

Structuring Learning Environments in Teacher
Education to Elicit Dispositions as Habits of Mind:
From Conception to Praxis

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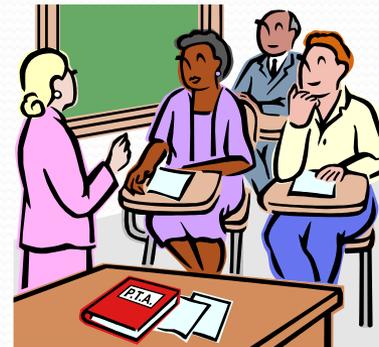
PURPOSE OF MY PRESENTATION

My presentation is to provide conceptual grounding to the on-going effort in my College of Education at Florida International University in Miami, Florida to bring clarity to “dispositions” and consequently to “habits of mind.”

My co-presenters will share examples of their work to enhance and nurture those habits of mind for our teacher education candidates.

Dispositions vs. Habits of Mind

The term “habits of mind” has not been part of the lexicon of teacher education programs in the United States. On the other hand, the term “dispositions” has been because the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, [now CAEP] the organization that accredits Schools and Colleges of Education, places a premium on colleges (units) having to provide evidence that candidates have acquired certain content knowledge, skills and dispositions.

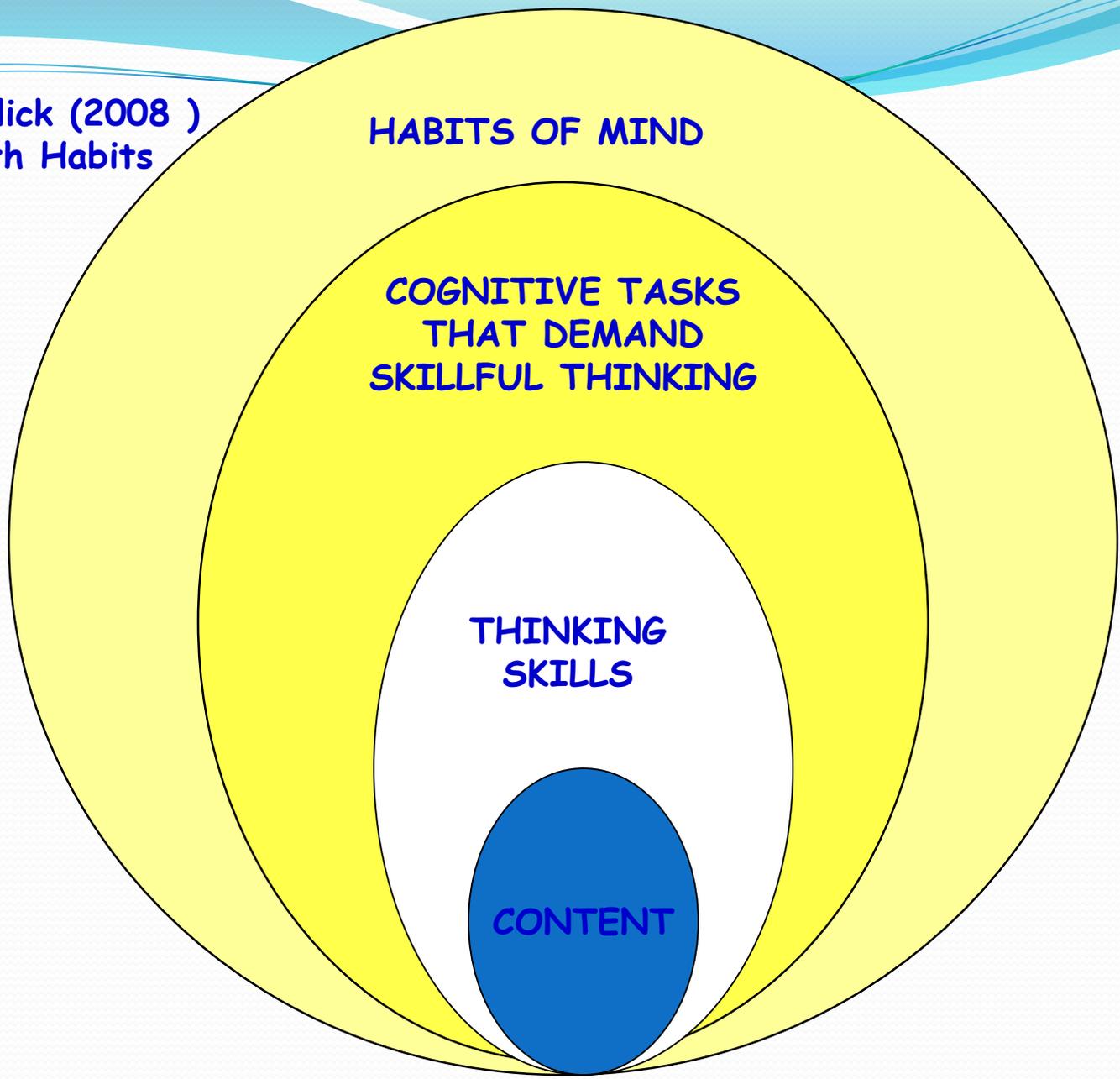


Next Generation CAEP Standards

- **Standard 3**
- **Candidate Quality, Recruitment, and Selectivity**
- **The provider demonstrates that the quality of candidates is a continuing and purposeful part of its responsibility from recruitment, at admission, through the progression of courses and clinical experiences, and to decisions that completers are prepared to teach effectively and are recommended for certification.**

- **Additional selectivity factors**
- 3.5
- Provider preparation programs establish and monitor attributes beyond academic ability that candidates must demonstrate at admissions and during the program. The provider selects criteria, describes the measures used and evidence of the reliability and validity of those measures, and reports data that show how the academic and non-academic factors deemed important in the selection process and for development during preparation, predict candidate performance in the program and effective teaching.

