely hope that your life and choices have not been made hard and limited by the continuing effects of the climate change, which we see have already started to impact our lives. Most importantly, as you read this, I hope you recognise that, in the years since I wrote this letter, you have learned and tried, with me and other family and friends, ways to live well, and protect and cherish our home planet for us, and for you and your next generations, into the future.

With much love and care,
Your *Grandmother*

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Appendix 1 The qualities, skills and motivations I used in my collaborative project mapped onto the Inner Development Goal Framework

Significantly
Moderately
Rarely or not at all

1 BEING *Relationship to self*	2 THINKING *Cognitive skills*	3 RELATING *Caring for others & the world*	4 COLLABORATING *Social skills*	5 ACTING *Driving change*
Inner compass *a deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values & purposes relating to the good of the whole*	**Critical thinking** *Skills in critically reviewing the validity of views, evidence and plans*	**Appreciation** *Relating to others & to the world with a basic sense of appreciation, gratitude and joy.*	**Communication skills** *ability to really listen to others, to foster genuine dialogue, to advocate own views skilfully, to manage conflicts constructively and adapt one's communication to different groups*	**Courage** *Ability [and willingness] to stand up for values, make decisions, take decisive action and challenge and disrupt existing structures & views*
Integrity & authenticity *Commitment & ability to act with sincerity, honesty and integrity*	**Complexity awareness** *Understanding of and skills in working with complex and systemic conditions and causalities*	**Connectedness** *Having a keen sense of being connected with and/or being part of a larger whole, such as a community, humanity or global ecosystem*	**Co-creation skills** *skills & motivation to build, develop and facilitate collaborative relationships with different stakeholders, characterized by psychological safety and genuine co-creation*	**Creativity** *ability to generate/ develop original ideas, to innovate, & willing to disrupt conventional patterns*
Openness & learning mindset *mindset of curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable, to embrace change & grow*	**Perspective skills** *Skills in seeking, understanding and actively making use of insights from contrasting perspectives.*	**Humility** *able to act in accordance with the needs of the situation without concern for own importance.*	**Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence** *willingness and competence to embrace diversity and include people & collectives with different views and backgrounds*	**Optimism** *ability to sustain and communicate a sense of hope, positive attitude and confidence in the possibility of meaningful change.*
Self-awareness *ability to be in reflective contact with one's own thoughts, feelings and desires; having a realistic self-image & ability to regulate oneself*	**Sense making** *Skills in seeing patterns, structuring the unknown and being able to consciously create stories*	**Empathy & compassion** *ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness, empathy/compassion and to address related suffering*	**Trust** *ability to show trust and to create and maintain trusting relationships*	**Perseverance** *ability to sustain engagement and stay determined & patient even when efforts take a long time to bear fruit*
Presence *Ability to be in the here and now, without judgment and in a state of open-ended presence*	**Long term orientation and visioning** *Long-term orientation and ability to formulate and sustain a commitment to visions relating to the larger context eg SDG-related problems*		**Mobilisation skills** *skills in inspiring and mobilizing others to engage in shared purposes*	

Keep Swimming : Why Influencing Beliefs is Important
Josefina Ramirez

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Introduction

For an educator of children I thought that promoting healthier happier lives with elements that are proved to be key to pursue such ambitions, should be a straightforward task. One would think that many people for example the parents and families of my pupils, would like to participate in initiatives that lead to happier and healthier lives, not only for their own children and families, but also for future generations. One would also think that because happiness and sustainability are trending topics, more people would want to get involved in projects which encourage them. As I accepted the challenge and embarked on the proposal to design a collaborative action learning project aimed at living a life that was more supportive of one or more of the UN's SDGs[1] (Figure 1), I was optimistic and convinced that many people would join our collaboration. But, as time passed, and several invitations and activities did not provoke or achieve the expected effect, I began to   wonder if my commitment to action for the SDGs was shared by others and question why is it so difficult to involve people in something that was clearly in their own interest and in the interests of their children?

Figure 1 17 Sustainable Development Goals

A positive happy approach

When proposing the SDG collaboration, everyone I approached agreed how important and life changing they may be. But the overwhelming response was that they were too busy to tackle them now. This lead me to question the motives for why people avoid or ignore opportunities to make a difference, through their actions – even when they know it is a good thing to try?

All the reports I have read about sustainability indicate the scale and urgency of the situation of our planet requires an endless number of actions that are needed to heal it and our communities. Perhaps though it is the scale, complexity and relentless nature of the task that makes it seem like an impossible quest, and therefore, overwhelming to most people. The information we receive on the profound damage we have caused and the nature and urgency of the challenge may trigger at least three reactions and emotions that affect our beliefs and therefore our ability and willingness to act.

Lack of self-belief

When confronting the scale and complexity of the change in human behaviours required of the SDGs it is not surprising that we feel inadequate and helpless and lack self-efficacy (belief in ourselves), and choose insensitivity as a self defence mechanism, *"fields of research have given evidence to their maladaptiveness as ways of dealing with threatening stimuli. It has been found that defences can lead to insensitivity to danger signals, lowered coping capacity to life stresses with increased vulnerability to "psychosomatic diseases""*.[2] It seems that the overwhelming negative information we receive about the state of our planet and human suffering affects people's reactions, and they become insensitive, to the implications of this troublesome knowledge in order to be able to cope. The other feeling mentioned, self efficacy, is the persons belief in their capacity to act in order to achieve a goal. Bandura`s concept[3] refers to the belief a person has regarding their own power to affect situations, and when affected, a person will feel he or she won't be able to influence or change something. As stated, it does **not refer to the real power to affect** something, **but to the belief** regarding that power, and in the case of the planet situation and the need to lead healthier lives, the challenge may seem unreachable, therefore it may trigger a sense of inefficacy. Finally, the attempts someone may have tried, regarding actions such as recycling, eating better, exercising, or trying to live a life that is consistent with any of the other SDGs, may be counteracted with the continuous barrage of news regarding the dire situation

for our planet. For example in global warming, droughts and floods, contaminated seas, loss of rain forests and biodiversity more generally and many other things that lead to feelings of learnt hopelessness.[4] Such a state of mind makes people feel that no matter what they do, no action they may take will change their fate or situation, making them resistant to attempting action to resolve an unsatisfactory situation.

Cultivating hope & optimism

The feeling that people are paralyzed and do not take part in even small actions towards a healthier more sustainable life, suggests that we can motivate and move people, showing them a more positive vision, which may affect their self efficacy. Tragic scenarios, as real as they may be, may also push people to quit trying, and "block" information or actions that will only depress them, because they feel there is no hope, and nothing they can do, may affect the result. So how might we defeat this hopeless and helpless feeling and get people to see and appreciate that their own small actions may be the ones that will provoke the butterfly effect? Just as hopelessness is learnt, optimism may also be learnt[5]. Perhaps the answer lies in collaboration and partnerships that bring people together around a common cause. As Melissa Shaw[6] and Norman Jackson[7] show in their articles finding people who share your concerns and forming or deepening relationships with them as you act together on these concerns builds hope and optimism as the results of actions, however small, are appreciated and celebrated.

So, why and how does a collaborative positive approach lead to more people wanting to be involved in small but consistent actions towards a happier, healthier life for all? When inviting people to join small, fun activities or projects, in communities that cultivate an optimistic view, in which every achievement is celebrated and every failure is taken as one more step towards the goal, people may feel that it is worth the effort to keep trying, as well as appreciating the small achievements along the way. It may also lead to feelings of relatedness and connectedness to others and to the world and ultimately to the sense of interbeing[7] and being with and within an empathic community. Positive relationships built in such groups, may optimize each participant performance[5] regarding the actions towards reaching the SDGs, motivation to try new actions, and develop collective empathy.

Smaller dynamic communities working collaboratively towards shared visions and goals develop the sense of being a collective with a group sense of self efficacy. If we define collaboration as one of the central prosocial behaviors in which a group of people more or less at the same level, develop the same task with a common objective, working together in the pursuit of such goal[8] may trigger learning; this may be the way to develop new healthier habits, in a friendly, but more systematic way, as we share this with a group with which one identifies.

Harnessing empathy

Empathy, which implies a shared interpersonal experience, is implicated in many aspects of social cognition, notably prosocial behaviour, morality and the regulation of aggression[9]. Empathy involves several components: affective arousal, emotion understanding and emotion regulation. *"Individuals with high scores in Empathic Concern were also found to score more highly on Fantasy, Personal Distress, Neuroticism, Stress and Anxiety. Thus, more empathic individuals are likely to experience elevations in negative affectivity when they perceive the emotional suffering of others."* [10]

If we can harness the powerful force of empathy and develop collective empathy this certainly will have impact on our willingness to act despite the scale and complexity of the actions each one may take towards the collaborative objective. This suggests that when inviting others to join action groups, we should emphasise the positive outcome over the depressing state of the situation we are in in order to help and heal our common "home" : the earth and all who "interlive" in it. We want action to be taken, and empathic people may feel overwhelmed and threatened if they believe that there is nothing they can do to make a change.

Empathy can be categorized as an emotional or cognitive response[11] Emotional empathy consists of
- feeling the same emotion as another person,
- personal distress, distress in response to perceiving another's plight
- feeling compassion for another person

It is important to note that feelings of distress associated with emotional empathy don't necessarily mirror the emotions of the other person. This empathy is associated to compassionate human behaviour, related to be concerned and to help others[11,12].

On the other hand, cognitive empathy refers to how well an individual can perceive and understand the emotions of another, and is also referred to, as empathic accuracy, involves having accurate knowledge about how the person feels.

So when we see another person (or living being) experiencing an emotion, (anxiety, despair because of the urgent situation in their habitat: lack of food, or water, contamination , inadequate jobs or other), we represent that same emotion in ourselves. Perhaps this is another reason why when we are bombarded by all the information on the situation in our planet, we may feel so overwhelmed, that we may quit trying any action.

Less is more – it is better to act in small ways than not all

The negative information regarding our planet comes from varied and persistent sources, creating an overload. So where do we start? What do we do? Our proposal, on taking small actions to contribute in small but consistent steps, should provide a positive view and set an optimistic tone, with which people are more likely to to want to engage. Sharing fun, good results from anyone taking some steps, should be the engine to feel lifted, enthusiastic, and powerful. We should remind everyone that less in consistently more; that less is a step to big changes in small communities. Small communities may then start to be interconnected in ways that they have not been before.

How do we overcome denial?

Just as we see people that may be overwhelmed by the planetary situation on several fronts, on the other side of the road, we can also see people whose response to such situation is denial. If we would want to motivate someone with this belief system we should not try to use the scientific information as evidence, if they do not believe it? We may even skip it and just propose these actions as better ways to live to create a healthier environment…even more so… more than "use", we may move to better ways to "connect" with our environment and the people in our families and communities.

Cultivating the belief that we can make a difference

Through my experience of trying to encourage and facilitate collaboration for the SDGs I am confronted by the reality of trying to persuade people who told me that they are too busy to make even the simplest of changes in their lives. I came to the conclusion that this is perhaps an excuse for underlying beliefs that are generated by the overwhelming scale and complexity of the issues we are all confronting in respect of the SDGs that disempowers people and creates resistance to involve themselves in trying to change. I have reasoned that in order to make changes that will lead to a more sustainable regenerative future we need to cultivate hope and optimism for the future and the belief that even small changes we make can make a difference to the future. Ultimately, we have to believe in something much bigger than ourselves and our own lives to overcome belief systems that convince us we are powerless to make a difference and there is no point in even trying.

The Inner Development Goals Framework[13] (reproduced in this issue of the magazine[14]) is an ongoing initiative to identify skills and qualities that individuals and organizations need to develop in order to successfully work with the complex societal issues mapped by the UNs 17 Sustainable Development Goals. While motivations that encourage and enable people to engage with the SDGs are recognised in the framework, there is no recognition that beliefs are a fundamental influence on motivations.[15]

Let's keep swimming until we find other like-minded fish to swim with

In spite of my experience and apparent failure to build a partnership for the SDGs I remain optimistic and I feel I have more understanding as to why I was not successful. So I invite you to join our quest to help create a healthier future for ourselves and the planet. Even though the challenge may seem daunting, the very act of trying to pursue healthy behaviours or habits, is filled with joy, faith, humour and enthusiasm. Your actions may inspire more than you think. When undertaken with a positive and happy spirit, in the manner of Dory in Nemo´s Disney movie, just keep swimming and you are likely to find that by your example others are swimming with you!

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To Be Is To Inter-Be
Norman Jackson

The profound idea of interbeing

Every so often I come across an idea that shocks me in its simplicity and wisdom—the idea of interbeing falls into this category. "*To be or not to be?* is the much quoted opening passage of a soliloquy written by William Shakespeare, given by Prince Hamlet as he contemplates his own existence. But as I discovered through a combination of participating in the Gaia Design for Sustainability and Regeneration course and my collaborative action learning project, the more responsible and regenerative question is "*to be or to inter-be?*"

Vietnamese monk and poet Thich Nhat Hanh[1],[2] expresses the profound idea of interbeing in this poetic way.

If you are a poet, you will see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper. Without a cloud, there will be no rain; without rain, the trees cannot grow; and without trees, we cannot make paper. The cloud is essential for the paper to exist. If the cloud is not here the sheet of paper cannot be here either. So we can say that the cloud and the paper inter-are. 'Interbeing' is a word that is not in the dictionary yet, but if we combine the prefix 'inter' with the verb 'to be,' we have a new verb, inter-be.

If we look into this sheet of paper even more deeply, we can see the sunshine in it. Without sunshine, the forest cannot grow. In fact, nothing can grow without sunshine. And so, we know that the sunshine is also in this sheet of paper. The paper and the sunshine inter-are. And if we continue to look we can see the logger who cut the tree and brought it to the mill to be transformed into paper. And we see wheat. We know that the logger cannot exist without his daily bread, and therefore the wheat that became his bread is also in the sheet of paper. The logger's father and mother are in it too. When we look in this way, we see that without all these things, this sheet of paper cannot exist.

We cannot point out one thing that is not here – time, space, the earth, the rain, the minerals in the soil, the sunshine, the cloud, the river, the heat. Everything co-exists with this paper. That is why I think the word inter-be should be in the dictionary. 'To be' is to inter-be- we cannot just be by ourselves alone. We have to inter-be with every other thing. This sheet of paper is, because everything else is.

I have thought a lot about the wisdom in this story and it has given me a new way of thinking about the world of which we are a living expression with the ability to express ourselves and comprehend the way everything is related to everything else.

Context

I've lived in the village of Betchworth on the edge of the Surrey Hills for nearly 20 years. It's a beautiful peaceful place and there has been a village on this spot for over 1000 years. Since I retired I have spent a lot of time immersed in my garden and the adjacent woodland and about 5 years ago I started making short movies of the natural world which I post in my nature notes blog. It has stimulated my interest and curiosity in nature and provided me with an outlet for my creativity and has undoubtedly been a contributor to my mental wellbeing.

I feel deeply connected to this place but during the years I have lived here I've had relatively little interaction with the local community. I saw my action learning project as an opportunity to change my attitude and behaviour and become more connected to the village and its community. In my initial vision statement for my project I envisaged a new cooperative relationship with people who wanted to make a difference to the natural environment and the life it sustains around my village. Building on my existing interest, I wanted to develop a better understanding of the natural habitats in the area where I live and encourage greater biodiversity. Many years ago I was geologist and I made geological maps. I thought I might try to rejuvenate these skills and try to make maps of the natural environment and the plant and animal species it contains.

Opportunity for action

I pride myself with being good at recognising opportunities when I encounter them. Early on in my project it was clear to me that I needed to find and collaborate with other people who also cared about the natural environment. As I searched for other people I stumbled on the website of a group of people who called themselves the *RE-Betchworth climate and ecology network group* – RE stands for RE-wilding | RE-cycling | RE-ducing | RE-pairing | RE-using | RE-storing | RE-inventing | RE-connecting. What luck! An existing group of people who where already involved in sustainability and regeneration work. I emailed the leader of the group and offered to help. I explained I was starting an action learning project and I intended to create some habitat maps. He invited me to the next meeting of the group in his kitchen and while stroking his cat I was welcomed and assimilated into the group. I immediately felt that I was amongst kindred spirits and that sense of belonging has grown over the last 6 months.

Our kitchen meetings are always jolly affairs but they are always business like. The group had a plan but we added new detail around the idea of a Greener Healthier Betchworth. My vision for my project became subsumed within the vision for the group.

Working together we aim to build… An engaged community where everyone strives to live each day in a way that respects and cares for the natural environment, to enhance the health and well-being of the people, animals and plants that live here."

One of the strengths of the groups is the local knowledge the members of the group have. We successfully bid for funding from the Parish Council to support the priority areas of our action plan but in order to secure the funding we were encouraged to register as a company with our own bank account. We decided to bid for Charitable status which we are now doing and I have agreed to become a trustee.

In the short time I have been involved we have developed a communication strategy to enable us to share the work we are doing and invite collaboration. We are using the village Whats App forum, our own mail-list of people who have expressed interest in our work, the parish magazine and leaflets. I established a new biodiversity website to provide a focus for our educational work and a YouTube channel for our nature movies.

Types of collaboration

Collaboration is at the heart of our project and I've experienced two forms of participation. The first is where I've contributed to the work of the group through my own activities – for example in creating the biodiversity website and making habitat maps and short nature movies. Over the last six months I've made 8 short nature movies for the project and these have been circulated to our community and posted on the educational page of our biodiversity website. Making the maps and movies encouraged me to explore places I haven't been to before and they forced me to learn about the flora using the plantNet app.
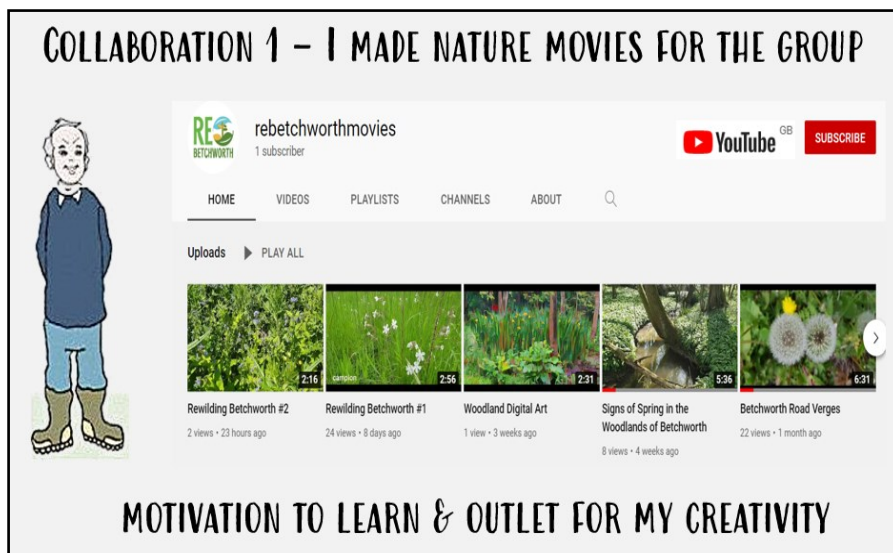
The second form of collaboration I've been involved in is where we have worked as a group to achieve specific objectives. For example, in our planning meetings we drew up our strategy and in our Jubilee Plant a Tree campaign we worked together to encourage the village community to plant a tree. We used the village fete on the Queens Jubilee holiday weekend to involve our community and successfully gained our target of 70 pledges to plant a tree.

The village fete during which we secured many promises from members of the village community to plant a tree

Am I a healthier for engaging in this action learning project?

So am I healthier or in some way a better person for being involved in this action learning project? I think the answer is yes in two important ways – in the formation of new relationships leading to new experiences with good caring people, and in the new opportunities for creative self-expression in the things I have been able to create – websites and movies.

Through participation in the whole of our life we are able to satisfy our psychological and physical needs. Building on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs[3], Clayton Alderfer developed his ERG model[4] of the three motivational forces that drive our participation in life namely, our needs for existence, relatedness and growth.

Figure 1 Comparison of the Maslow and Alderfer motivational forces models.
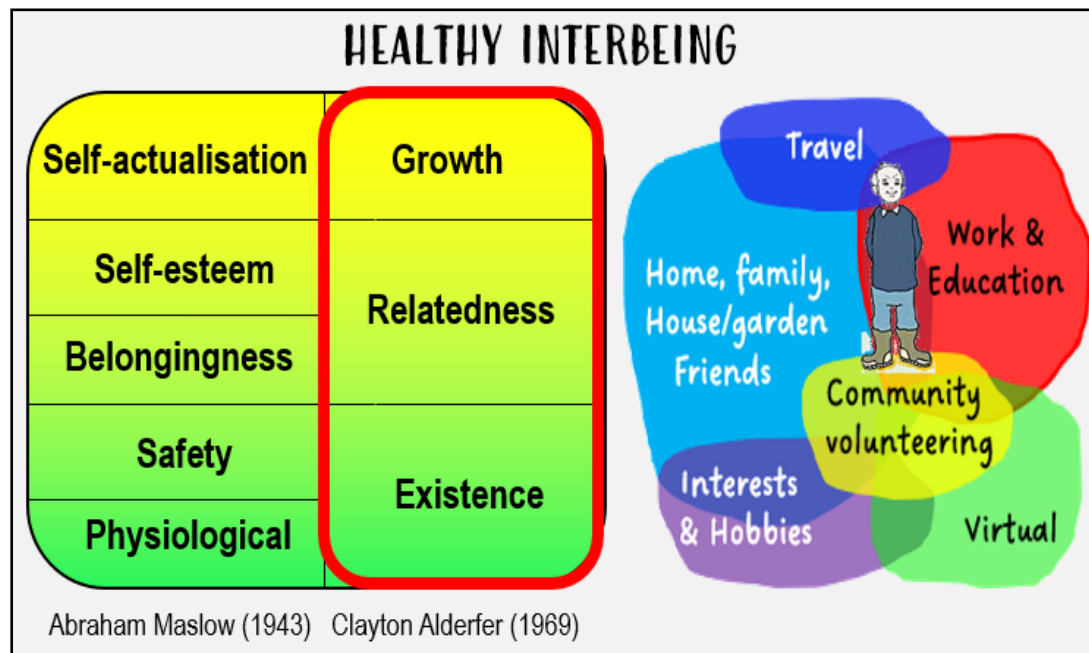
My participation in the Re-Betchworth community project has enhanced my relatedness through new friendships, feelings of belonging and feeling valued. It has also given me new opportunities for personal growth and involvement in creative activity as I have been able to pursue my interest in making educational nature movies. At the same time I feel I am doing something useful for my community. Furthermore, as a collective we are helping to raise awareness of several of the SDGs and taking positive steps to address some of them in ways that might ultimately contribute to more sustainable futures for our children and grandchildren.

As I reach the end of my story I want to return to the idea of interbeing. I now realise just how much we inter-are. By collaborating with others to try to bring about a future that is more sustainable and regenerative, I'm deepening and extending my own interbeing through new relationships, connectivities and interdependencies with people, with place and with the natural world. My new insight is that by accepting that everything is connected[1, 5] and being conscious of my interbeing[1] I am better able to make scientific, social, emotional and spiritual sense of my presence in the ecological world and beyond this the universe.

To what extent has my action learning project required the qualities of character, motivations and skills outlined in the IDG framework and provided opportunities for further development?

The Inner Development Goals framework [6,7]. Table 1 provides a heuristic to help recognise the qualities, motivations and skills necessary to participate in complex change processes relating to the achievement of one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Table 1 provides a subjective analysis of the qualities, motivations and skills I believe have been drawn upon during the first three or four months of my collaborative action learning project. Looking back over my experiences of the last six months, I can make the case for engaging in a significant way with all but 6 of the 23 elements of the framework. Given greater time and a

bigger variety of interventions I am confident that all areas of the framework could be engaged. I also recognise that the framework itself could be strengthened in a number of areas namely – beliefs and values, commitment, leadership and the important idea of interbeing. I comment on these in the concluding article in this issue.[8] Based on this synthesis it seems likely that a series of collaborative, connected actions that are embedded in a strategic plan and vision to make significant change will require, to varying degrees all the qualities, motivations and skills contained in the IDG framework.

Table 1 Inner Development Goal Framework Mapping Tool

Significantly
Moderately
Rarely or not at all

Evaluation: To what extent did my action learning project require these qualities of character, motivations and skills, and provide opportunities for further development?

1 BEING Relationship to self	2 THINKING Cognitive skills	3 RELATING Caring for others & the world	4 COLLABORATING Social skills	5 ACTING Driving change
Inner compass a deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values & purposes relating to the good of the whole	**Critical thinking** Skills in critically reviewing the validity of views, evidence and plans	**Appreciation** Relating to others & to the world with a basic sense of appreciation, gratitude and joy.	**Communication skills** ability to really listen to others, to foster genuine dialogue, to advocate own views skilfully, to manage conflicts constructively and adapt one's communication to different groups	**Courage** Ability [and willingness] to stand up for values, make decisions, take decisive action and challenge and disrupt existing structures & views
Integrity & authenticity Commitment & ability to act with sincerity, honesty and integrity	**Complexity awareness** Understanding of and skills in working with complex and systemic conditions and causalities	**Connectedness** Having a keen sense of being connected with and/or being part of a larger whole, such as a community, humanity or global ecosystem	**Co-creation skills** skills & motivation to build, develop and facilitate collaborative relationships with different stakeholders, characterized by psychological safety and genuine co-creation	**Creativity** ability to generate/ develop original ideas, to innovate, & willing to disrupt conventional patterns
Openness & learning mindset mindset of curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable, to embrace change & grow	**Perspective skills** Skills in seeking, understanding and actively making use of insights from contrasting perspectives.	**Humility** able to act in accordance with the needs of the situation without concern for own importance.	**Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence** willingness and competence to embrace diversity and include people & collectives with different views and backgrounds	**Optimism** ability to sustain and communicate a sense of hope, positive attitude and confidence in the possibility of meaningful change.
Self-awareness ability to be in reflective contact with one's own thoughts, feelings and desires; having a realistic self-image & ability to regulate oneself	**Sense making** Skills in seeing patterns, structuring the unknown and being able to consciously create stories	**Empathy & compassion** ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness, empathy/compassion and to address related suffering	**Trust** ability to show trust and to create and maintain trusting relationships	**Perseverence** ability to sustain engagement and stay determined & patient even when efforts take a long time to bear fruit
Presence ability to be in the here and now, without judgment and in a state of open-ended presence	**Long term orientation and visioning** Long-term orientation and ability to formulate and sustain a commitment to visions relating to the larger context eg SDG-related problems		**Mobilisation skills** skills in inspiring and mobilizing others to engage in shared purposes	

Final word

The sign of a successful action learning project is that it does not end after a predetermined time. What happens is we learn that what we are doing is actually important to our life and to the person we want to be and continue to become and we realise that engaging in purposeful action and undergoing through the experience, has no ending.

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Opening the Mic: Polyvocality, Pedagogy & Creative Possibility
Pip McDonald

Pip McDonald (she/her) works in higher education in Learning technology and is also an experimental performance poet. She has recently performed at High Tide Festival in Twickenham, Wandsworth Fringe festival and the Newcastle Poetry festival open mic. She has recently published original poetry in the *Aayo* Magazine, *Spilling Cocoa* and the *Sun*, *Hometown*, *Nature* poetry anthologies edited by Sourav Sarkar.

You can follow Pip on Twitter: @PipMac6.

A bundle of contexts

A core part of the role of working in a learning technology context within a digital innovation team in a university setting, is to support academics with the development of digital literacy. An approach I have explored is to encourage an academic to share their story and experience of working with technology-enhanced learning (TEL). What stories do we tell ourselves? What "folk pedagogies and pseudo-theories" do we have? (Drumm, 2019). Initially, the possibilities of a techno-auto-biographic space were explored (Leschallas & McDonald, 2021). The approach was shared in a research poster at the UNESCO Inclusive Policy Lab Education and Digital Skills event in December 2021 (Leschallas & McDonald, 2021).

Drawing on the idea of adopting an auto-ethnographic approach to making sense of working in learning technology

Figure 1 Eclipse Digital Media Inc (2021)

and experimenting with the idea of an "identity performance", a techno-auto-ethnographic approach was created as a lens through which stories about working in a technology-enhanced capacity could be shared (Clark, 2020). How can we perform our identities? The combination of technology and poetry emerged as a creative practice for me. *Techno-poetics* provided a range of creative possibilities.

In 2021, a techno-auto-ethnographic poem entitled 'I'm a Learning Technologist, Get Me Out of Here' was published in the annual #creativeHE annual 2021 which explored what being creative in a time of adversity meant and in the Creative Academic Magazine exploring creative practice as a result of the pandemic (McDonald, 2021). Additionally, the poem was performed live in a multimodal capacity with customised LED Mask at the Play on Words (POW) event at The Bridge House Theatre in Penge in London in March 2022. Furthermore, a presentation entitled The Possibilities of Techno-Poetics was delivered at the Women in Academia Support Network (WIASN) conference exploring diversifying higher education and research in an online capacity in 2022. The presentation involved a performance of an excerpt of the techno-auto ethnographic poem.

The techno-auto-ethnographic poem was also performed as part of a presentation at the University of Brighton at the Everyday Creativity conference exploring moving towards an international research network in June 2022 entitled 'Techno-poets dream of electric sheep?. Exploring the potential of techno-auto-ethnographic performance poetry as a creative approach to research methodology' (McDonald, 2022).

Photographs by Alex Newman, 2022.

As a Learning Technologist, a critical part of the role is to create technology-enhanced learning (TEL) opportunities. How about enhancing poetry with technology or technology-enhanced poetry (TEL?). How can poetry be enhanced by technology?
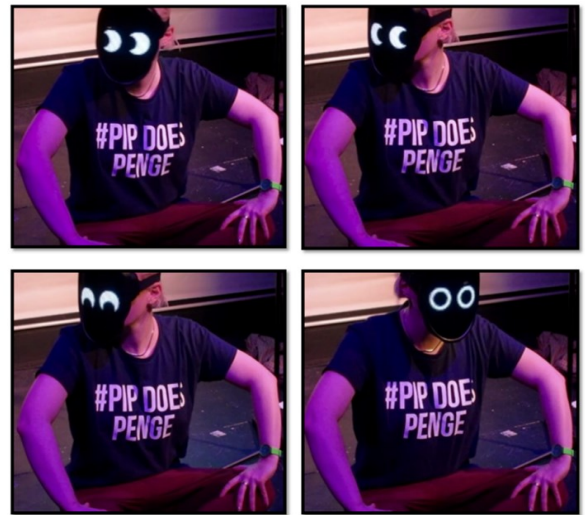
Technology-enhanced poetry (TEP) took place in two ways. Firstly by rewriting famous poems with a digital lens. For example, 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock' (TS Eliot) was rewritten from the point of view of a voice assistant entitled 'The Love Song of J. Alexa Prufrock' and performed at New Poetry Shack at Candid Arts Trust in London in 2022 (McDonald, 2022). Another example was re-writing Shakespeare's 'Sonnet 18' to create 'Digital Sonnet 18' which was published in the #JoyFE magazine and performed as part of the Wandsworth Fringe Festival Lost Souls poetry shows.

Left—Screenshot McDonald, 2022, computer image, Eclipse Digital Imaging, Inc. (2021

Secondly, Technology-enhanced poetry (TEP) was achieved by adopting a technology-enhanced performance. This involved creating a multimodal performance experience, for example by wearing a mobile phone outfit, a customized LED mask or glasses. If wearable technology is possible, could 'wearable poetry' become a performative practice? Could fashioning techno-poetics become a performative practice?

Right—Photograph by Alex Newman, 2022 (left) & by Hannah Stanislaus, 2022 (centre & right).

Another example of technology-enhanced poetry (TEP) took place after visiting Wordsworth's birthplace in Windermere in March 2020. Wordsworth's poem 'I wandered Lonely as a Cloud' was rewritten with a technology focus entitled 'Digital Daffodils' (McDonald, 2022). In order to enhance the performance, 3D glasses were handed out to the audience to view 3D videos of daffodils created using the mobile phone application 3D Effect.

3D videos created by 3D Effect mobile application (left & right) & photograph by Alex Newman (centre).

The possibilities of both performance poetry and technology-enhanced performance allowed me to reflect on the difference between a poem in a textual format and the performance of the poem. Performing a poem is an opportunity to create an mexperience. Jean-Michelle Jarre created an immersive and multimodal experience to perform his music, for example at the virtual reality concert at Notre-Dame in Paris he performed (Jean-Michel Jarre, 2022). What happens when we perform a poem? Do we *become* our poems?

Emergent opportunity for collaborative inquiry

As a result of the poem and performing in online open mic events throughout the pandemic, early in 2022, the idea of the #creativeHE open mic event emerged as an opportunity for the community to perform their own original and creative work. This new enterprise became the focus for this Action Learning based collaborative inquiry as we contemplated how the open mic event could relate to and be explored in the context of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) (3) Good Health and Well-being (United Nations, n.d.).

A blog post was published on the #creativeHE blog to promote the open mic event and to show participants how to sign up (McDonald, 2022). Working with Tom Burns, a Senior Lecturer from London Metropolitan University and Norman Jackson, an Emeritus Professor of the University of Surrey and the founder of both Lifewide and Creative Academic, the event took place on Zoom during World Creativity Day in April 2022. Norman also curated an open mic warm up event led by Ailsa Parsons, a Lecturer in Psychology at the University of Salford as an improvised dance based on her original composition 'Moments of light leave a trace on my soul' (Parsons, 2022).

Ten performers signed up and shared their original work. For first time performers, a test session was offered as an opportunity to try out performing in the Zoom setting. A wide range of original work was performed including animated stories, songwriting, work performed in a different language, storytelling, and multimodal video poetry. Dr Lee Campbell, a performance poet and Senior Lecturer at the University of the Arts London performed in the capacity of headline act who is a performance poet. A recording of the open mic event is curated on the Creative Academic YouTube channel (Creative Academic, 2022).

Creating and performing for health and wellbeing

Participants and other attendees were invited to complete an online evaluation for the end of the event. The question '*how did you feel after participating in the #creativeHE Open Mic?*' was asked as a way to explore the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) (3) Good Health and Well-being was explored (United Nations, n.d.). Some of the responses include:
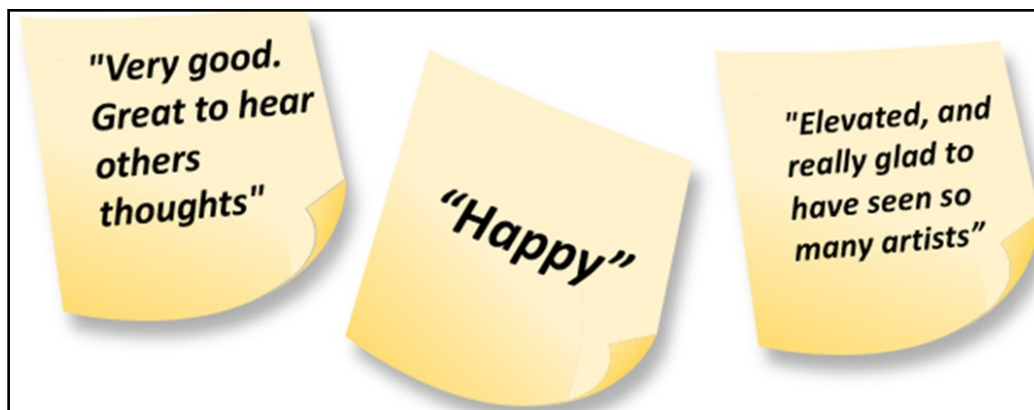
Additionally, the question '*If you performed, to what extent did you feel that performing contributed to improving your health and wellbeing*?' was also asked. Most participants selected the option "*A great deal*".

Throughout the current collaborative inquiry, participants were invited to share how their projects were going in response to a series of stimulus questions. During one of the progress meetings, a crowd sourced poetry experiment was performed. Crowd sourced poetry can be defined as "A crowdsourced poem is created entirely from words submitted by the public on a particular topic or theme" (Simpson, n.d.) A google document with a range of creative prompts and questions was shared amongst the inquiry participants for example, *"If your action research project was a colour, what colour would it be and why?"*. Drawing on the responses from the group, a multimodal poem was created and performed at the progress meeting. Recordings of the progress meetings and the poem are available on the Lifewide website (Lifewide Education https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/healthy-futures.html

Whilst the techno-auto-ethnographic approach focused on the self and technology, there was a possibility to explore the combination of auto-ethnography and collaborative practice. What about "collaborative poetics?" (Johnson, 2021). Crowd sourced poetry provides an opportunity to explore the "performative autoethnographic-we" (Mendus, 2021). The idea of

polyvocality was inspired by Simone Eringfeld and her album *Please Hold* and which emerged from "sound-based research methodology" and "an auditory journey" (University of Cambridge, n.d.). Simone Eringfeld also presented at a #creativeHE event exploring how poems were created by using research data about experiences of pandemic (Seat, 2021).

Image by Eclipse Digital Media Inc (2021)

Co-creation through collaboration

In July 2022, at the end of our collaborative inquiry the facilitators decided to adopt an Open Mic format to share what they have learnt through their own action learning projects. This was a direct consequence of one of the facilitators experiencing the #creativeHE Open Mic event and believing that it offered opportunities for personal and collective creativity beyond the affordances of a typical online conference.