Taken from Costa and Kallick (2008)
Learning and Leading with Habits
Of Mind



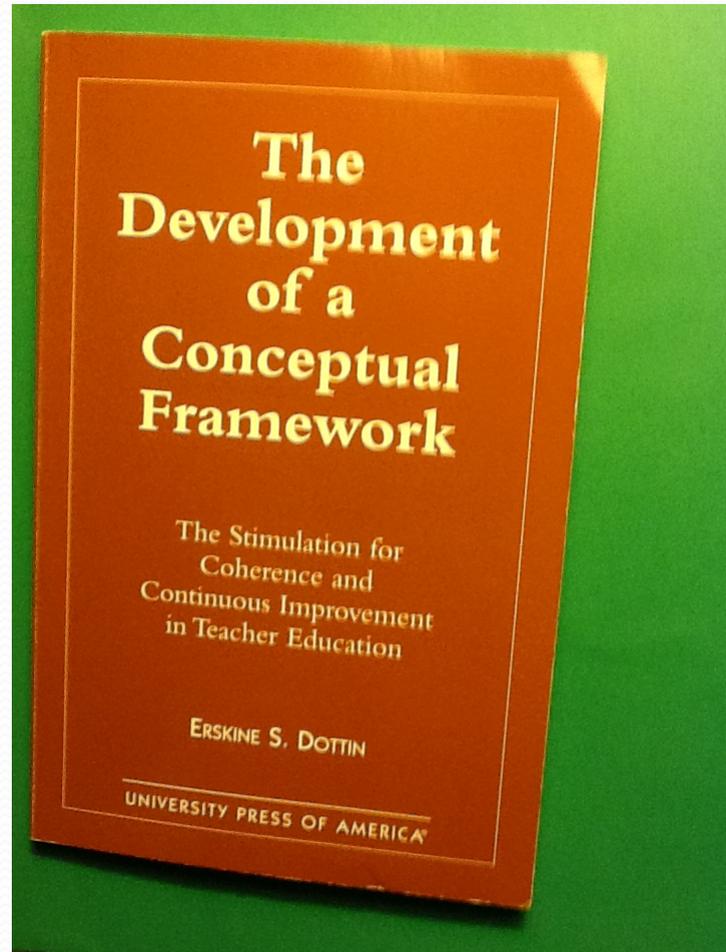
NCATE Standards

- **Conceptual Framework**
- “A conceptual framework^[1] establishes the shared vision for a unit’s efforts in preparing educators to work in P–12 schools. It provides direction for programs, courses, teaching, candidate performance, scholarship, service, and unit accountability. The conceptual framework is knowledge-based, articulated, shared, coherent, consistent with the unit and/or institutional mission, and continuously evaluated. The conceptual framework provides the bases that describe the unit’s intellectual philosophy and institutional standards, which distinguish graduates of one institution from those of another.”
- <http://www.ncate.org/Standards/NCATEUnitStandards/UnitStandardsinEffect2008/tabid/476/Default.aspx>

KEY TO UNDERSTANDING TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM(S)

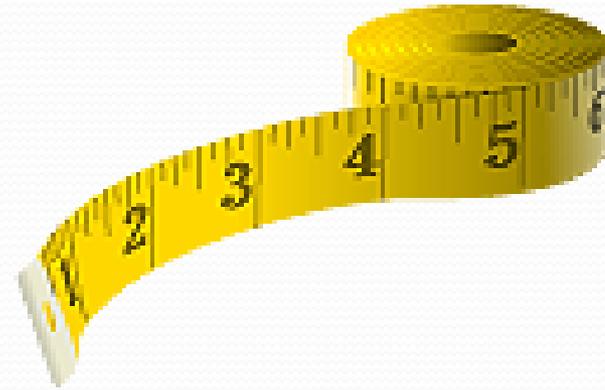
[The] conceptual framework is, first, a way of thinking for oneself, a way of seeing, thinking, and being that defines the sense of the unit across all its programs, thereby specifying the reasons for its existence and how life ought to be lived in the unit.... The framework sets forth the operational manner of the unit regarding what candidates should know (i.e., content knowledge), what they should be able to do (i.e., curricular, technological and pedagogical knowledge and skills), and to what they should be disposed (i.e., moral sensibilities).... It describes the knowledge base(s), derived from sound research and best practice on teaching and learning, upon which the learning outcomes are grounded.... It describes assessments and evaluation measures needed to produce the desired results in candidates' performance (Dottin, 2006, pp. 27-28).

Dottin, E. S. (2006). A Deweyan approach to the development of moral dispositions in professional teacher education communities: Using a conceptual framework. In H. Sockett (Ed.). *Teacher dispositions: Building a teacher education framework of moral standards* (pp. 27-47). Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.



THE RUSH TO MEASURE

“We need to take thoughtful time to examine what our conceptual framework statements imply for the development and assessment of dispositions”