I used the opportunity to create and perform a poetry comic : my own synthesis of the open mic project entitled 'One Small Step for Techno-Poetic Kind-Performing a Digitally Enhanced Techno-auto-ethno-graphic Poetry Comic' (McDonald, 2022). A recording of the open mic conference is available on YouTube (Creative Academic, 2022) and a reflective blog post on the open mic conference was published on the Royal Agricultural University (RAU) Digital Transformation Blog entitled 'Never Knowingly Undertold: Telling Our Stories' (McDonald, 2022).

McDonald (2022), Comic Template, Eclipse Digital Media Inc. (2021)

Exploring the Impact of the Open Mic

As a result of the open mic event, members of the #creativeHE community were invited to present at the JISC online meeting for Community Managers to explore and share ideas about the group. A blog post was also published about this experience (Nerantzi, Burns & McDonald, 2022). As part of this presentation, JISC members were invited to participate in a range of creative activities including a crowd sourced poem. A recording of the poem is available on SoundCloud (McDonald, 2022).

At the open mic event, Dr. Teeroumanee Nadan wrote and performed a poem 'I Noticed' exploring the lived experience of microaggression and published a reflective blog post about the experience (Nadan, 2022). As a result of this experience, she

wrote another poem entitled 'Eye Noticed' and published an additional blog post to provide an explanation of the intended meaning of each stanza and a bibliography. An annotated poem can help to provide context, motivation and meaning. Teeroumanee Nadan also provided an opportunity to contribute to a photo flashcard project where participants can add images in order to explore digital inequality in education (Nadan, 2022).

One of the performers, Aspa Paltoglou, Senior Lecturer at Manchester Metropolitan University wrote a reflective blog post exploring the experience of the open mic event. She explored how modifying pre-existing poems provided a platform to express what she was interested in, the idea putting words into a "poetry cabinet", how performances triggered memories and I know how bringing people together has a positive impact on mental health (Paltoglou, 2022).

"The first thing to note is the very friendly and joyful atmosphere. The organisers and participants created a space where one could feel comfortable to share personal issues and present their creations..."
(Paltoglou, 2022).

Exploring Inner Development Goals (IDG) and the Open Mic Event

Finally, it is possible to ask myself the critical question 'to what extent did co-organsing and co-hosting the #creativeHE open mic event improves my health?'. In order to answer the question, it is possible to draw on the Inner Development Goals framework (Transformational Skills for Sustainable Development, Table 1).

Table 1 Inner Development Goal Framework (IDG 2021, 2022)

1 BEING Relationship to Self	2 THINKING Cognitive Skills	3 RELATING Caring for Others and the World	4 COLLABORATING Social Skills	5 ACTING Driving Change
Inner compass	Critical thinking	Appreciation	Communication skills	Courage
Integrity and Authenticity	Complexity awareness	Connectedness	Co-creation skills	Creativity
Openness and Learning Mindset	Perspective skills	Humility	Inclusive mindset and intercultural competence	Optimism
Self-awareness	Sense-making	Empathy and Compassion	Trust	Perserverance
Presence	Long-term orientation and Visioning		Mobilization skills	

Having explored an auto-ethnographic approach, the following goals are relevant:

1. Being - Relationship to Self. This goal is relevant in terms of expressing what is important to the individual (Transformational Skills for Sustainable Development, n.d.). Providing the #creativeHE community and beyond an opportunity to share their original work was important to me. Having performed at a range of open mics both online and in person, it felt like a positive and constructive move to provide others with an opportunity to feel positive about sharing their original work. In engaging with the open mic format most of the participants entered unknown territory and through this they developed new ways of communicating. The idea of becoming different is perhaps another dimension of being that could be represented in the Inner Development Goals Framework.

2. Thinking – Cognitive Skills. Creating original work requires the integration of perception, reasoning and imagination in ways that extend understanding beyond the analytical into both artistic and poetic domains.

3. Relating - Caring for Others and the World. The open mic model provides a space for empathy and an opportunity to explore challenging issues such as the global pandemic and identity.

4. Collaborating - Social Skills. The open mic was a group project which required working in a collaborative capacity for example organisation, co-hosting and supporting performers to share their original work (Transformational Skills for Sustainable Development, n.d.). One of the core goals of the event was to communicate with the wider community and the overall performance of all participants was an act of co-creation which was appreciated by all who were involved.

5 Acting – Driving Change. The open mic event provides opportunities to perform and engage personal creativity in the design of materials for performance and the performance itself.

Conclusions

The Action, Creativity and Learning, for Healthy, Sustainable, Regenerative Futures Inquiry to encourage creativity set out to encourage participants to engage with one or more of the Sustainable Development Goals and to do so in creative ways as a way of nurturing health and well being. In this respect the open mic event provided a novel way of enabling participants to share their experiences and insights in a format that was new to most of them. A recording of the event is available on YouTube (Creative Academic, 2022).

The open mic approach has a number of pedagogic benefits. For example, all participants have a voice and an opportunity to express their ideas in an inclusive, accessible and interdisciplinary safe space, whether online, in person or in a hybrid capacity. Future developments include the possibility of a publication with original work from performers for example in a 'zine' format, and exploring the possibility of a comedy component or 'educomedy'. Ultimately, exploring the open mic approach could form the basis of an approach to building "critical performative pedagogies" (Campbell, 2020). How do you perform yours?

Drawing by the author (McDonald, 2022)

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The Urgent Need for Sustainability Awareness Education: Collaborative Action Learning in the Educational Environment
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Catalina is High School Principal at Marymount School, in the Medellin district of Colombia. She has been working at Marymount for the past 14 years and is also an alumna from the same school. Catalina is passionate about education and believes in the power it has to change the world and make it sustainable. That is way, her life purpose is connected to Marymount´s one and it is: to be committed to serve by transforming lives through education. She is a Psychologist with postgraduate studies in creativity and a master's degree in High School Education.

Introduction

In our lifetime human existence has changed, everything is moving faster - information and communication, technological development, global connectivity, climate change, population growth and migrations are all contributing to feelings of instability and insecurity. The scale and speed of change has raised a lot of issues and challenges for human societies and our very existence. Natural resources are not infinite, waste is more prevalent every day, poverty and social issues are more difficult with the expiation and governance models we use. Basically, the planet and society need people to act now and make the earth a safer and more hospitable place to live our lives and let all other species live theirs.

Figure 1 The regenerative vision of Thomas Berry[1]

As educators we have a huge responsibility to help young people to develop the values and beliefs, competences, and awareness to be and accomplish the changes we need to make to regenerate our future. We all need to develop awareness, regarding social and self-knowledge, in order to develop all social emotional skills needed to become a better society, based in empathy, gratitude, compassion and vulnerability. And not less important, develop skills such as creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking which are so necessary for living and thriving in the 21st century. To make sure that the decisions and future innovations will be guided by this awareness of self, others, and the environment.

The great work now, as we move into the new millennium, is to carry out the transition from a period of human devastation of the Earth to a period when humans would be present to the planet in a mutually beneficial way

Thomas Berry
'The Great Work' p3
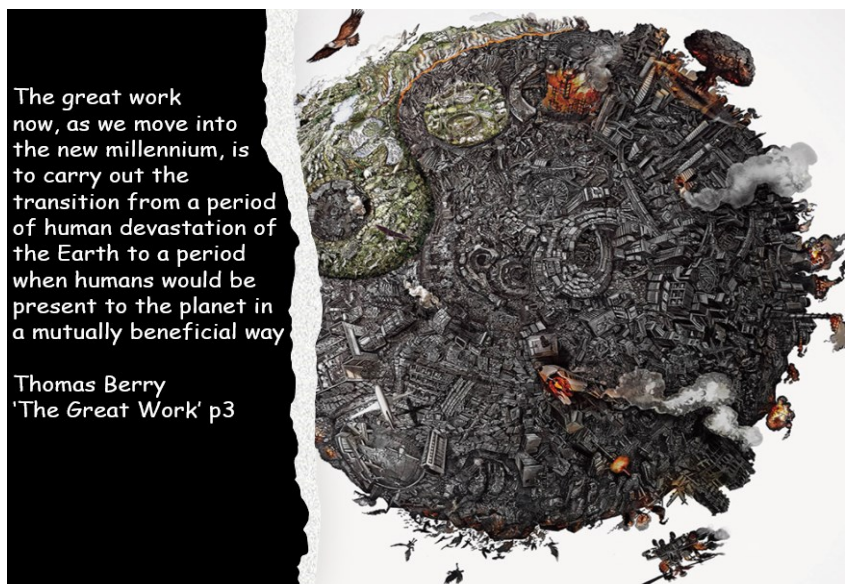
Acting for a Sustainable World

Therefore sustainability has become of central importance to our existence. The idea of sustainability has been around a long time but is became a political and ideological tool in the United Nations conference in Stockholm in 1972. Sustainable development as a concept was defined in the Brundtland Report of 1987[2], it refers to development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the possibility of future generations to meet their own needs. Sustainable development refers to the connections between economic, social, and environmental changes. It is a shared way of understanding the world, seeking for people to live with dignity, combining social inclusion, environmental sustainability, and economic development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[3] set the guidelines around this concept.[4]

Sustainable development is an intellectual project that seeks to understand the interaction between three complex systems: the world economy, global society, and the Earth's physical environment. Sustainable development also implies a normative (ethical) approach to the planet. In this sense, the 17 sustainable development goals to which the world should aspire must be considered, because they are a guide for the future development of the economy and society. What they aim to do is build a world where economic progress is as widespread as possible, extreme poverty is eliminated, social trust is supported by policies that strengthen communities, and the environment is protected from man-made degradation.

It is a holistic approach, because society must simultaneously pursue economic, social, and environmental objectives. For this to happen, the fourth objective must be achieved, which is governance: governments must guarantee basic functions so that societies can prosper; some of these are: health, education, infrastructure (such as roads), ports, electricity, protection of people against violence, promotion of basic science, new technologies and regulation of environmental protection. Good governance refers not only to governments but also to large multinationals that are also important actors[4].

One of the most important challenges of engaging with the sustainable development goals, is the necessary participation of multiple stakeholders such as: the public sector, the private sector and civil society (government, individuals, research centers, academies, ONGs, etc.). All sectors of society must be involved in this project because it is imminent that all have the responsibility for rapid and urgent action. For this to happen it is necessary to establish mechanisms that favor dialogue through the harmonization of different approaches, since many different perspectives - for-profit, non-profit, basic science, community, and education perspectives will need to be on the table. This great global social network must be coordinated to give effective solutions to serious and difficult problems, and take appropriate decisions and guarantee action to implement the SDGs.

The 17 goals included in the SDGs are:
1. Eradicate poverty in all its forms throughout the world.
2. End hunger, achieve food security and better nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture.
3. Guarantee a healthy life and promote well-being for all at all ages.
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

6. Guarantee the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all.
8. Promote sustained, inclusive, sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all
9. Develop resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation.
10. Reduce inequalities between countries and within them.
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.
12. Guarantee sustainable consumption and production patterns.
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its effects.
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources to achieve sustainable development.
15. Protect, restore, and promote the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, and halt the loss of biological diversity.
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and create effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels.
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revive the global partnership for sustainable development.

Sustainable development seeks to look at the world in a holistic way from the environmental, economic, social, and political perspectives in the belief that solutions to the wicked global problems we have created for ourselves require coordinated and integrated action in all of these domains, so that people, regardless of their condition, can live in a dignified way and are guaranteed a better future. The solution to these sustainable problems requires expertise in complex systems, but it is not a simple problem because it contemplates the complexity of issues as difficult as poverty, the environment, violence, among others.

Collaborative Actions Speak Louder than Words

Education has a critical role to play in raising awareness and developing individuals' belief and value systems to commit to a life that with lead to a more sustainable and regenerative future. At Marymount School Medellín in Colombia we are taking this responsibility seriously.

In 2022 we introduced action for sustainability as part of the elective courses for the senior students, with the objective of enhancing their awareness towards the importance of sustainability. Simultaneously, the School's Learning Council, engaged in an exercise to visualize every sustainability related action made by each area of learning, to make sure that all teachers, courses and curriculums were aligned to sustainability practices and awareness.

The Seniors Elective Sustainability Cycle was composed of three elements. The first element was dedicated to study and investigate the concept of sustainability and the history of sustainable development and how humans have impacted the earth and the life it supports.

The second element of the cycle was used to study the 17 SDGs and encourage students to self-reflect upon each of the SDGs in their daily life and their own family activities. In this way they created personal awareness about the SDG goals and what they meant to them in their everyday lives. This was the approach we used in a previous inquiry I undertook with the life wide learning research and development group.[5]

Students realized that they could achieve more it they worked together so they formed a team. They selected SDG #12 "Guarantee sustainable consumption and production patterns," to investigate and think about, and create a strategy that could be implemented in our local society. They concluded that, if we as individuals and consumers develop different and more conscious decisions towards consumption patterns, we will have the power to change production and guarantee a sustainable production and consumption cycle that will help society and the environment.

The third element of education for greater awareness of how to act for a more sustainable future, was devoted to creating a strategy that would help accomplish the goal of a sustainable production and consumption cycle. Working together, the students created the idea of a web page that would gather information provided by companies on their sustainability (social, environmental, and economic) policies and practices in such areas as food, fashion, services and travel. In this way the customer or consumer would have access to important information before deciding to buy something. The assumption being that armed with this information consumers would select those companies and brands with the best practices relating to sustainability. The assumption underlying this intervention is that if consumers adopted this practice at scale companies would change their methods of production, because customers at the end have the power to change the market. Without consumption there is no production.

To communicate this strategy to support SDG 12, the students created a video explaining their collaborative project and submitted it to the Full Sail Creativity Marathon, held on May 12, 2022, at the University located in Florida USA as a first step of sharing this initiative with the world through an academic process.

As a School we are aware of sustainability and its importance and of our responsibility to educate young people to live in ways that will help secure a more sustainable regenerative future. The 17 SDGs, provide a useful foundation to guarantee dignity, rights, duties, justice and a healthy environment in which we can live, enjoy and be sure that future generations will be able to do too. As a School and as educators, we have a big part of the change in our hands, everything we do counts and has an impact now and in the future.

Discussion- Education for the Inner Development Goals
In this concluding section of my article, I will briefly reflect on the way in which our educational initiative formed around collaborative action learning for sustainability, has contributed to the Inner Development Goals considered to be necessary for commitment and action to a more sustainable future.[6.7] The Inner Development Goals (IDGs) are being developed by a non-profit organization that is drawing on a global network of expertise. They are considered to be the skills and qualities that individuals and organizations need to develop in order to successfully work with complex societal issues, in particular those identified in UN Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The IDGs will provide an essential framework of transformative skills for sustainable development. The current IDGs framework represents 5 categories and 23 skills and qualities (Figure 1) which are especially crucial for leaders who address SDGs, but fundamentally for all of us! Here I use the framework as a prompt for reflecting my own observations on the ways in which our learning in action project engaged with the framework.

Figure 1 Inner Development Goal Framework[6.7]

1	2	3	4	5
BEING	**THINKING**	**RELATING**	**COLLABORATING**	**ACTING**
Relationship to Self	Cognitive Skills	Caring for Others and the World	Social Skills	Driving Change
Inner compass	Critical thinking	Appreciation	Communication skills	Courage
Integrity and Authenticity	Complexity awareness	Connectedness	Co-creation skills	Creativity
Openness and Learning Mindset	Perspective skills	Humility	Inclusive mindset and intercultural competence	Optimism
Self-awareness	Sense-making	Empathy and Compassion	Trust	Perserverance
Presence	Long-term orientation and Visioning		Mobilization skills	

In Table 1 I provide a subjective evaluation of the ways in which the educational strategy outlined above engaged with the IDGs. The process led to the recognition that some elements of the cycle could be developed for the seniors in 2023 academic year to enable more of the IDGs to be addressed. With the objective of reinforcing those skills that weren't developed during the iteration of the action for sustainability programmed.

Table 1 Inner Development Goal Framework Mapping Tool

Evaluation: To what extent did my action learning project require these qualities of character, motivations and skills, and provide opportunities for further development?

| Significantly |
| Moderately |
| Rarely |

1 BEING Relationship to self	2 THINKING Cognitive skills	3 RELATING Caring for others & the world	4 COLLABORATING Social skills	5 ACTING Driving change
Inner compass a deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values & purposes relating to the good of the whole	**Critical thinking** Skills in critically reviewing the validity of views, evidence and plans	**Appreciation** Relating to others & to the world with a basic sense of appreciation, gratitude and joy.	**Communication skills** ability to really listen to others, to foster genuine dialogue, to advocate own views skillfully, to manage conflicts constructively and adapt one's communication to different groups	**Courage** Ability [and willingness] to stand up for values, make decisions, take decisive action and challenge and disrupt existing structures & views
Integrity & authenticity Commitment & ability to act with sincerity, honesty and integrity	**Complexity awareness** Understanding of and skills in working with complex and systemic conditions and causalities	**Connectedness** Having a keen sense of being connected with and/or being part of a larger whole, such as a community, humanity or global ecosystem	**Co-creation skills** skills & motivation to build, develop and facilitate collaborative relationships with different stakeholders, characterized by psychological safety and genuine co-creation	**Creativity** ability to generate/ develop original ideas, & willing to innovate, & willing to disrupt conventional patterns
Openness & learning mindset mindset of curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable, to embrace change & grow	**Perspective skills** Skills in seeking, understanding and actively making use of insights from contrasting perspectives.	**Humility** able to act in accordance with the needs of the situation without concern for own importance.	**Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence** willingness and competence to embrace diversity and include people & collectives with different views and backgrounds	**Optimism** ability to sustain and communicate a sense of hope, positive attitude and confidence in the possibility of meaningful change.
Self-awareness ability to be in reflective contact with one's own thoughts, feelings and desires; having a realistic self-image & ability to regulate oneself	**Sense making** Skills in seeing patterns, structuring the unknown and being able to consciously create stories	**Empathy & compassion** ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness, empathy/compassion and to address related suffering	**Trust** ability to show trust and to create and maintain trusting relationships	**Perseverance** ability to sustain engagement and stay determined & patient even when efforts take a long time to bear fruit
Presence Ability to be in the here and now, without judgment and in a state of open-ended presence	**Long term orientation and visioning** Long-term orientation and ability to formulate and sustain a commitment to visions relating to the larger context eg SDG-related problems		**Mobilization skills** skills in inspiring and mobilizing others to engage in shared purposes	

After analyzing the extent to which our action for sustainability educational initiative for senior students in 2022 had engaged with the IDG framework was concluded that the initiative made a good attempt to engage with many elements of the framework but that some aspects of the initiative could be developed so that more elements of the IDG framework could be addressed. Here is offer a short commentary on the map I have created in Table 1.