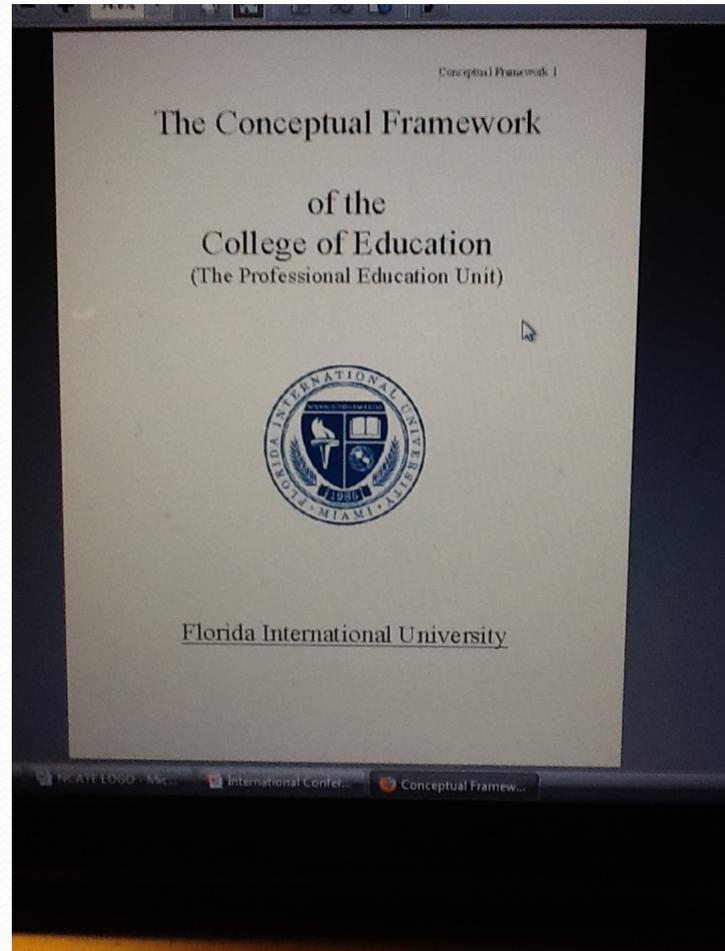


Diez, M. (2006). Assessing dispositions: Five principles to guide practice. In H. Sockett (Ed.). *Teacher dispositions: Building a teacher education framework of moral standards* (pp. 49-68). Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

Pursuing Conceptual Clarity with Regard to Dispositions

The College of Education's conceptual framework is grounded in a vision that seeks "a desired future in which the emphasis on inquiry is the means-ends connection to enhancing reflective intelligence" ("The Conceptual Framework of the College of Education," n.d., p. 4). More specifically, the college's way of thinking is that "...educational environments conducive to this philosophy are thus structured to challenge candidates to engage in the habits of thinking that are consistent with reflective inquiry or as termed by Dewey, "the essentials of reflection" (Dewey, 1916/1944, p. 163)" ("The Conceptual Framework of the College of Education," n.d., p. 6).

<http://education.fiu.edu/docs/Conceptual%20Framework%2006-19-09.pdf>



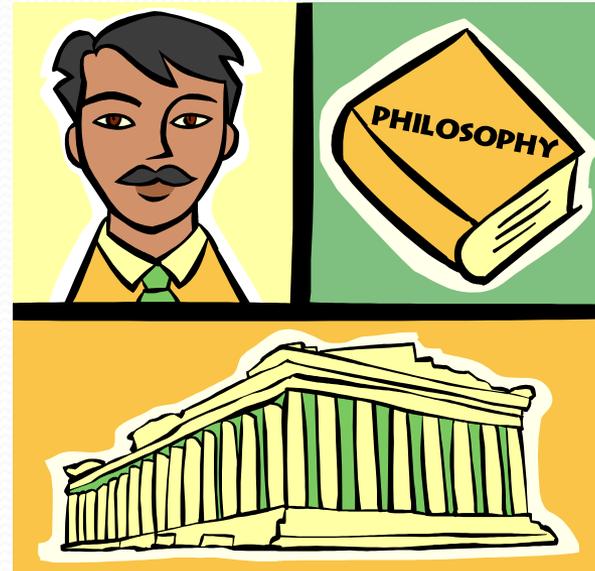
Concept of Dispositions in the College's Conceptual Framework

- The concept of “dispositions” that emerge from the college’s way of thinking is that “dispositions needed by teachers and other school personnel [should] be the habits that would render their actions (conduct) intelligent in the world of practice, and as such, those dispositions would guide how life is lived in the unit” (“The Conceptual Framework of the College of Education,” n.d., p. 4).
- The faculty in the unit, therefore, seeks to create the kind of teaching and learning environments that elicit the mental and moral sensibilities consistent with reflective intelligence by engaging learners in intelligent action so that they might demonstrate wisdom in practice (“The Conceptual Framework of the College of Education,” n.d., p. 9).
- The characteristics expected of graduates from the college are that they be (a) stewards of their discipline, (b) reflective inquirers, and (c) mindful educators.

Philosophical Base

Dewey's view of reflective intelligence is grounded in "learning from experience" where dispositions as habits may be seen as expressions of growth.

To retain the ability to learn from experience obliges a person to cultivate among other things, what Dewey calls, 'personal attitudes' toward thinking and acting in the world. These attitudes include.... straightforwardness, openmindedness, breadth of outlook, integrity of purpose and responsibility. Such qualities characterize a person who is extending and deepening an interest in learning from all of his or her contacts in the world, whether the latter be weighty or light, momentary or enduring, pleasant or trying (Hansen, 2002, p. 269).



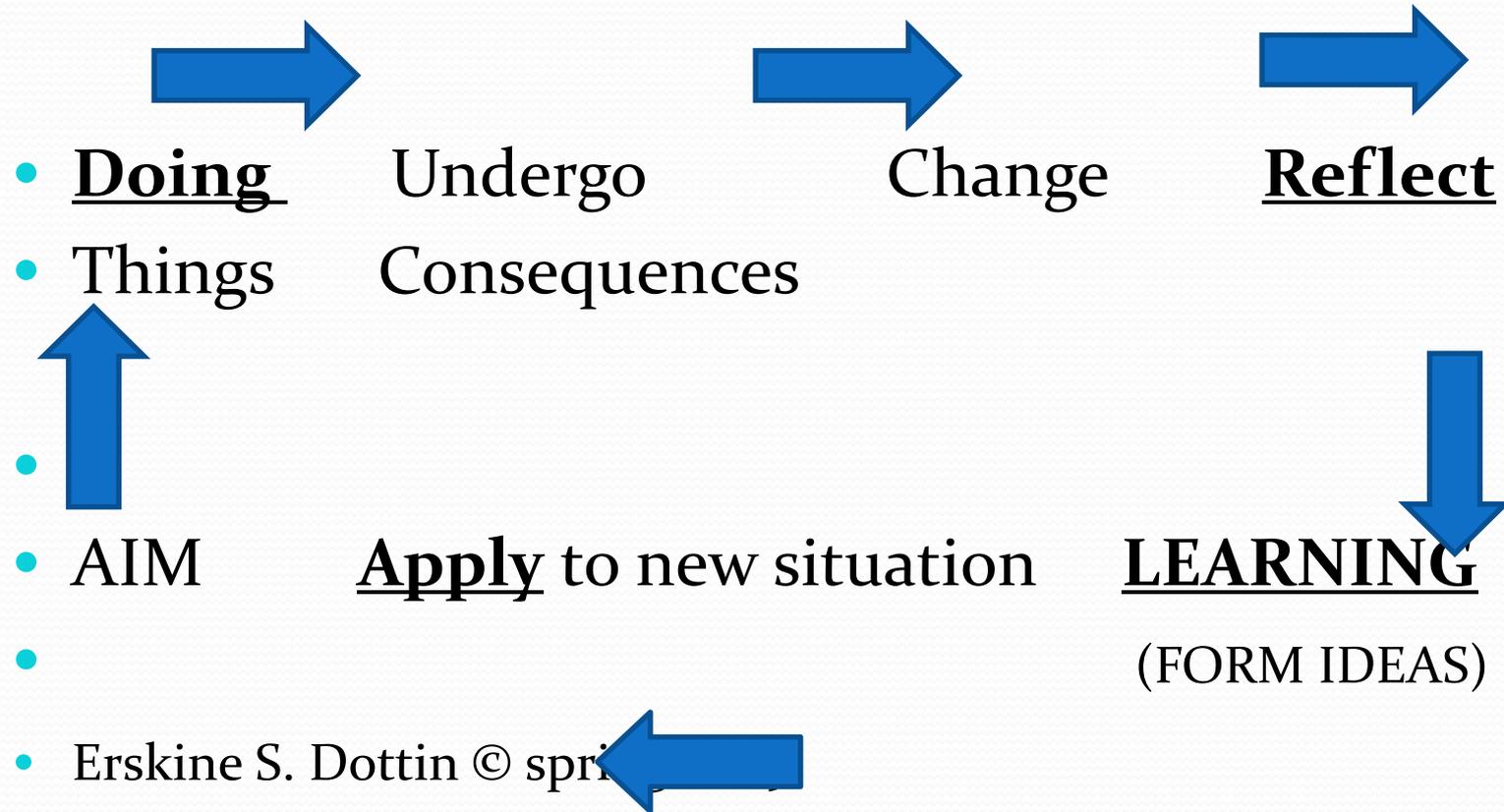
Philosophical Base

To Dewey, learning from experience is a form of moral practice since it requires “the disposition to respond intelligently to new circumstances” (Anderson, 2010, para. 1) or more specifically, “the use of reflective intelligence to revise one’s judgments in light of the consequences of acting on them” (Anderson, 2010, para. 2).