Being Skills - students act ethically, with integrity, responsibility, with openness and with an orientation to learning all require and help improve self-awareness and presence. But education is all about helping people to become different to become better versions of themselves so perhaps this column in the framework should acknowledge that by engaging in active learning to support the SDGs students are growing and becoming different. Learning is transformation and evolution, this

happens with the development of self-awareness and metacognitive skills, in which the students evaluate themselves and their peers, regarding their mentors feedback, with time for reflection and making plans on how to reach their goals, with clear objectives and deadlines and with a systematic follow-up.

Thinking Skills – our students engaged in critical thinking in reviewing and evaluating information relevant to the SDG and in seeking a range of perspectives. But they need to develop a wider view of reality, expanding their vision from the local sense to the global one connected to the local and their interactions, which will help with perspective and contrasting, and orient their curiosity, ideas, and projects to long term formulations, that will have impact over the time.

Relating – our students know that we/they are all connected, and they show gratitude and joy in what they do, nevertheless there is scope for the further development of empathy, compassion, and humility. Students need to understand that they are not the center of the world, and that diversity and inclusion goes beyond minorities to accepting and embracing those around me who are different to me, and after that being trail blazers of this specially in Medellin's culture which is really narrowminded.

Collaborating – the students worked as a team to achieve something for the SDG and the developed trust between each other. They needed to communicate with each other and collaboratively to co-create their vision and ideas, and their video film. The aspect of the framework that is most in need of developing in young people concerns mobilization skills which need to be encouraged through acts of trying to bring about change that will be enduring and impactful, with worldwide visions and impacts.

Acting – it encouraged students to use their initiative, courage and creativity to come up with great ideas and invent a solution that they could enact, and this encouraged a more optimistic view of the future. Of course, they might have taken their project further and this is where perseverance needs to be fostered, to bring ideas to real life through the practice of implementation. Here they may encounter challenges and impediments that will need them to be resilient.

Using the IDG framework in this way provides some useful insights that can be used in the design of the next iteration of the action for sustainability educational initiative. A number of aspects that, need to be strengthened were identified, especially the impact over time of the ideas and the possibility of bringing them to real life use, beyond a prototype. For this to happen, the cycle will probably need to be undertake with younger students that can engage longer with the cause and the project, also finding the way to connect and collaborate with young people from other places in the world to expand the vision and impact, not losing sight of the strong potential for developing being skills.

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Action Learning for a Heathier World— a primary teacher's perspective
Zahra Bahrami

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Helping the next generation live a healthy life for a healthier world

I am working as a second-grade teacher at a village primary school. Most students' families have a low income and this issue was an important factor in choosing to bring the financial literacy (FL) idea into my Action Learning Project for a healthier, more sustainable regenerative future. I believe that the FL idea is close to SDGs #1 (Help End Poverty) and #4 (Quality Education). There is clearly a link between health and poverty and a quality education creates more opportunities for people to secure a better standard of living for themselves. The students I teach are between 8 and 9, so I focused on teaching FL basic concepts like spending and saving money and making good financial decisions. I wanted to make their learning experience relevant to their own lives.

FL is not an established part of the school curriculum in Iran. Although some private organizations or teachers help parents increase their students' FL, not all students can afford these classes on the other hand in some of these private classes, students engage in learning the FL concepts alone or with a small number of peers, with little opportunity for discussions with a larger group of peers. I thought this would be the perfect opportunity to both engage the students an Action Learning Project related to my work as a teacher and help them learn some useful FL concepts.

My approach to teaching FL

In my class students have the opportunity to work in groups, encounter and discuss many ideas, criticize these ideas and think about their ideas and try to look at them from a different point of view. I approached this topic through storytelling using a collection of seven translated stories for children aged between 6 to 10 together with class activities. To encourage lifewide learning, I also included some home-based activities like encouraging students to investigate their parents' money saving strategies and encouraging them to imagine other useful strategies in class, and helping their parents while cooking or gardening encouraging them to think about the benefits of collaboration. In this way I was trying to make the class discussions relevant to the everyday lives of the children.

In each session we worked on a different story. In this process, we engaged in group activities like working on worksheets, questions and answers, discussions, evaluating the actions of the characters in the story, providing solutions to the character's problems, making predictions while reading the story, and post-story activities and conversations. In this way we collaborated with each other and shared our perspectives and insights.
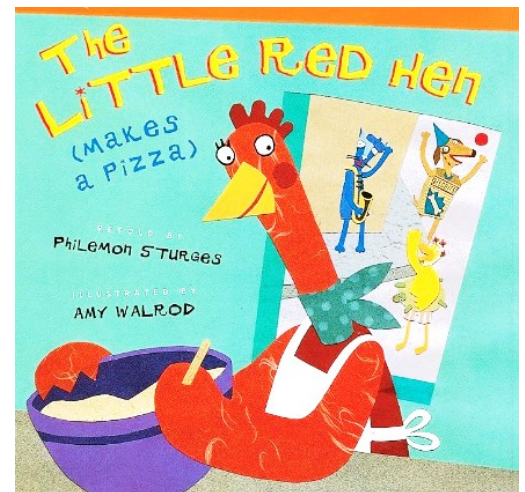
I observed that my students were eager to hear the stories and identified with the character's in each story. Before reading the stories, I tried to use worksheets or tasks to encourage them to think about particular situations and challenge them. I asked them to listen to the story carefully and we discussed some of the issues as they emerged while the story was being told. Since their curiosity had been aroused through the worksheet activities, they listened carefully and actively engaged in questions and answers during storytelling. I read each page of the book, and they gave their own responses and comments to what had happened. The books were illustrated and some of the children wanted to see the pictures so I showed them the pictures while reading the book. After finishing storytelling, they engaged in activities like rethinking their ideas or completing

worksheets, or discussing what they had learnt from the story. The class discussion continued so that they could process their ideas about FL and the issues raised in the stories and develop deeper understandings.

The nature of collaboration

Before reading the story, for two sessions I invited the students to write their ideas about two concepts (small business and spending money). These two activities were done in two different ways. In one of the sessions, they needed to write about the concept of spending money – using the idea of buying a gift for a friend on their own, and in the next session, with the help of their peers, they wrote about their ideas for starting a small business in school.

Buy my hats!
by Horowitz, Dave

I had some reasons for engaging them in these activities. Firstly, I wanted them to figure out for themselves that by working with each other they can co-create better ideas and through this insight appreciate that collaboration is something valuable and worthwhile. When these two sessions were over, we also had finished reading "the little red hen makes a pizza" and "buy my hats" stories. Then I challenged their ideas about working alone or with a partner. They mentioned that when they were writing alone, it was hard to know how attractive their ideas were and to appreciate the obstacles they had not considered. They asserted that their peers could assist them to develop their ideas and help them in difficult situations. They made connections to the characters in the stories for example the Red Hen who could not make a pizza alone and she needed the help and cooperation of her friends. Through discussion the students concluded that in our business, we also need the help and collaboration of others. Another student mentioned the story " buy my hats ". In her opinion, Frank and Carl could find a unique solution to increase their product sales because they had each other's support and were able to solve business problems by consulting each other.

I also tried to help them make connections between their ideas and the FL concepts within the story. For example, when I asked them to imagine it is their best friend's birthday and they need to buy her a gift, what were they going to buy? their answers did not consider their budget based on their savings and some of them even decided to borrow some money from their parents. But after finishing the story, I asked them to write down again how they would shop for their friend's birthday based on what they learned from the story. They changed and refined their initial gift ideas by trying to avoid making the character's mistakes and challenging the character's actions. I also asked them to argue why they changed their initial ideas. Most students considered their friend's needs, their financial budget, saving money until their friend's birthday, and buying a thoughtful and valuable rather than an expensive gift. In this way they demonstrated a higher level of awareness necessary for sound personal financial management.

Regarding the concept of collaboration in this project, I think the ideas of collaboration and participation are very important in the FL concepts. The students need to realize the necessity and importance of collaboration with others before mastering these concepts. Also, as the gift ideas were discussed in class and students critiqued each other's ideas, they learned how thinking together and listening to different perspectives from their peers could help them to find proper solutions.

Another important point of this collaboration was creating a teaching strategy. I shared the data with my professor and we discussed it for hours. We achieved a flexible contextual teaching strategy that could help me teach challenging subjects to students. In this way, students can be involved in group assignments and projects. This strategy helps them to discover the strengths and weaknesses of their work and assess their performance through peer review and evaluation of projects. On the other hand, boosting their collaboration, participation, analysis, and review skills is valuable as a byproduct of learning. SDG 17 encourages partnerships to deliver the SDGs but unless people have learnt the value of working together to achieve something such collaborations will not happen. By encouraging young children to collaborate and role modelling acts of collaboration with them as a teacher I believe I am helping to lay the foundations for a lifetime of collaboration.

The meanings of health and improving health

In my view, the meaning of health in our class FL project could be that it helped the students to improve their knowledge and attitude toward their own behaviours as consumers. By improving their knowledge and understanding, they will be able to make better decisions concerning their small financial problems in the future. Maybe all these 21 students will not find another chance to learn about FL in the future (according to the schools' context and the curriculum), But in my opinion, the

experience of this project will help them to be more aware of their small financial decisions and be more inquisitive about the situations they encounter involving money.

A student who says: "My friend has a fabric store, so I want to open my sewing shop because people who buy fabric would need a tailor", has been able to gain insight into economic issues in these few sessions, even in a small way. Yet, the impact of education on health cannot be ignored and students need to receive sufficient training in FL in the curriculum and be able to apply what they have learnt in their life outside school. Consequently, the educational system needs to consider the needs of people for sustainable growth and development in the future. Therefore, teaching FL and acquiring FL skills as one of the important personal assets can affect people's health by changing income and improving consumption patterns, and guiding their economic behavior[1].

Glo goes shopping

Manifestations of creativity in the contexts of our Action Learning Projects

For me, creativity meant that I could implement the idea of FL in the classroom based on the goals of this project and using appropriate teaching-learning strategies. Since I did not know how to integrate this project into my classroom, being creative was very important for me. However, I always considered the idea of FL related to SDGs 1 and 4 (Help End Poverty and Quality Education), which sparked my interest to bring this idea into ALP. So when faced with the challenges of how to integrate the new project into the classroom, I tried to construct the necessary arguments for this. By studying some articles about the implementation of FL in classrooms, I figured that stories are a great source of knowledge and wisdom and I was able to design some worksheets that were context-oriented and specific to our class. These worksheets helped me to qualitatively measure the students' understanding of the concepts, cover the weak points of the work, and to increase the students' involvement.

I designed some strategies to engage my students while reading the story, making them interested in the idea of FL, bringing them into the class discussion, and guiding them to criticize and evaluate others' ideas. I designed these strategies by thinking about my previous experience and using some teaching and communication skills which I consider as other dimensions of my creativity in the ALP project.

Also, some contextual obstacles and challenges limited my creativity. Since the teaching conditions during the coronavirus were slightly different, students attend class in two separate groups on different days and were behind schedule. So we did not have so much time. A lack of school facilities was another obstacle to collaboration. Some active students who suspected COVID-19 were absent long from class and it was difficult to assess these students' understanding of FL concepts. The lack of facilities such as a projector in the classroom (to show the photos of the storybook) and the deficiency of sufficient facilities to print the students' worksheets (they had to write some of them by hand) were other factors that limited our creativity.

Education for the Inner Development Goals

The Inner Development Goals (IDGs) are being developed by a nonprofit organization[2,3] that is drawing on a global network of expertise. They are considered to be the skills and qualities that individuals and organizations need to develop in order to successfully work with complex societal issues, in particular those identified in UN Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The IDGs provide an essential framework of 23 transformative skills, qualities and motivations for engaging with the SDGs and for leading change and influencing the world around us. Using the framework as a prompt for reflection on my ALP as a teacher engaging her students in thinking about and acting on just one small aspect of the SDGs, I believe that I needed most if not all of these these skills in my Action Learning for a Healthier World project (Figure 1). I agree with the IDG developers - the achievement of the SDGs needs the involvement and effort of people who have these sorts of skills, qualities, and motivations who are willing to use them in their everyday lives to try to influnce others. Teachers and educational institutions have a key role to play in the development of these skills and attitudes.

One of the most important things I learnt through my ALP was the importance of "paying attention to the seemingly small but important details and issues and relating them to larger goals". Before I started engaging in lifewide learning inquiries I hadn't paid much attention to the role of small issues that can make a big difference, and now I notice it's an important skill and attitude. Developing this skill was very challenging for me and I felt a lot of problems in finding contextual issues related to the SDGs. Perhaps this skill and orientation is close to the cognitive skills of "Sensemaking making, Complexity thinking and Perspective skills".

Figure 1 Inner Development Goal Framework & Mapping Tool showing the qualities of character, skills & motivations necessary to engage with and implement practices consistent with Sustainable Development Goals

| Significantly |
| Moderately |
| Rarely or not at all |

To what extent did your action learning project require these qualities of character and skill, and provide opportunities for further development?

1 BEING Relationship to self	2 THINKING Cognitive skills	3 RELATING Caring for others & the world	4 COLLABORATING Social skills	5 ACTING Driving change
Inner compass a deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values & purposes relating to the good of the whole	**Critical thinking** Skills in critically reviewing the validity of views, evidence and plans	**Appreciation** Relating to others & to the world with a basic sense of appreciation, gratitude and joy.	**Communication skills** ability to really listen to others, to foster genuine dialogue, to advocate own views skilfully, to manage conflicts constructively and adapt one's communication to different groups	**Courage** Ability [and willingness] to stand up for values, make decisions, take decisive action and challenge and disrupt existing structures & views
Integrity & authenticity Commitment & ability to act with sincerity, honesty and integrity	**Complexity awareness** Understanding of and skills in working with complex and systemic conditions and causalities	**Connectedness** Having a keen sense of being connected with and/or being part of a larger whole, such as a community, humanity or global ecosystem	**Co-creation skills** skills & motivation to build, develop and facilitate collaborative relationships with different stakeholders, characterized by psychological safety and genuine co-creation	**Creativity** ability to generate/ develop original ideas, to innovate, & willing to disrupt conventional patterns
Openness & learning mindset mindset of curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable, to embrace change & grow	**Perspective skills** Skills in seeking, understanding and actively making use of insights from contrasting perspectives.	**Humility** able to act in accordance with the needs of the situation without concern for own importance.	**Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence** willingness and competence to embrace diversity and include people & collectives with different views and backgrounds	**Optimism** ability to sustain and communicate a sense of hope, positive attitude and confidence in the possibility of meaningful change.
Self-awareness ability to be in reflective contact with one's own thoughts, feelings and desires; having a realistic self-image & ability to regulate oneself	**Sense making** Skills in seeing patterns, structuring the unknown and being able to consciously create stories	**Empathy & compassion** ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness, empathy/compassion and to address related suffering	**Trust** ability to show trust and to create and maintain trusting relationships	**Perseverance** ability to sustain engagement and stay determined & patient even when efforts take a long time to bear fruit
Presence Ability to be in the here and now, without judgment and in a state of open-ended presence	**Long term orientation and visioning** Long-term orientation and ability to formulate and sustain a commitment to visions relating to the larger context eg SDG-related problems		**Mobilisation skills** skills in inspiring and mobilizing others to engage in shared purposes	

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Improving the Health of Our Work Environment and Our Own Wellbeing: Our Space Renewal Project
Janet Wolstenholme

Janet is an Educational Developer with the Office of Teaching and Learning at the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada. She has a background in Art, holding a diploma from OCAD University and an undergraduate degree with a double major in Art and Sociology (Guelph). Janet's Masters degree is in Sociology where she investigated "women entrepreneurs." She teaches a course called *What is Art in the 21st Century?* for undergraduates in the first-year seminar program and a course for graduates in the theory and practice of university teaching and learning.

Background

The Office of Teaching and Learning (OTL) is the leader in championing the University of Guelph's pedagogical mission. We provide expertise in, and passionately advocate for, innovative and evidence-informed pedagogical approaches to build, maintain, and promote collaborative successes for our learners and campus community. Our work in the OTL directly impacts instructors, faculty, staff, and graduate students, who in turn impact the quality of education at our institution that our graduate and undergraduate students experience. Through this Lifewide Action Learning Project (ALP), we proposed to address the UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals of quality education and improve good health and wellbeing in our workspace regeneration project.

As we returned to campus after over two years of working from home, we were reminded of how dated and uninspiring our workspace is. Our building, Day Hall, was built in 1895 (see picture to the right) with minimal renovation over the years. Although a beautiful and historic building, the interior space is drab and not conducive to collaboration. Before beginning our project, we surveyed individuals who had worked in the OTL space in Day Hall about the physical environment and found that fewer than 15% of respondents reported that the workspace promoted their health and wellbeing. The common space in our teaching centre, on the second floor, is used for numerous gatherings and collaborations with people outside of our unit, such as meetings, workshops, working/development sessions for curriculum renewal and even occasionally for the lunchtime practice of yoga. As a group we believed that an uplifting environment would be beneficial to all who inhabit and used the space.

Our project aimed to bring together members of our team through creative collaboration. Over the past two years, during the Covid pandemic, we have welcomed new members to the OTL team, but have only worked with these new team members via virtual meetings. Our project provided a vehicle to bring us together as a team, "live and in 3D" and contribute to our team's collective wellbeing by creating a shared, inspiring, renewed workspace. We wanted to create an environment conducive to good health and wellbeing. We intended the project to be multi-faceted and contain many small elements including:

- engaging in team building through the creation of collaborative artwork which we imagined would hang on dividers throughout the space,
- creating a working wall for collaboration or the sharing of inspiring phrases and quotes related to teaching and learning using mobile whiteboards, magnetic chalkboard,
- creating interactive indoor mini gardens, e.g., air plants, herbs, Zen Garden, terrarium,
- a shared little library that will provide the opportunity to informally exchange books on teaching and learning.

All these elements together are meant to be used to renew, inspire, create a sense of hope, calm and balance, as well as be conducive to collaboration. Our plans were informed by the responses we received from our surveyed respondents, who suggested that improved aesthetics including artwork, greenery, and posters would help improve the space. Survey respondents also suggested that the office could use more spaces for collaboration, and inspirational messages and resources related to teaching and learning.

Slow Progress

Progress has been slow but we have made progress. We have learned a lot over the past two years, through the numerous lockdown events and the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic. One of the most important lessons learned was a reminder about the importance of mental health and wellbeing and our need for meaningful collaborations with a sense of hope and inspiration. During the past two years there have been a few false starts for staff from our university returning to campus due to the continuing mutation of the COVID-19 virus. Now the virus is getting closer to "home" with team members getting sick, it has been difficult for our team to come together and actively work on a project collaboratively. As a result, we are not as far along in the project as we would like to be at this point. We will continue to work on the elements in our plan as we hope to be returning to the office slowly in September 2022.

We have learned a lot about each other as we worked on our paintings in June. The one time we managed to get-together and collaborate we spoke at length about our experiences, growing up, our families, taste in music, preferences of food and all manner of topics. This was a particularly useful exercise as a couple of our colleagues, hired during the pandemic, had never been to campus, let alone interacted with each other informally.

As part of the July 12th, 2022, Lifewide "Open Mic" mini-conference, I created a comic strip presentation. The comic strip semi-fictionalizes and summarizes the events of our Action Learning Project. What follows in Exhibit 1. is an abridged version of the comic strip, entitled, *Survival of OTL: the Attack of COVID-19, a story of hope, creativity, and inspiration over adversity*.

Exhibit 1. The graphics and storyboard I produced for my contribution to the Open Mic sharing conference titled *Survival of OTL: the Attack of COVID-19, a story of hope, creativity, and inspiration over adversity*.
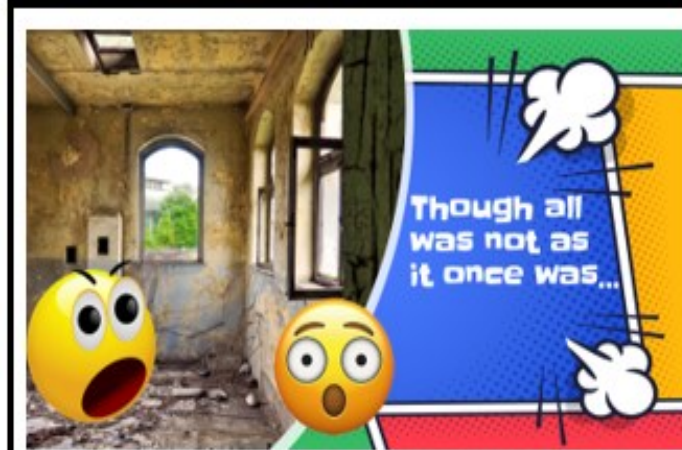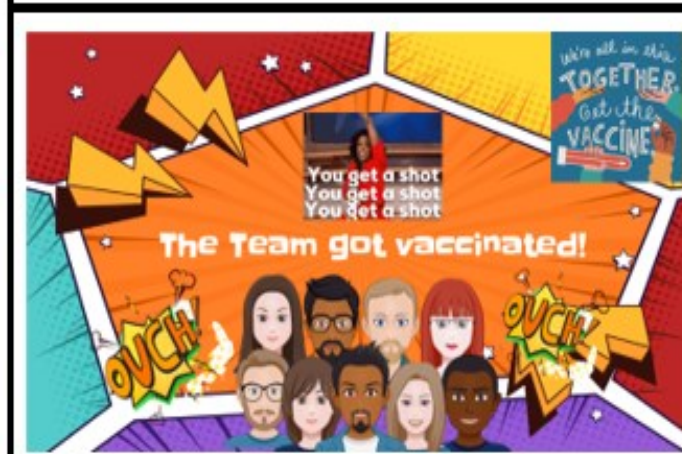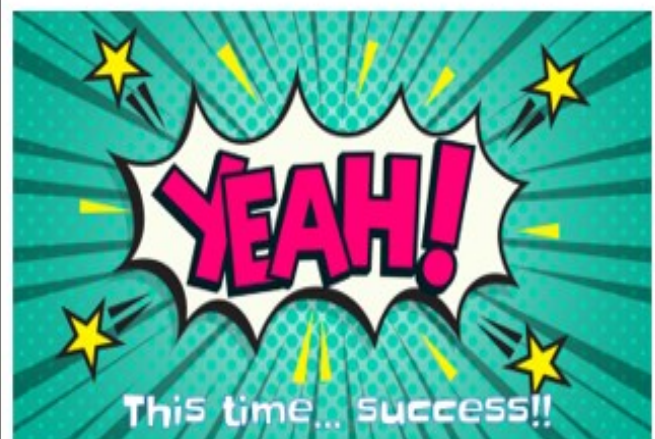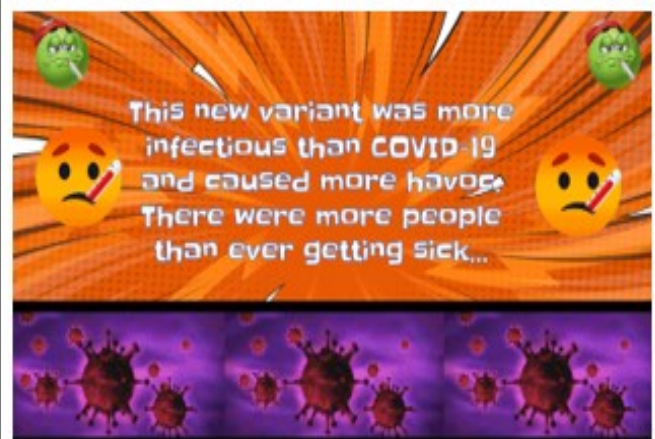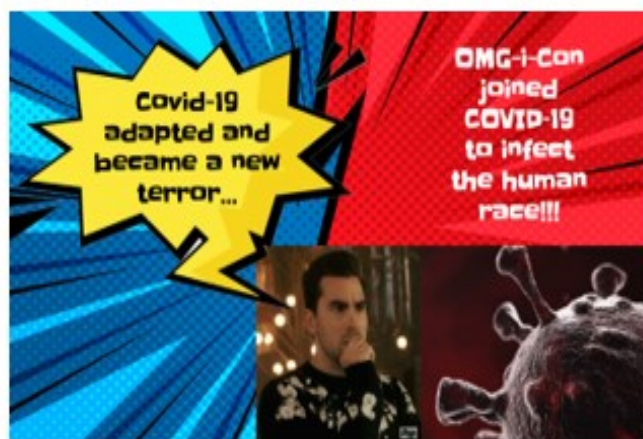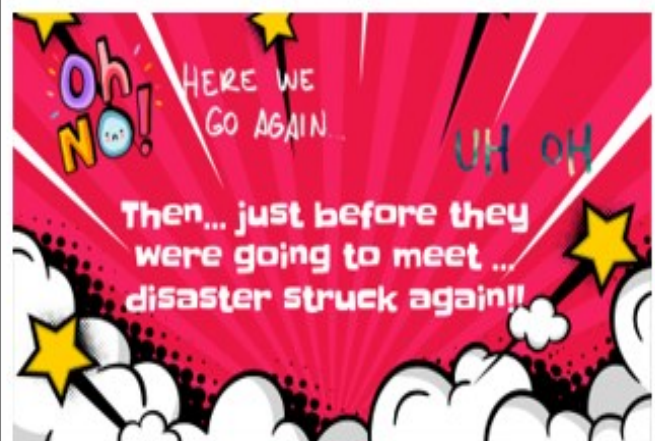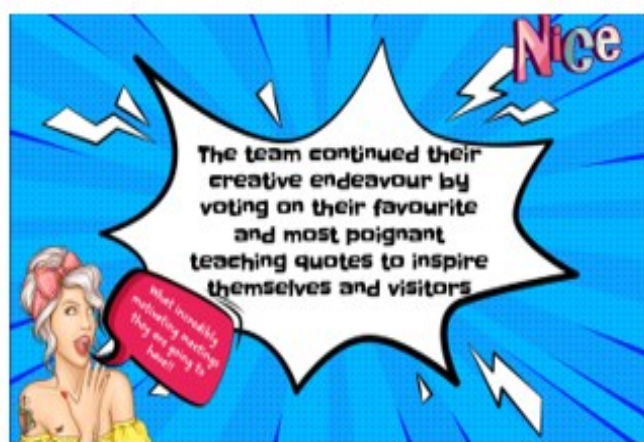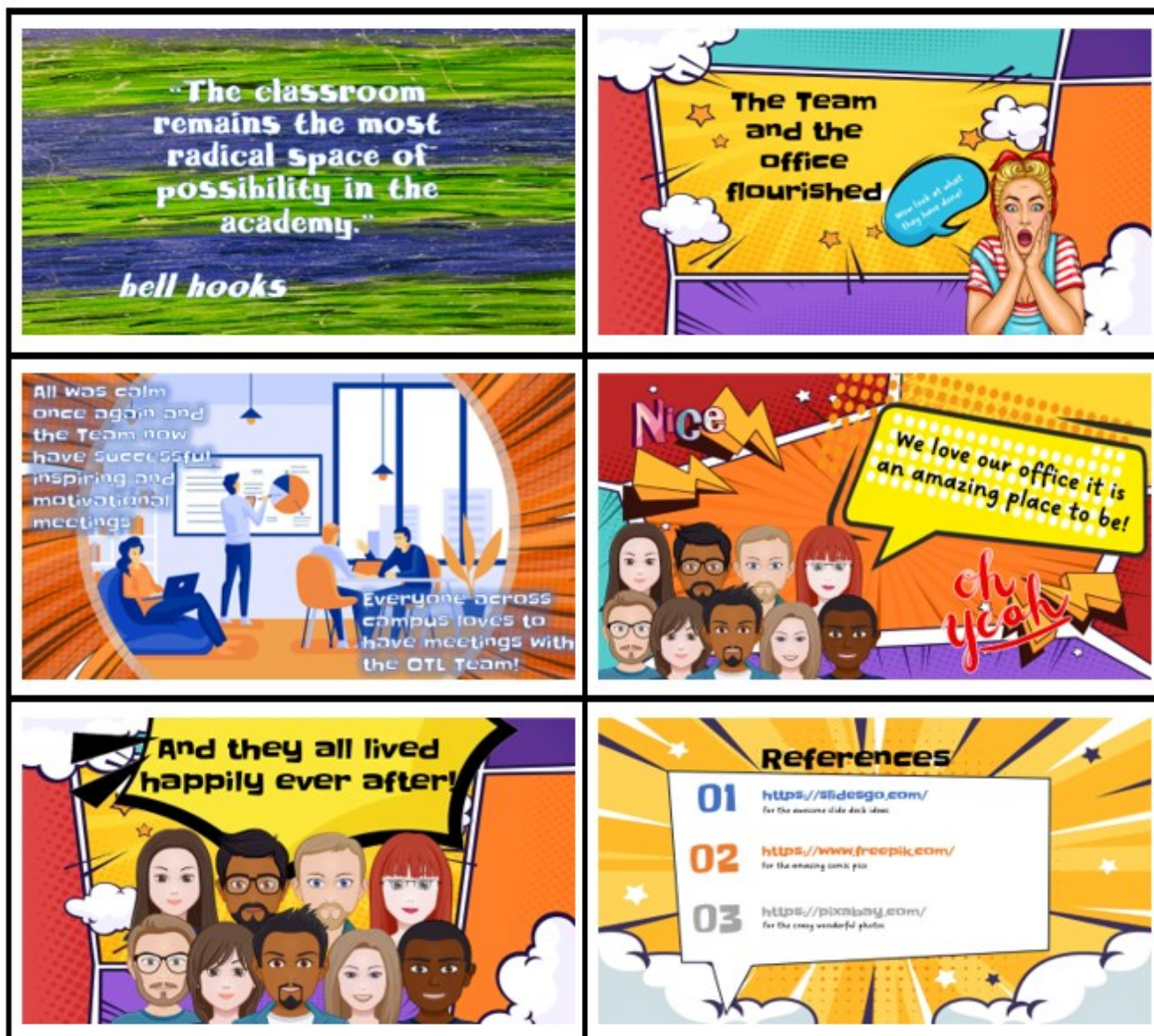
What have I/we leant?

Our Action Learning Project reminded us that our team works well together and enjoys collaboration. As individuals, we have our strengths and interests that play well together. Where one team member has expertise, another can complement strengths in another capacity. By combining strengths and working toward a common goal, we are successful and generative, we inspire and motivate each other and create learning opportunities for staff, instructors, and students. Our ALP is effective at the process and relational level – creating affordance for us to collaborate on something we value and also at an outcome level, by improving our environment and space for our work to transpire.

We approached the UNESCO Sustainable Development Goals of quality education by improving our workspace to allow for discussion, debate, collaboration, and development – effectively making it a healthier more stimulating environment in which to work. Improving the health of our environment has contributed to healthier relationships and our own individual wellbeing as we feel more energised and creative in surroundings that we have shaped in a way that means something to us.

At a personal level, my ALP allowed me to engage with the team in a different way, by using my artistic expertise to help foster creativity skills and create ownership of our renewed office space through the artwork we produced. Through this collaboration we improved our work environment and our own wellbeing by implementing some of the elements of our ALP. And there is more yet to come! I am also hopeful for the continued improvement of the team's mental health in addition to, their wellbeing by engaging with the mini-library, informal discussions, and care of the mini-gardens.

The July Open Mic event, when we shared our experiences of facilitating our ALPs, provided another affordance for creativity. In fact preparing for and delivering my short contribution, pushed me out of my comfort zone, and inspired me to develop new skills. In the spirit of the occasion I decided to try to create a comic strip. This was a new type of presentational format for me and it required a "crash course" to create and deliver it . Most of my artistic background is visual fine art, not digital. I taught myself the new skills required through an experiential learning process. Beginning with an idea and outline of what I wanted to

present, a storyboard if you will, I had to teach myself how to use new comic book software using YouTube videos and narrative Google searches.   The results of my efforts are shown in exhibit one and preserved in a video recording of the event https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/healthy-futures.html (73-82 mins).

Inner Development Goals

The Inner Development Goals (IDGs) are being developed by a nonprofit organization[2,3] that is drawing on a global network of expertise. They are considered to be the skills and qualities that individuals and organizations need to develop in order to successfully work with complex societal issues, in particular those identified in UN Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The IDGs provide an essential framework of 23 transformative skills, qualities and motivations for engaging with the SDGs and for leading change and influencing the world around us. I used the framework as a prompt for reflection on my ALP. Table 1 shows my own learning and skill development through the comic strip presentation at our Open Mic event, as well as participation in the ALP project. It reveals that, the totality of my involvement touched every dimension of the framework. What is evident is that a good portion of my learning comes from collaboration. This finding does not surprise me as collaboration is not only a key part of my educational ethos, it is also what happens when you are part of a group process.

Table 1. Mapping the skills, qualities and motivations needed for our work space renewal project using the Inner Development Goals Framework

Legend- the deeper the colour the stronger the practise, relatedness, or development

| Myself |
| As part of **ALP** |

My assessment: what skills were practised, related to, or further developed through our team action learning project and my related participation in the "Open Mic" conference to share our experiences and insights.

BEING *Relationship to self*	THINKING *Cognitive skills*	RELATING *Caring for others & the world*	COLLABORATING *Social skills*	ACTING *Driving change*
Inner compass A deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values & purposes relating to the good of the whole	**Critical thinking** Skills in critically reviewing the validity of views, evidence, and plans	**Appreciation** Relating to others & to the world with a basic sense of appreciation, gratitude, and joy	**Communication skills** Ability to really listen to others, to foster genuine dialogue, to advocate own views skilfully, to manage conflicts constructively and adapt one's communication to different groups	**Courage** Ability [and willingness] to stand up for values, make decisions, take decisive action, and challenge and disrupt existing structures & views
Integrity & authenticity Commitment & ability to act with sincerity, honesty, and integrity	**Complexity awareness** Understanding of and skills in working with complex and systemic conditions and causalities	**Connectedness** Having a keen sense of being connected with and/or being part of a larger whole, such as a community, humanity, or global ecosystem	**Co-creation skills** Skills & motivation to build, develop and facilitate collaborative relationships with different stakeholders, characterized by psychological safety and genuine co-creation	**Creativity** Ability to generate/ develop original ideas, to innovate, & willing to disrupt conventional patterns
Openness & learning mindset Mindset of curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable, to embrace change & grow	**Perspective skills** Skills in seeking, understanding, and actively making use of insights from contrasting perspectives	**Humility** Able to act in accordance with the needs of the situation without concern for own importance	**Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence** Willingness and competence to embrace diversity and include people & collectives with different views and backgrounds	**Optimism** Ability to sustain and communicate a sense of hope, positive attitude, and confidence in the possibility of meaningful change
Self-awareness Ability to be in reflective contact with one's own thoughts, feelings, and desires; having a realistic self-image & ability to regulate oneself	**Sense making** Skills in seeing patterns, structuring the unknown and being able to consciously create stories	**Empathy & compassion** Ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness, empathy/compassion and to address related suffering	**Trust** Ability to show trust and to create and maintain trusting relationships	**Perseverance** Ability to sustain engagement and stay determined & patient even when efforts take a long time to bear fruit
Presence Ability to be in the here and now, without judgment and in a state of open-ended presence	**Long term orientation and visioning** Long-term orientation and ability to formulate and sustain a commitment to visions relating to the larger context e.g. SDG-related problems		**Mobilization skills** Skills in inspiring and mobilizing others to engage in shared purposes	

Evaluation and sustainability

The success of our collaborative ALP remains to seen, as at the time of writing in late August 2022 we are not back on campus on a full-time basis for at least another month. Several aspects of our renewal project have yet to be implemented on a continuous basis so we have yet to experience the level of commitment required to fully achieve our intentions. For example, OTL staff and visitors will be encouraged to borrow books from the teaching and learning library and add their own books. The plants in our office garden will require watering and the teaching and learning quotations will be updated to fit with the focus of the season (e.g., quotations related to assessment during final exams).

Looking to the future, we intend to organize an annual OTL team retreat to create and update the collaborative art projects that will be used in the office space. Each year, we will revisit this activity to update the art and ensure that the space remains fresh, motivating, and inspiring. We hope that the workspace renewal project will continue to inspire and bring together Educational Developers and others interested in teaching and learning on campus for the foreseeable future.

What has transpired in the few short months of this ALP has been successful as a team-building exercise and artistic collaboration. As we get back to campus and work further on our ALP, we will continue to inspire and motivate each other by completing our initial project and updating our work as the seasons change. We are looking forward to welcoming colleagues from across campus into our space and building relationships for meaningful educational and curriculum development work.

Perhaps there is one more message to emerge from our ALP which underpinned my contribution to the Open Mic event. In spite of Covid's best efforts to disrupt our life as a team and our ALP best intentions, we have been resilient and managed to adapt to the novel and challenging circumstances we have found ourselves in. Resilience is an important dimension of the health of any team or individual and our experience has reinforced our beliefs that where there is a collective will to work together we can find a way through the challenges we face. This belief will help us sustain ourselves when we encounter new challenges in the future.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Office of Teaching and Learning at the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada, for engaging in this project. Special thanks go to, Jenn Reniers, Christie Stewart and Aron Fazekas for their expertise, creative thinking, advice, and willingness to participate in an ALP inquiry with me.