Anderson, E. (2010, fall). Dewey’s moral philosophy. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Edward N. Zalta (Ed.). Retrieved from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/dewey-moral/>



LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE



“PLASTICITY”

- Learning from experience links impulse and habit – the concept of plasticity (Dewey, 1944).
- Habits are formed from experience; and habits may be changed by forms of education that instill independent thought, critical inquiry, observation, experimentation, foresight, imagination, and sympathy with others.

The Essential Moral Interest = Reflective Morality

THE THINKING PROCESS IN INQUIRY

- A man is walking on a warm day. The sky was clear the last time he observed it; but presently he notes, while occupied primarily with other things, that the air is cooler. It occurs to him that it is probably going to rain; looking up, he sees a dark cloud between him and the sun, and he then quickens his steps. What, if anything, in such a situation can be called thought? Neither the act of walking nor the noting of the cold is a thought. Walking is one direction of activity; looking and noting are other modes of activity. The likelihood that it will rain is, however, something *suggested*. The pedestrian *feels* the cold; he *thinks of* clouds and a coming shower. (John Dewey, *How We Think*, pp. 6-7).
- 1. Did the man start with the FACT that air is cool?
- 2. Did he draw on PAST KNOWLEDGE about the world: just before it rains air is cool?
- 3. Did he make an INFERENCE: it is about to rain?
- 4. DID GOOD THINKING LEAD HIM TO TEST HIS INFERENCE by checking possibilities such as : before it rains dark clouds appear?
- 5. Does he affirm the possibility through the FACT that dark clouds do appear?
- 6. NOW, does he have knowledge on which to ACT, and to transfer to new situations?

SO...

- Dispositions as habits of mind for inquiry require reflective intelligence, and reflective intelligence enhances professional judgment if reflective intelligence is associated with enabling educators to increase their capacity to solve pedagogical problems, make informed pedagogical decisions, and generate new knowledge in the world of practice (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004)
- Conversations about dispositions must be a conversation about professional conduct and about making that conduct more intelligent.

SO...

- In teacher education programs candidates acquire knowledge and skills to enable them to act, that is, conduct themselves in classrooms. But if the conditions in the classroom change, then teacher education candidates must have the necessary dispositions: be aware of the need to change; have the necessary inclination to change; and engage in the necessary reflective activity to enhance change (Ritchhart, 2002).

Making Professional Conduct more Effective

- To make professional conduct more effective we must move beyond what educators “know” – their knowledge, and what they can do – their ability, to what they are actually likely to do with that knowledge and those skills.
- It is this link between ability and deployment of ability that is being referred to as “dispositions” – or as “habit” by Dewey - the consistent and internal motivator and organizer of intelligent behavior/conduct

Habits of Mind developed by Art Costa and Bena Kallick

1. Persisting
2. Managing Impulsivity
3. Listening with Understanding and Empathy
4. Thinking Flexibly
5. Thinking about Thinking
6. Striving for Accuracy
7. Questioning and Posing Problems
8. Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations
9. Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision
10. Gathering Data Through All Senses **
11. Creating, Imagining, Innovating **
12. Responding with Wonderment and Awe
13. Taking Responsible Risks
14. Finding Humor **
15. Thinking Interdependently
16. Remaining Open to Continuous Learning **

SO...

- How are “dispositions” as “Habits of Mind” cultivated and nurtured?
- Through reflective inquiry/reflective practice, and to facilitate such, programs must move from a “transmission model” to an “enculturation model” that enhances educative environments (Dewey’s transactional theory of knowing).

Habits of Reflective Action/Conduct

- Qualities of effective educators may be captured as “dispositions of pedagogical mindfulness and thoughtfulness (reflective capacity) that render professional educators’ action and conduct more intelligent” (Dottin, 2009, p. 85). This means that pedagogues have a disposition toward enhancing the educational growth of all learners through the application of their thinking to things already known (content, process skills) for the purpose of improving social conditions (Hansen, 2001).

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