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Available at: https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/magazine.html

What Skills, Qualities, Beliefs, Values and Motivations Enable us to Bring About a More Sustainable Regenerative Future?

Editor: During our collaborative inquiry we discovered the Inner Development Goals (IDG) Framework which were published in November 2021 by The Inner Development Goals, a not for profit organisation founded by "29k, The New Division, and Ekskäret Foundation". The initiative is drawing on a global network of expertise to identify skills and qualities that individuals and organizations need to develop in order to successfully work with complex societal issues, in particular those identified in UN Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The hope is that the IDGs will provide an essential framework of transformative skills for sustainable development. As part of our reflective process we are considering how the IDG framework was manifested in our individual action learning projects, and how our projects enabled further development. In the interests of eduction for sustainable futures we reproduce the short version of the IDG Framework report below. Both the longer and shorted versions of the report can be found on the Inner Development Goals website https://www.innerdevelopmentgoals.org/

Inner Development Goals: Background, method and the IDG framework

The Inner Development Goals is a non-profit organization for inner development. We research, collect, and communicate science based skills and qualities that help us to live purposeful, sustainable, and productive lives. The IDG has brokered the development of an Inner Development Goals Framework aimed at identifying the plethora of skills, qualities and motivations needed to successfully engage with and implement the Uns Sustainable Development Goals.

Introduction

The Inner Development Goals (IDGs) is a framework of skills and qualities that individuals and organizations need to develop in order to successfully work with complex societal issues, in particular those identified in UN Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The present version of the IDG framework can be used as a starting point for exploring both individual and collective skills and qualities and how organizations and institutions can support the necessary human growth for sustainable development.

The IDGs initiative is still in its creation phase. The core activities have been gathering researchers and practitioners and organizing a number of discussions to process the responses from two surveys with over 1,000 respondents and using their expertise to develop a list of key skills and qualities.

1	**Being** — Relationship to Self
2	**Thinking** — Cognitive Skills
3	**Relating** — Caring for Others and the World
4	**Collaborating** — Social Skills
5	**Acting** — Driving Change

Background

The starting point for this initiative was a belief that there is a blind spot in our efforts to create a sustainable global society: the need for investing in inner development to build sustainable and regenerative futures. We have accumulated much knowledge about environmental problems, climate change, poverty, public health, various social ills, etc. In UN Agenda 2030, goals and targets have been formulated for 17 critically important areas relating to sustainability. We have a vision of what needs to happen, we have enough technology for achieving these goals but progress has been slow and somewhat disappointing.

At the roots of the many problems the world is facing, we believe there is an imbalance between humankind's material and technological power, which brought us into the Anthropocene, and the relative underdevelopment of the inner skills and qualities we need to manage this power and the increasing complexity it has brought to our world.

The IDG project was initiated in 2019 by a number of organisations that identified an urgent need for the development of relevant skills and qualities for inner growth of leaders who work with complex societal issues. Our aim is to educate, inspire and

empower people to be a positive force for change in society, in their own lives and those around them, and at the same time find purpose and meaning in their lives.

A number of business partners and organisations have supported the initiative, including Ekskäret Foundation, 29k, The New Division, Ashoka, Close, Ericsson, Houdini, Hofstede Insights, IKEA, Telia Company, Motivation.se, Midroc, Region Stockholm, Spotify, Tenant & Partners, the EU Erasmus+ programme and others.

Official academic partners of the IDG initiative and research include Stockholm School of Economics, Stockholm University, Karolinska Institute, and Lund University. Additional reference group of researchers and experts who contributed significantly along the process of developing the IDG framework, among others include Amy C. Edmondson, Ph.D., Harvard Business School; Jennifer Garvey Berger, Ph.D., Harvard University; Otto Scharmer, Senior Lecturer, MIT Sloan School of Management; Peter Senge, Senior Lecturer, MIT Sloan School of Management; Robert Kegan, Ph.D., Harvard University; and many other distinguished experts.

By having a framework such as the IDGs, which is easy to grasp and which describes those skills and qualities, we hope to mobilize a broader engagement and effort among organizations, companies, and institutions to significantly increase the investments in efforts to develop crucial skills and qualities.

Overview of the Inner Development Goals framework

The IDG framework represents 23 skills and qualities in 5 categories developed through two surveys. The IDGs are a work-in-progress and may continue to change as the project develops and new information and input comes in. The current IDG framework is set out in Table 1.

Table 1 Inner Development Goal Framework

Being – Relationship to Self	Thinking – Cognitive Skills	Relating – Caring for Others and the World	Collaborating – Social Skills	Acting – Driving Change
Inner compass	Critical thinking	Appreciation	Communication skills	Courage
Integrity and Authenticity	Complexity awareness	Connectedness		Creativity
		Humility	Co-creation skills	Optimism
Openness and Learning mindset	Perspective skills	Empathy and Compassion	Inclusive mindset and Intercultural competence	Perseverance
	Sense-making			
Self-awareness	Long-term orientation and visioning		Trust	
Presence			Mobilization Skills	

1 Being – relationship to self

Cultivating our inner life and developing and deepening our relationship to our thoughts, feelings and body help us be present, intentional and non-reactive when we face complexity.

Inner compass - Having a deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values and purposes relating to the good of the whole. Having an Inner Compass is not so much a skill as a consequence of the broad scope of awareness that leads one to care for and contribute to the welfare of something much larger than oneself. Having an inner compass firmly anchored in a commitment to contribute to the good of the whole is intimately related to other IDGs, such as *Connectedness*, *Long-term Orientation and Visioning*, and *Perseverance*.

Integrity and Authenticity - A commitment and ability to act with sincerity, honesty and integrity. This item is partly about values one has identified with and is committed to practising, but it is also strongly related to personal maturity.

Openness and Learning Mindset - Having a basic mindset of curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable, to embrace change and grow. A capacity to be open to learning, re-evaluation and curiosity about alternative ways of perceiving and interpreting various issues requires a sense of identity robust and complex enough not to feel threatened by cognitive dissonance.

Self-awareness - An ability to be in reflective contact with one's own thoughts, feelings and desires; having a realistic self-image and the ability to regulate oneself. What goes on inside a person has a considerable impact on that person's potential

for being effective when engaging with complex issues, especially in interaction with people with diverse perspectives and interests.

Presence *- Ability to be in the here and now, without judgment and in a state of open-ended presence.* This capacity is strongly linked to the *Openness and Learning Mindset*, but emphasizes the quality of making oneself fully available in encounters with other people, in an accepting, mindful, sensitive and non-judgmental way.

2 Thinking – Cognitive Skills

Developing our cognitive skills by taking different perspectives, evaluating information and making sense of the world as an interconnected whole is essential for wise decision-making.

Critical thinking *- Skills in critically reviewing the validity of views, evidence and plans.* Critical thinking is strongly related to "reflective judgment" or "skills of argument". One way of describing critical thinking skills is to focus on the habit of asking probing questions in relation to statements, validity claims, views and opinions. Critical thinking is closely related to and partially overlaps with *Perspective Skills*.

Complexity Awareness *- Understanding of and skills in working with complex and systemic conditions and causalities.* Complexity Awareness is first and foremost a keen awareness that certain issues might be complex, and perhaps complex in ways that one is not yet aware of. A very significant and often mentioned aspect of Complexity Awareness is systems thinking: the propensity to look for patterns of wholes, how elements of systems interact in complex ways, leading to system dynamics and emergent properties of systems. Complexity Awareness is an important condition for having a genuine openness and learning mindset. Complexity awareness is closely related to *Critical Thinking*, *Sense-making* and *Perspective Skills*.

Perspective Skills *- Skills in seeking, understanding and actively making use of insights from contrasting perspectives.* A basic Perspective Skill is simply being aware that your view of the world and its issues and events *is* a view: an interpretation based on a limited and selective set of data and complemented by assumptions and judgments not necessarily backed up by proven facts. Perspective skills are related to *Openness and Learning Mindset*, *Sense-making, Complexity Awareness, Critical Thinking* and *Inclusive Mindset and Intercultural Competence.*

Sense-making *- Skills in seeing patterns, structuring the unknown and being able to consciously create stories.* This item is partly about values one has identified with and is committed to practising, but it is also strongly related to personal maturity.

Long-term Orientation and Visioning *Long-term Orientation and ability to formulate and sustain a commitment to visions relating to the larger context.* A capacity to be open to learning and re-evaluation, and curiosity about alternative ways of perceiving and interpreting various issues, requires a robust sense of self. *Long-term Orientation and Visioning* is closely related to *Critical Thinking, Complexity Awareness, Perspective Skills, Humility, Creativity* and *Communication Skills*.

3 Relating – Caring for Others and the World

Appreciating, caring for and feeling connected to others, such as neighbours, future generations or the biosphere, helps us create more just and sustainable systems and societies for everyone.

Appreciation *- Relating to others and to the world with a basic sense of appreciation, gratitude and joy.* Appreciation is not a skill in the traditional sense, but a mode of relating to people and the social, material and natural worlds, and can be strengthened by effort. A basic appreciative attitude is helpful in building connection to and trust between people, and is thus conducive to creative and collaborative work performance. Appreciation is related to *Humility, Openness and Learning Mindset* and *Presence*, and can be an important factor for *Mobilization Skills*.

Connectedness *- Having a keen sense of being connected with and/or being a part of a larger whole, such as a community, humanity or the global ecosystem.* This is one of the items in the IDG framework that is most profoundly intertwined with felt identity. This sense of connectedness more or less automatically leads to a sense of caring for the well-being of the larger whole.

Humility *- Being able to act in accordance with the needs of the situation without concern for one›s own importance.* Here, humility means the capacity to act without concern for looking good in the eyes of others or of oneself. The stance of humility

is here understood to be a consequence of not being (overly) identified with a certain self-image and a need to be confirmed in that self-image by others.

Empathy and Compassion - The ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness, empathy and compassion and to address related suffering. Here, Empathy is seen as the capacity to understand and feel into what other people feel with reasonable accuracy, while compassion adds the quality of wanting to relate to other people with benevolence. Empathy and compassion are, of course, important components of emotional intelligence, connectedness and appreciation.

4 Collaborating – Social skills

To make progress on shared concerns, we need to develop our abilities to include, hold space and communicate with stakeholders with different values, skills and competencies.

Communication Skills - The ability to really listen to others, to foster genuine dialogue, to advocate one's own views skilfully, to manage conflicts constructively and to adapt one's communication to different groups. Communication skills can be described in terms of certain concrete behaviours, such as conveying positive intentions and regard, attentive and active listening, asking open-ended questions and advocating views in constructive ways.

Co-creation Skills - The skills and motivation to build, develop and facilitate collaborative relationships with different stakeholders, characterized by psychological safety and genuine co-creation. The focus here is on skills in creating favourable conditions for and facilitating productive collaboration and co-creation. Sub-skills include skills in creating an open climate characterized by trust and psychological safety; leading meetings in ways that structure the work process through shared focus, encourage creativity and openness to diverse input; and deconstruct power dynamics that hinder open and creative collaboration.

Inclusive Mindset and Intercultural Competence - The willingness and competence to embrace diversity and include people and collectives with different views and backgrounds. Being actively interested in seeking out, considering and involving individuals and groups with diverse backgrounds, identities and views is one facet of this cluster. More specifically, working in international contexts means that differences in culturally conditioned norms, values, attitudes, expectations, behavioural patterns, etc. play a significant role in successful collaboration.

Trust - The ability to show trust and to create and maintain trusting relationships. We include trust in the framework even though trust often is understood as an outcome, rather than a skill or a basic attitude.

Mobilization skills - Skills in inspiring and mobilizing others to engage in shared purposes. Mobilization skills do, of course, overlap with co-creation skills, but deserve a separate listing because mobilization includes reaching out broadly to different groups of people, evoking their interest and offering productive ways for people to become actively involved in various kinds of work towards fulfilling the SDGs.

5 Acting – Driving Change

Qualities such as courage and optimism help us acquire true agency, break old patterns, generate original ideas and act with persistence in uncertain times.

Courage - The ability to stand up for values, make decisions, take decisive action and, if need be, challenge and disrupt existing structures and views. Courage is another IDG that cannot easily be regarded as a skill, but which is still a quality that can be nurtured and developed through a range of strategies. We have here subsumed a couple of related qualities: the courage to advocate convictions, the capacity to go from ideas to actually making decisions, and the propensity to engage in decisive actions in order to achieve tangible results.

Creativity - The ability to generate and develop original ideas, to innovate, and being willing to disrupt conventional patterns. Creativity is linked to adult development processes. A common distinction in the adult development field is to differentiate between preconventional, conventional and postconventional patterns of meaning-making. Conventional meaning-making is associated with taking prevailing norms and practices as given, rather than inquiring into alternative possibilities, whereas postconventional meaning-making involves independent envisioning of what is desirable and how it can be realized.

Optimism - The ability to sustain and communicate a sense of hope, positive attitude and confidence in the possibility of meaningful change. Optimism may be regarded as a personality trait, but here the emphasis is on the capacity to inspire hope in others (and oneself) that it is possible to achieve meaningful results by focusing on what is doable.

Perseverance - The ability to sustain engagement and remain determined and patient even when one's efforts take a long time to bear fruit. Perseverance may also be understood as a personality trait or virtue, although it is likely that the capacity for sustaining engagement can be strengthened by conscious focusing on the possibilities to achieve long-term positive outcomes. As such, perseverance is related to *Long-term Orientation and Visioning*.

It is obvious that capacities are often properties of systems rather than individuals, and we think that the present version of the IDG framework can be used as a starting point for exploring individual and collective skills and qualities, and the ways in which culture, organizations and institutions can support the development needed. These expanded descriptions are a starting point for more thorough reflection, revisions and refinement.

What's next?

The first phase has been focused on identifying WHICH abilities, skills and qualities are needed, and even though this area will continue to develop, the project is now (November 2021) moving into focusing on HOW to support the development of these abilities, skills and qualities.

The IDG initiative will now proceed into Phase 2, which consists of:

1. broadening the scope of people from around the world getting involved and being able to give input to the IDG framework;
2. mapping out what validated methods, practices and tools already exist for supporting skills development as well as adult development and mindset;
3. from the above, creating an "IDG field-kit" with an overview of these methods regarding each of the 5 IDG Categories. This will be open-source and free for all to use.

The presentation of the field-kit and the results of the Phase 2 is scheduled for April 2022 during a "Growth That Matters" Conference, bringing together IDG partners and stakeholders from around the globe. The start of the second phase will also include efforts to mobilize more local and global partners and financial resources: this is a major task that will require comprehensive efforts. The full report can be accessed from. https://www.innerdevelopmentgoals.org/resources

Evaluation of An Action Learning Inquiry for the Sustainable Development Goals and Related Inner Development Goals
Jenny Willis & Norman Jackson

Introduction

The Lifewide Learning Research and Development group is an informal international network of people united by interests in education and learning who generously share their lives and experiences to try to understand the nature of learning and personal or professional development in their own everyday lives.[1,2] In January 2021 Lifewide Education began exploring the Sustainable Development Goals[3] (SDGs) and what it might mean to live in ways that are more likely to create a future that is more sustainable and regenerative.

Between March-June 2022 up to 15 members of the group participated in the 'Action, Creativity and Learning, for Healthy, Sustainable, Regenerative Futures' collaborative inquiry in which participants tried to initiate and facilitate an Action Learning Project (ALP)' involving other people. Information about the inquiry together with our Open Mic sharing event can be found on the project webpage https://www.lifewideeducation.uk/healthy-futures.html together with recordings of the meetings in which participants shared their experiences and understandings. The aim of the inquiry was to examine how we as individuals, collaborating with others, might contribute to a sustainable future for our own communities and beyond using the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a guide[4].

SDG 17 talks about partnerships in support of the SDGs and this was at the heart of our collaborative action learning based inquiry. This was the third inquiry that members of our lifewide learning research and development group have undertaken and in some respects it was the most challenging because each participant had to develop a set of relationships with other people and negotiate and adapt their ideas with the other members of their group. In other words, they were not in control of what happened and what emerged through the process of co-creation, was sometimes very different to what had been imagined.

Eight highly individual ALPs were facilitated during the three-month timescale, in diverse contexts, and the accumulated data derived from the collective experience was inevitably 'messy' and complex so this article attempts to make some sort of sense of the overall experience and the insights we gained.

Towards the end of our inquiry, we discovered a new framework had recently been published, called the Inner Development Goals[5] (reproduced in this issue of the magazine[6]). The framework is an ongoing initiative to identify skills and qualities that individuals and organizations need to develop in order to successfully work with complex societal issues, in particular those identified in UN Agenda 2030 and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Our collaborative action learning projects provided a good environment for using and evaluating the framework so we developed a questionnaire and an analytical tool to gain feedback from participants on those aspects of the IDG framework that were relevant to their particular projects and experiences. Through this process we identified a number of ways in which the framework might be strengthened and through this we are able to provide feedback to the researchers who are developing the framework.

Engagement with SDGs

At the start of our collaborative inquiry (March 2022) 15 ALPs were proposed but only 8 managed to significantly realise their potential after 3 months . The intention of the inquiry was for participants to collaborate with other people to bring about changes that were consistent with one or more SDGs. The range of SDGs involved across the 15 proposals was diverse. Table 1 summarises which of the 17 SDGs were explicitly addressed in each of the 15 projects (labelled A1-A15). These are highlighted in yellow to give a quick overview of their variability. Whilst there was some commonality in their focus on education and well-being, the permutations found in each project were unique reflecting the interests, values, beliefs and circumstance of those leading and designing an action learning project.

Table 1: SDGs targeted in each ALP

The 15 themes are listed in Table 2, illustrating the range of individual interests and objectives.

UN Sustainable Development Goals	Good Life Goals	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	A11	A12	A13	A14	A15
(1) No Poverty	1 Help End Poverty					■		■								■
(2) Zero Hunger	2. Eat Better					■		■								
(3) Good Health and Well-being	3. Stay Well		■	■		■	■	■			■	■	■			
4) Quality Education	4. Learn and Teach	■				■		■		■				■	■	■
(5) Gender Equality	5. Treat Everyone Equal			■		■										
(6) Clean Water and Sanitation	6. Save Water					■		■								
(7) Affordable and Clean Energy	7. Use Clean Energy					■		■								
(8) Decent Work and Economic Growth	8. Do Good Work				■											
(9) Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure	9. Make Smart Choices					■										
(10) Reducing Inequality	10. Be Fair		■												■	
(11) Sustainable Cities and Communities	11. Love Where You Live							■			■					
(12) Responsible Consumption and Production	12. Live Better															
(13) Climate Action	13. Act on Climate					■						■				
(14) Life Below Water	14. Clean the Seas															
(15) Life On Land	15. Love Nature	■														
(16) Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions	16. Make Peace		■											■		
(17) Partnerships for the Goals.	17. Come Together – get involved	■						■					■	■		

ALP	Theme
1	*Helping to Create a Healthier World*: Understanding the habitats, plants and animals and increasing biodiversity within and around Betchworth village
2	*Changing Perceptions of Mental Health & Destigmatising Mental Illness* Stimulating self-reflection through on-line questionnaire and workshops
3	*Grandmothers United* Individual projects *"individual actions can play their part by a) the action itself b) by example and discussion, persuading more people to live sustainably c) potentially leading to more pressure on organisations and the government"*.
4	*Relentless 2022* *The people behind the high street: the impact of change on the UK fashion and textile industry* Aim is to sustain an annual extracurricular fashion-related project for a new group of students to take ownership of each year - choosing a different SD goal to support/ contribute to with each iteration of the project
5	*One small farm at a time* To co-create a small farm community with like minded people embodying resiliency, sustainability to regenerative and with the intention of multi-generational education
6	*Office of Teaching and Learning Workspace Renewal Project* On return to campus, a collaborative action project where OTL staff and others create an environment conducive to good health and well-being
7	*The Sustainability Learning and Action Cycle* 3 cycle, Economic, Social and Environmental study programme
8	*Staying Well* To accompany 12 illustrations created during lockdown with brief narratives in the form of acrostic poems and to share what is learnt to help others find their inner strength. *"The natural healing force within each of us is the greatest force in getting well"* as Hippocrates said.
9	*Think Tank Development in Education* Focusing on the early stages of school learning as a lifelong journey student's thoughts, ideas and theories on life, learning and the future, students share what they see, feel and want for our planet. I will be proposing questions that will make them think and design ideas.
10	Make a family change and report it through vignette, image etc to collective site
11	*The #creativeHE Open Mic Event* Part of #CreativeHE's contribution to World Creativity Day 21 April 2022. Participants can be active or observers, performance involves e.g. poetry, storytelling, monologue, comedy, music, and can be in any language
12	*SDG Kringle* Each participant 'gifts' to the other group members a small suggestion for improved health/wellbeing and another for the planet which they will commit to do for a month
13	*'Belonging and becoming' in praxis* Builds on group established for World Education Summit 23 March 2022. It aims to explore why/how a focus on identity forming can support wider, improved learning outcomes for social and environmental justice.
14	*Encouraging Creativity and Innovation in students at an early age in their development.* To explore how creative teaching strategies can pique the interest of students to explore ideas in more meaningful ways. This trait will promote problem solving in later years.
15	*Developing financial awareness to survive and thrive* Building on previous work in the primary school classroom, to teach the basic concepts of financial literacy (spending money, saving, financial decision-making), using translated stories and classroom activities

Participants

Each of the action learning projects was led and facilitated by a member of the Lifewide Learning R&D group who constituted a collective for the purpose of this inquiry. They created their own partnerships for collaboration in line with the visions they had developed for their ALP. The people/parties involved in an ALP, ranged from family and friends, colleagues, students and people in a community who were not known at the start of a project, as shown in Table 3. The blue cells indicate the character of the participants for each of the 15 projects. Most projects were of a micro or meso nature, focussing on personal contacts at family, social, organisational or community levels, perhaps reflecting the belief that successful collaboration depended on building on relationships that were already established. The 15 projects proposed at the start of the process embraced communities in Australia, Canada, the Caribbean, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, East Africa, Hong Kong, India, Italy, Peru and Sweden as well as the UK. We should acknowledge the scope of the cultures we were fortunate to touch.

Table 3: Participants in each project

Partners	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	A11	A12	A13	A14	A15
Family	■		■	■	■									■	
Friends												■			
Community	■		■	■	■					■					
Students				■				■	■	■					■
Colleagues		■					■						■		
On-line								■	■						
Institutions		■							■			■	■		

Learning from unrealised ALPs

Not all ALPs came to fruition within the 3-month time frame we set for our inquiry, so it is important to examine the reasons for this. Table 5 uses colour coding to show the degree of progress achieved after 3 months. Green represents satisfactory/ good progress; amber some, limited progress and red projects that did not get off the ground. The right-hand column, indicates the parties involved in a project.

Table 5: Extent of ALPs' progress within 3 months

ALP	Theme	Significant factors
1	*Helping to Create a Healthier World:* Understanding the habitats, plants and animals and increasing biodiversity within and around Betchworth village	Local community
2	*Changing Perceptions of Mental Health & Destigmatising Mental Illness* Stimulating self-reflection through on-line questionnaire and workshops	Meso level Only 2 leaders
3	*Grandmothers United* Individual projects *"individual actions can play their part by a) the action itself b) by example and discussion, persuading more people to live sustainably c) potentially leading to more pressure on organisations and the government".*	Close contacts
4	*Relentless 2022* The people behind the high street: the impact of change on the UK fashion and textile industry Aim is to sustain an annual extracurricular fashion-related project for a new group of students to take ownership of each year - choosing a different SD goal to support/ contribute to with each iteration of the project	Students and community contacts
5	*One small farm at a time* To co-create a small farm community with like minded people embodying resiliency, sustainability to regenerative and with the intention of multi-generational education	Local community
6	*Office of Teaching and Learning Workspace Renewal Project* On return to campus, a collaborative action project where OTL staff and others create an environment conducive to good health and well-being	Immediate colleagues
7	*The Sustainability Learning and Action Cycle* 3 cycle, Economic, Social and Environmental study programme	Students
8	*Staying Well* To accompany 12 illustrations created during lockdown with brief narratives in the form of acrostic poems and to share what is learnt to help others find their inner strength. *"The natural healing force within each of us is the greatest force in getting well"* as Hippocrates said.	Lack of engagement
9	*Think Tank Development in Education* Focusing on the early stages of school learning as a lifelong journey student's thoughts, ideas and theories on life, learning and the future, students share what they see, feel and want for our planet. I will be proposing questions that will make them think and design ideas.	Meso contacts
10	Make a family change and report it through vignette, image etc to collective site	Family
11	*The #creativeHE Open Mic Event* Part of #CreativeHE's contribution to World Creativity Day 21 April 2022. Participants can be active or observers, performance involves e.g. poetry, storytelling, monologue, comedy, music, and can be in any language	Engagement achieved
12	*SDG Kringle* Each participant 'gifts' to the other group members a small suggestion for improved health/wellbeing and another for the planet which they will commit to do for a month	Friends
13	*'Belonging and becoming' in praxis* Builds on group established for World Education Summit 23 March 2022. It aims to explore why/how a focus on identity forming can support wider, improved learning outcomes for social and environmental justice.	Meso contacts
14	*Encouraging Creativity and Innovation in students at an early age in their development.* To explore how creative teaching strategies can pique the interest of students to explore ideas in more meaningful ways. This trait will promote problem solving in later years.	Family
15	*Developing financial awareness to survive and thrive* Building on previous work in the primary school classroom, to teach the basic concepts of financial literacy (spending money, saving, financial decision-making), using translated stories and classroom activities	Students

Our lifewide learning R&D collective is an entirely voluntary enterprise and the members of our community who decide to join an inquiry have to make time in their busy lives to participate. It is therefore not surprising that good intentions may not be realised as circumstances change or ambitions are thwarted. Nearly half the ALPs that were planned at the start of the inquiry did not come to fruition although some of these made some progress towards their goals (Table 5).

Feedback from participants indicates that there were two overarching reasons for ALPs not making significant progress towards their objectives. The first relates to the ***overall concept/vision and design of a project.*** For example, in choosing partners that did not result in an activity group that was able to engage others, or in choosing a topic that did not appeal to the group of people it was intended to engage. Typical comments on this were:

'insufficient advertising on our part' and *'perceived irrelevance of the topic.'*

The ***number of participants*** was also significant: too few reduced a sense of peer pressure in turn adversely affecting motivation:

'I believe that the lack of peer pressure was partly responsible for not forging ahead with this activity.

When a group of more than two is involved in a project, there is greater potential for encouragement or

pressure to pursue the project.'

Contrary to our expectations, **who** was involved in a project did not necessarily affect its potential success: as we see in the final column, projects drawing on family and friends had mixed outcomes. The same was true for ALPs planned by teachers and involving their students. The leader of one such project confessed her frustration after trying repeatedly to engage students and their parents: *'I'm really overwhelmed by life.'* Characteristically, she was not defeated, and was finding practical solutions to encourage participation. But it was noticeable that very small collaborating groups ie 2 were particularly vulnerable to losing momentum, perhaps for the reasons suggested in the last quotation.

There is also a suggest that projects that engaged at the micro (everyday life) level were more likely to be perceived as relevant and within practical reach than those, such as mine, which focused on the meso level.

However, the most common reason for not making progress with an ALP related to the fact that people could not create **sufficient space in their busy lives** to fulfil their good intentions.

"Regarding to the Learning Action Plan, for the Life Wide Education, my regrets that I haven't been participating due to my full plate, lots of commitment on studies and apprenticeship for this farm season. I will catch up when I found easiness on my schedule. Graciously, I am in flow on learning pathways of the design that I had been presented in our group."

"this academic year is incredibly busy and full of challenges so I would like to apologise for my absence."

It is also inevitable, when people are involved in multiple projects, that some projects are accorded a lower priority.

"My main problem was that I had too many conflicting priorities and also the change of jobs [I was seeking] and the challenges this brings, didn't allow me to focus on the [inquiry] project. I know that xxxxx was also very busy at the time. I didn't want to do a bad job, so had to step away from it despite the fact that I felt that what you had set-up was a really useful opportunity for all involved. It was also important for me to not just focus on our project but engage with what at least some other colleagues would have done and this was not possible, so it would have felt strange also to just work on our project without connecting with others."

Unforeseen circumstances, particularly ill health, was an important factor in reducing the space and capacity of individuals to fulfil their action learning ambitions. One respondent recorded *'we all got sick – I got sick twice in April'.* The timing of the projects coincided with the continuing Covid-19 pandemic, whose impact must also be a factor in the ability of participants and the collaborative partnerships to realise their intentions.

"Another participant explained "during the planning stages, I stayed with my brother. He had a really bad accident and hurt his ankle, which resulted in surgery in 2 places. I was tasked with assisting him during the healing process. My group of elementary teachers who are all family members is still interested and I will continue to work with them in progressing the work I articulated in the proposal."

But we should not take busyness at face value. Telling ourselves and others that we are too busy to create the time and head space to enact our intentions, while a perfectly acceptable reason, is often accompanied by deeper and complex relational matters when our intentions involve others. As one participant explained.

"I had full intention of completing the project that I started, but a few things got in the way of me doing so."

"Perhaps the most simple answer was my ridiculous workload. I know we are facing work intensification but recently my workload has grown exponentially. But I do try and make space for projects that bring me pleasure, and this was going to be one of those. So I knew I would be pushed, I was willing.

"But a more complex answer is around relationships. I initially spoke with my friends and they were excited and willing to participate (especially the idea of co-authoring something). I opened a private FB chat group to further explain the process and for them to nominate their gifts to themselves and each other. Judging by their entries, I think some understood, but others' weren't so clear – I also suspect I could've been clearer. I tried to work with their suggestions but after these initial posts there was no further activity. I didn't chase up anything up, and neither did any of them."

"I wrestled with this decision on non-action though. I knew I was letting you down but at the same time I just couldn't assume 'a teacher/facilitator' role with these women/friends. These are my lifelong friends and I am conscious of not being 'Doctor Doons' (that's what they call me at times). While they are proud of my achievements (I am the only one in the group who attended university), I also am conscious of not to put them in a position that changes our relationship."

These stories illuminate some of the challenges, conflicts and impediments that emerge in partnerships for the SDGs (SDG #17) at the micro level of individuals' lives.

Motivations, Qualities and Skills to Realise Intentions – the inner development goals (IDGs)
The UN's SDGs provide identify some of the most challenging and complex global problems many of which have been around for a long time. Yet humanity is not doing well in terms of living in a way that will lead to a more sustainable regenerative future for humankind and all other life on our planet. So, we need to change our behaviours and habits and we will only do this if we can bring about *inner change* – changes to beliefs, values and understanding that influence our motivations to do something and the skills and capabilities to think and practise in ways that will, with time, help co-create a more sustainable regenerative future. The IDGs map key dimensions of human development – qualities, skills and motivational forces that are considered, by the designers of the framework, to be necessary for bringing about change relevant to achieving the SDGs. The IDG framework (reproduced in Table 4) is organised around five headings - Being; Thinking; Relating; Collaborating and Acting.[5,6]

Table 4: Mapping responses onto the Inner Development Goals framework[5,6]

1 BEING *Relationship to self*	2 THINKING *Cognitive skills*	3 RELATING *Caring for others & the world*	4 COLLABORATING *Social skills*	5 ACTING *Driving change*
Inner compass	Critical thinking	Appreciation	Communication skills	Courage
Integrity & authenticity	Complexity awareness	Connectedness	Co-creation skills	Creativity
Openness & learning mindset	Perspective skills	Humility	Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence	Optimism
Self-awareness	Sense making	Empathy & compassion	Trust	Perseverence
Presence	Long term orientation and visioning		Mobilisation skills	

We realised that the framework could form the basis for an evaluation tool aimed at understanding the beliefs, values, qualities, skills and motivational forces necessary to engage in each ALP. By doing this without sharing the details of the IDG framework with respondents, we could also offer a perspective on the framework itself. Using the headings of the framework as a template, but incorporating our concerns that the framework should also include a beliefs and values category, we designed a simple, open-ended set of questions, prefaced with the following statement:

Based on your experience of collaborating with others to try to bring about changes that are consistent with the aims of one or more SDGs - **what beliefs, values, attitudes, knowledge, ability/skill, or other qualities do you believe are essential to develop individually and collectively to** *achieve such goals?*

Participants were invited to give narrative comments within a matrix which asked them what they perceived to be essential for their project in respect of:

1. Beliefs
2. Values
3. Attitudes
4. Knowledge
5. Ability/skills
6. Other qualities

Eight valid responses were returned, one for each of the corresponding completed projects. Although this is a small number, comments were rich and consistency was found between them, suggesting that their views may offer a framework for further research. Before examining the emergent themes, it should be noted that respondents were sometimes confused as to the distinction between values and beliefs, skills and attitudes. One explicitly acknowledged the problem stating *'(It is) difficult to distinguish beliefs from values'* and there was an email exchange between some members to help clarify issues.

Respondents' own categorisations are used in this analysis, which results in some overlap in their comments. For clarity, the definition used by the researchers is:

Values and beliefs are two important concepts that govern our behaviour and attitudes. Values and beliefs are interrelated since they collectively affect our attitudes, perceptions, personality, character and behaviour. The **main difference** *between values and beliefs is that* **values are principles, ideals or standards of behaviour while beliefs are convictions that we generally accept to be true.** *It is these ingrained beliefs that influence our values, attitudes, and behavior.*[7]

1. BELIEFS
Responses to this question included beliefs in general and those specific to the project.

General beliefs
Three subsets of general belief emerged:

i Personal beliefs
One respondent explicitly felt that *'work is worthwhile.'*

ii Life/planet
There was a shared belief in the need to address environmental issues. Comments touched on four themes:
- Live a life that is mindful of our adverse effects on the world and the need to minimise these effects
- We must protect and nurture the natural world
- It is not too late to address climate change but time is pressing
- If we act now, we can secure better future for future generations

iii Collaboration
The power of collective action featured prominently, with such comments as:
'Belief in collaboration and the ability of small groups to bring about change'
'Positive change can be achieved through collective action'
The '*potential for individuals to influence others*' was noted, and the role of respect was important for this: *'It is easy to change your beliefs to those you are working with if you respect those people.'*

Project-related beliefs
There was recognition that personal beliefs in one or more of the SDGs was essential, e.g. *'belief in the value of quality education.'*

As generically, it is important to believe that *'we can make a difference'* through the project and that working with people of like minds and shared values enhances the potential for success and also - implicitly – deepens relationships. Here we see beliefs and values relating to the SDGs and the actions we undertake in support of them coming together in a powerful union.

2. VALUES
Five common themes emerged in response to question 2.

i Respect difference
Taking up a point previously made regarding beliefs, it was suggested that
'It's easier to work with people who value the same sorts of things and it's easy to get infected by other people's values when working collaboratively.'
However, difference was seen as a positive attribute, comments recognising the need to
- Value everyone's voice
- Respect different values
- Value individual rights and equality of opportunity
- Pursue this in the interests of social justice and equity

ii Older generations
Some of the projects were specifically addressing the role of older members of a family, especially that of grandmothers. Responses in this context relate to the personal value of age in contributing to self-esteem, '*positive self-worth as an older woman*' and also to the practical value of the experience older people can bring: *'The usefulness of older generations in multi-generational families.'*

iii Teams
The value of teams featured again, with specific dimensions being identified:
- Process of working as a team enables us to demonstrate care for each other
- Trust in team members is a prerequisite
- We can be easily infected by other people's values when working collaboratively, positively or negatively

iv Specific SDG themes
It was acknowledged that personal values determine what people were prepared to invest time and energy in i.e individuals' values influenced the subject and content of their ALPs by:
- Promoting a cause/concern
- Relating to the environment, community or other living things
- Recognising the value of the planet

- Valuing the worth of humans co-habiting in symbiosis with nature/plants/other animals
- Encompassing the value of the SDGs at all levels (personal, local, global)

v Personal qualities
The final emergent theme regarding values was some personal qualities on which projects drew, anticipating questions 3 and 5. These include:
- Compassion
- Empathy
- Vulnerability
- Respect

In conclusion to this question, we might bear in mind the words of one respondent, *'I found that as I commit to something I cared about and worked on its behalf your values deepen and with it your motivation.'* This reveals an interesting reciprocal relationship between our values and our actions that are consistent with our values.

3. ATTITUDES
Responses to question 3 focused on 3 themes, some overlapping with those already seen.

i Motivation
Motivation was associated with several dimensions. **Commitment** to the project was essential, but one respondent cautioned: *'Commitment to the project (only a small number of original collaborators will retain this…it's good to be open about this as a team from the start, and to acknowledge that it's ok for people to fall away).'*

In fact, as we shall see below, there may be very good reasons for the decline of commitment as we live in a turbulent world and people lead complex lives. For example, a number of participants encountered illness or family-related issues including bereavement during the process. Good ALP project facilitators will sense waning commitment and try to understand the reasons and where appropriate support, enthuse or reengage those who are becoming less involved.

Determination and perseverance were closely related elements:
'Perseverance – inevitably life is busy and big and smaller things interfere with plans so there has to be determination to keep trying and even when you are forced to take a break there has to be something there to make you want to go again.'
Intricately connected to these is ***positivity***, which one respondent described as having a *'positive, growth mindset, seeing challenges as opportunities.'*

ii Problem solving
The last quotation leads to the desire to face a challenge and solve problems, a second common thread.

iii Collaboration – respect, openness,
Once more, the importance of collaboration built on mutual respect and openness was recognised. This demands
'Openness and willingness, kindness, engagement. (Recognition) that everyone is doing their best and has the best intentions.'
Ideally, it is proposed, there should be a
'Positive attitude to group work, not just focussed on outcome, but collaborative journey. Open to serendipity.'

4 KNOWLEDGE
Responses to this question distinguished between general knowledge and that which was relevant to a project.

i General knowledge
Awareness of **how groups work** was proposed, with the warning that '*groupthink can lead to norming/storming (Tuckman: 1965)*', to the detriment of the project.
There was a common reference to the need for *'some understanding of how to use social **media** e.g. e-mail, texting, WhatsApp, Zoom, and internet browsers.'*
Related to this was a caution that it is important to have '*some understanding of **trustworthy sources of information.**'*

ii Project-related knowledge
One respondent suggested that knowledge was less important than ***attitude***:
'While having knowledge is very useful to understand what it is you might try and do, it is not as important as a willingness to learn and to try and find out.'

It was accepted that **subject specific** knowledge would be brought to the project but each participant would have their own area of expertise, contributing to a greater body of knowledge.

P*ast experience* was brought to some projects, which built on previous iterations of the work. For example, it was thought that *'some existing awareness/understanding of what the* **UN Sustainable Development Goals** *mean'* was desirable.

Finally, it was also acknowledged that knowledge of context was essential to bringing about change in a particular environment. For example, knowing who to ask in order to do or achieve something was particularly useful in one community-based ALP.

5 ABILITIES AND SKILLS
Responses to question 5 proposed a range of dispositions (abilities) and skills, some already mentioned in previous replies.

i Dispositions
These included a willingness to **embrace new ideas** and **adaptability** *'if necessary as project stalls or develops.'*
A *'capacity for* **empathy'** which enabled the group to *'reframe failure or setback into something positive'* was one practical proposal*.*

ii Skills
Once more, the strength of **collaboration** was noted:
'Everyone has a unique package of skills but the strength of a group that is collaborating is that knowledge and skills are pooled.'
Communication and social skills were frequently mentioned, e.g. *'Listening and willingness to help others, sharing, providing feedback.'*
Organisational and **leadership skills** were important, in order to
'Build on individual strengths. Help to make people feel positive and valued for their contribution.'
On a practical level, the ability to use **social media** was raised again.

6. OTHER QUALITIES
Three themes emerged in response to question 6, two of which were new.

Leadership
Leadership had already been mentioned as a skill, but featured again with the suggestion that
'There always has to be a driving force but there also has to be a willingness to share the load, for people to step forward to take a lead on particular matters.'

Creativity
This was a new theme, mentioned by several respondents, who explained this to mean:
'Thinking on our feet'
'Anticipating problems, being ready to deal with them, embracing those problems as part of the process'
'It happens as a group of people interact, ideas emerge and then when things have to be done.. it's a natural process'

Professionalism
The second new theme comprised ideas which relate either explicitly or implicitly to achieving a professional outcome. Comments were:
'The end result of our project looked impressive and polished; this added to the team's sense of achievement and was important in our context as the participants want to use this project in their future careers.'
'Friendship – a sense of unity, even across the small core team that ended up delivering the project, other members of our ALP had to trust me that what we are doing is not too onerous and is worthwhile.'
'Determination to achieve goals, resilience in face of obstacles e.g. non-response, perseverance, compassion to accept things may not happen immediately because life gets in the way but continuity is important.'
'Willingness to learn to fill gaps.'

What can we conclude?
Having initially thought that the survey responses would be difficult to make sense of, it was clear that some common themes emerged notably:

- There was an overwhelmingly positive response to the value of the ALPs
- Collective action was perceived to be a potential means of addressing the SDGs at personal, local and global levels, though projects focused predominantly at micro or local level
- There was a strong desire to save the planet and create a more sustainable future for future generations, and belief in our ability to do so
- Dispositions such as motivation, resilience and empathy were considered by some respondents to be more important than knowledge. It is very important to be able to learn through the process of trying to accomplish something.
- This is the growth of knowledge specifically for more sustainable regenerative futures in highly situated contexts. Hence collaborative action learning enables the learning process to co-create new knowledge in each new circumstance
- Categorisation of beliefs and values resulted in overlapping interpretations of terminology, demonstrating a need for further discussion of the relationship between values (underpinning principles) and beliefs (what we accept to be true).

Comparison of participants' survey responses to IDG Framework

We did not share the IDG framework with the participants before they were surveyed so it was interesting to compare their responses with the inner development goals framework[3]. Instinctively, it seemed that the collective responses of participants leading ALPs touched on every element in the framework (Table 5) suggesting that the framework has general validity for the types of SDG-related action learning projects we were undertaking.

Table 5: Collective responses of participants completing the survey compared to the Inner Development Goals framework
Our qualitative survey did, however, facilitate greater detail being given on some of the themes e.g. 'mindfulness' was made explicit as was the power of collective effort.

1 BEING *Relationship to self*	2 THINKING *Cognitive skills*	3 RELATING *Caring for others & the world*	4 COLLABORATING *Social skills*	5 ACTING *Driving change*
Inner compass	Critical thinking	Appreciation	Communication skills	Courage
Integrity & authenticity	Complexity awareness	Connectedness	Co-creation skills	Creativity
Openness & learning mindset	Perspective skills	Humility	Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence	Optimism
Self-awareness	Sense making	Empathy & compassion	Trust	Perseverence
Presence	Long term orientation and visioning		Mobilisation skills	

While beliefs and values are implicit in the IDG framework, our survey tried to make these explicit, as in our opinion they provide the foundation for the motivational forces required to initiate and sustain complex and challenging change processes. Furthermore, it seems that there is a complex feedback loop between the beliefs and values that motivate action, the actions themselves and the reinforcement of beliefs and values as summed up by one respondent:

'I found that as we commit to something we care about and worked on its behalf our values deepen and with it our motivation.'

Using the IDG Framework as an analytical tool

We wanted to explore the potential of the IDG Framework to provide a prompt for reflection on specific ALPs so we developed a mapping tool (Table 6). We thought that participants could either use the tool to make a subjective assessment of the qualities, motivations and skills that they drew upon to lead and facilitate their collaborative action learning project (individual level) or make a subjective assessment of the qualities, motivations and skills their collaborative group as a whole drew upon during their action learning project (collective level).

Table 6 Inner Development Goal Framework Mapping Tool

Evaluation: To what extent did my action learning project require these qualities of character, motivations and skills, and provide opportunities for further development?

1 BEING Relationship to self	2 THINKING Cognitive skills	3 RELATING Caring for others & the world	4 COLLABORATING Social skills	5 ACTING Driving change
Inner compass a deeply felt sense of responsibility and commitment to values & purposes relating to the good of the whole	**Critical thinking** Skills in critically reviewing the validity of views, evidence and plans	**Appreciation** Relating to others & to the world with a basic sense of appreciation, gratitude and joy.	**Communication skills** ability to really listen to others, to foster genuine dialogue, to advocate own views skilfully, to manage conflicts constructively and adapt one's communication to different groups	**Courage** Ability [and willingness] to stand up for values, make decisions, take decisive action and challenge and disrupt existing structures & views
Integrity & authenticity Commitment & ability to act with sincerity, honesty and integrity	**Complexity awareness** Understanding of and skills in working with complex and systemic conditions and causalities	**Connectedness** Having a keen sense of being connected with and/or being part of a larger whole, such as a community, humanity or global ecosystem	**Co-creation skills** skills & motivation to build, develop and facilitate collaborative relationships with different stakeholders, characterized by psychological safety and genuine co-creation	**Creativity** ability to generate/ develop original ideas, to innovate, & willing to disrupt conventional patterns
Openness & learning mindset mindset of curiosity and a willingness to be vulnerable, to embrace change & grow	**Perspective skills** Skills in seeking, understanding and actively making use of insights from contrasting perspectives.	**Humility** able to act in accordance with the needs of the situation without concern for own importance	**Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence** willingness and competence to embrace diversity and include people & collectives with different views and backgrounds	**Optimism** ability to sustain and communicate a sense of hope, positive attitude and confidence in the possibility of meaningful change.
Self-awareness ability to be in reflective contact with one's own thoughts, feelings and desires; having a realistic self-image & ability to regulate oneself	**Sense making** Skills in seeing patterns, structuring the unknown and being able to consciously create stories	**Empathy & compassion** ability to relate to others, oneself and nature with kindness, empathy/compassion and to address related suffering	**Trust** ability to show trust and to create and maintain trusting relationships	**Perseverance** ability to sustain engagement and stay determined & patient even when efforts take a long time to bear fruit
Presence ability to be in the here and now, without judgment and in a state of open-ended presence	**Long term orientation and visioning** Long-term orientation and ability to formulate and sustain a commitment to visions relating to the larger context eg SDG-related problems		**Mobilisation skills** skills in inspiring and mobilizing others to engage in shared purposes	

Our experiences of trying to form new collaborative partnerships to accomplish change that is consistent with the SDGs, revealed that it is not a simple matter. The insight we gained was that the IDG framework was as applicable to the collective as it is to the individual. In fact, in some ways it is more applicable as within a collective whose goals and actions are co-created, knowledge and skill sets are pooled and different motivational forces relating to beliefs and values can be harnessed.

Four participants attempted to use the tool and their subjective assessments are summarised in Figure 1. Our evaluation of the IDG framework in the context of our action learning projects suggests that the IDG framework is valid in terms of its overall content i.e. participants recognise the relevance of the particular qualities, skills and motivations identified in the framework in their attempts to lead and participate in collaborative actions that were intended to support change in respect of one or more of the SDGs.

Table 7 Patterns of skills, qualities and motivations used in four of the Action Learning Projects

The four assessments shown in Table 7 make the same general point - that any action learning project conducted over a period of time with a group of people is likely to involve most aspects of the IDG skills-qualities-motivational framework.

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Strengthening the IDG Framework

The insights we have gained through our efforts to bring about change in respect of one or more of the SDGs provide a number of suggestions for how the IDG Framework might be developed further (Table 8).

Table 8 Suggestions for how the Inner Development Goal Framework (IDG 2021) might be developed

BELIEFS, VALUES, RELATIONSHIPS & ECOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING that result in COMMITMENT to live in ways that are more likely to lead to a sustainable, regenerative future				
1 BEING & BECOMING *Relating to and caring for self. Trying to become a better self*	**2 INTERBEING** *Relating to and caring for others & the world*	**3 THINKING** *Using and integrating perception, reasoning and imagination to understand connectivities & interdepedencies*	**4 COLLABORATING** Working together to achieve shared goals and values	**5 ACTING** *Recognising the ecological nature of our practices*
Inner compass	*Ecological Understanding Recognising we are ecological interbeings, living in an ecological world (Connectedness)*	Long term orientation and visioning	Communication skills	*Willing to lead by example and facilitate change in ways that support the SDGs*
Integrity & authenticity	Humility	Critical thinking	Co-creation skills	Courage
Openness & learning mindset	Empathy & compassion	*Imaginative generative thinking*	Inclusive mindset & intercultural competence	Creativity
Self-awareness		Complexity awareness & Perspective skills	Trust	Optimism
Presence		Sense making	Mobilisation skills	Perseverence *& Resiliance*

1. BELIEFS The motivational forces that will lead to people respecting the SDGs and wanting to live their lives in ways that are consistent with one or more of the SDGs are founded on their beliefs and values and these, it can be argued, should be informed by an ecological world view[8,9,10] in which we accept that we are fundamentally ecological beings – thinking and acting in an ecological, relational and interdependent manner – and our very existence depends on this. Understanding this relationship between ourselves and our environments, our actions and the effects of our actions on ourselves and our environment puts us in a better position to understand how we might individually and collectively contribute to a future that is sustainable and regenerative. Understanding this relationship also means that we can begin to see our own practices, our learning and creative achievements as ecological in nature.

2 COMMITMENT People do not sustain behaviours that will lead to significant and meaningful change in line with the SDGs without commitment. Neither will they join and maintain collaborative or communal projects to achieve such goals without commitment. As we saw through our own experiences there are many challenges, impediments and competing interests and priorities when people get involved in change projects so without focused commitment it is easy for projects to fall by the wayside. Commitments make individuals' behavior predictable in the face of fluctuations in their desires and interests, thereby facilitating the planning and coordination of joint actions involving multiple agents.[11] Moreover, commitment also facilitates cooperation by making individuals willing to contribute to joint actions to which they wouldn't be willing to contribute if they, and others, were not committed to doing so.[12] The strength of a collaborating group with shared commitment towards achieving cocreated goals is that motivation to engage with a challenge and try to progress intentions does not rest with one individual so the group as a whole is likely to be more resilient to the inevitable waning of commitment due to the busyness of an individual's life. Commitment is deeply relational and is founded on beliefs, values and principles. Commitment is often connected to a vision or idea that is significantly bigger than ourselves and in enacting this vision we are helping to create a better version of ourselves. In this way we are growing and developing or actualising ourselves [13, 14] Commitment to actions that help bring about a more sustainable and regenerative future does not appear in the IDG framework but without it all the other things in the framework are meaningless.

3 BECOMING The IDG framework highlights the ontological state of being but it does not recognise that we live in a world that is in continual formation and that we ourselves are significantly responsible for its formation. The framework should recognise that engaging in change in order to live a life for a more sustainable regenerative future is an act of personal growth, of undergoing and becoming different, of trying to create a better version of ourselves that is more in tune with the needs of our planet and the future of humanity. The idea of becoming different should be made explicit within the framework. In this way we can connect the framework more deeply to lifelong learning which recognises that we are all in a perpetual state of becoming.[8]

4. INTERBEING A key insight from our action learning projects is that we are not just independent beings but interbeings deeply connected to interdependent with the world around us[15,16]. *"The meta-narrative of interbeing informs a participatory whole-systems understanding of life and consciousness. It allows us to value a wide diversity of perspectives while unifying us with our larger identity as humanity and life"* [17 p.240]. The idea of interbeing connects to what we might term ecological understanding – an awareness that influences the way we think and act that we are ecological interbeings living in and with an ecological world.[8,9,10] If we are to influence individuals' beliefs and values in ways that will encourage them to live their lives for more sustainable regenerative futures then we need explicitly to recognise the nature of our interbeing and the development of **ecological understanding** and awareness within the IDG Framework. This could be achieved by reorganising the columns and using interbeing as the primary concept in the relatedness column.

5. IMAGINATION The shorthand term of cognition, hides the beauty, complexity and power of human thinking. There is an opportunity in the IDG Framework to celebrate our capacity to think ecologically – in ways that embrace not only the analytical but also the imaginative and generative capacity of thought required to turn information into wisdom. Thinking with complexity and awareness, and thinking creatively, involves the integration of perception, reasoning and imagination. We certainly need imagination to be writ large in order to create/co-create designs for a more sustainable and regenerative future.

6 LEADING & FACILITATING CHANGE While the metaphor of 'Driving change' may well be acceptable in the corporate world, it is far less useful in the everyday world of people trying to bring about change in their everyday lives and communities. It is not a useful metaphor when considering the complex, sensitive, relationship building and maintenance associated with collaborative working where change is brought about by voluntary action. The ideas of leading by example (authentic modelling) and facilitation (encouraging, supporting, showing, coaching and more) drawing on previous experiences and a complex repertoire of skills and relational knowledge, are far more useful. As is the idea that leadership is a distributed phenomenon within a group and the members of the group must be willing to take the lead in order to achieve the aims of the group.

7 ECOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING Finally, the IDG Framework proved to be useful in identifying the elements involved in bringing about change but it does not show how these elements are connected and related or woven together in real practices in real time. Such holistic ecological understanding can only be gained through the experience of trying to accomplish something that is significant and challenging while working with others. It is this ecological understanding that our explorations into ecologies for learning and practice[8,9,10] is seeking to develop. Ultimately, we believe that it is only by embracing an ecological world view as part of our belief systems that we will whole heartedly commit to living our lives for sustainable and regenerative futures.

Next steps

The next stage in the development of the IDGs is being led by Kristian Stålne, who is the research lead for IDG, is to develop perspectives on how people develop their inner development goals. We hope that the insights we have gained through our collaborative ALP inquiry will be useful to those who are developing the IDG Framework in the sense that any significant ALP that seeks to engage with the SDGs will create an environment (or ecology) within which the sorts of qualities, skills and motivations described in the IDGs will be drawn upon and will provide opportunity for further development. These will not be in the form of a checklist; rather, intentions, practices, experiences and achievements, will be woven together in complex ecologies for practice (Barnett and Jackson 2020) in unique and emergent ways which may only be appreciated when people look back and reflect on their experiences.

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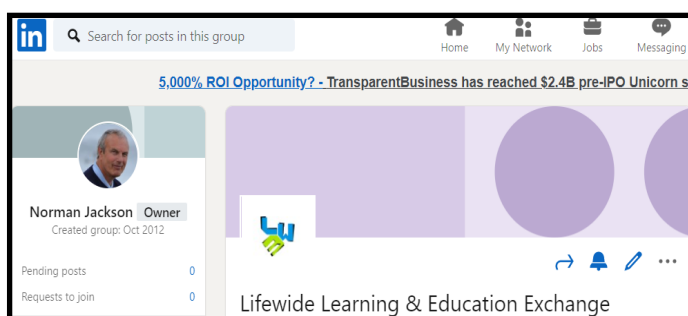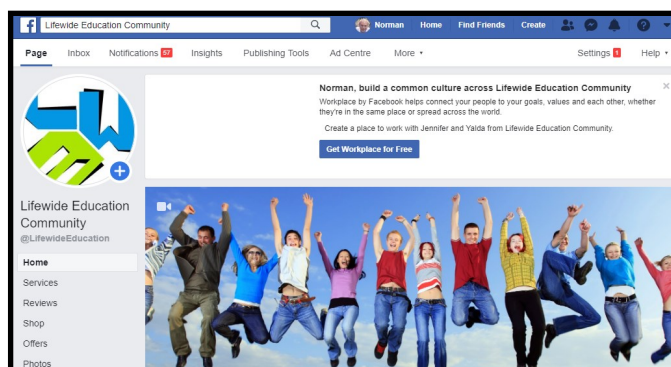
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