

Meeting Summary for RCE Making Change Stick

From: Meeting Summary with AI Companion (no-reply@zoom.us)

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Quick recap

The meeting focused on the concept of agency in education and the need for systemic reform, with discussions on self-determination theory, internal coherence, and the importance of well-being in learning environments. Participants explored strategies for advocating change, including the development of a shared vision, precise language, and effective political demands. The group also considered the potential impact of reframing educational challenges and the role of relationship-building in advocacy efforts.

Next steps

- Don to lead next week's session focusing on "Back to Basics 2.0" and how to frame the conversation around well-being in education.
- Attendees to consider signing the Declaration of Child Rights-centric Education and encourage others to do so.
- Interested participants to schedule one-on-one conversations with Don using the provided appointment link.
- Attendees to fill out the form shared by Richard to share their information for networking purposes.
- Don to organize "advocacy talks" to share effective strategies for communicating about education reform.
- Attendees to focus on having deep, relationship-building conversations about education reform in their local areas.
- Interested participants to consider attending the IDEC conference in Belgium this summer.

Summary

Exploring Student Agency in Education

Richard and Derry discussed the concept of agency and its importance in education, with

Derry sharing his recent meeting with Ned Johnson, who has conducted research on the benefits of a 20% respite for medical students. Richard acknowledged the potential of this idea and the need to work with anyone open to change. Sifaan and Joyce also joined the meeting, with Sifaan expressing his interest in the topic. Rupert, a lecturer at UCL, introduced himself and shared his academic focus on student agency. Peter, a father of four unschoolers, was also present.

Education Transformation and Funding Discussion

In the meeting, Peter discussed his experiences with learning centers and his desire for a more significant transformation in the education system. He mentioned the need for better stories about what's happening now in education and the potential for dramatic changes. Richard then introduced the topic of funding for education revolution and the need for public money to support people working on this cause. Joyce, who has been friends with Don for over 30 years, introduced Don's work on self-determination theory and his contributions to the education transformation. Don then presented a technical approach to understanding global systemic school reform, emphasizing the importance of technical language over persuasive marketing. He also shared his experience with community organizing and the challenges of fundraising for education compared to environmental causes.

Challenges of Large-Scale Change Implementation

Don discussed the challenges of implementing large-scale change, using the examples of the Oregon Trail, medicine, and environmentalism. He highlighted the importance of internal coherence, where a concept or idea is well understood and can make accurate predictions, and external coherence, where the concept is widely accepted and implemented. Don emphasized that these changes often take time and are influenced by various factors, including societal norms and political decisions. He also noted that while some individuals may resist these changes, they ultimately become pervasive social facts.

Education Sector's Internal Coherence

Don discussed the lack of internal coherence in the education sector, highlighting the absence of a unified approach to education. He pointed out that various schools and organizations, such as Summerhill and Iowa Big, operate independently without recognizing each other's conferences. Don also emphasized the need for a stronger technical language to ensure effective political leadership. He proposed focusing on self-determination theory as a general consensus in education, but noted that embedding it in policy alone is not enough. Don suggested building a specific consensus with natural allies and using a tactical language to pave the way for political change. He also mentioned the importance of marketing and campaigning to support these efforts.

Language and Perception in Reality

Don discussed the concept of "back to basics 2.0" and the importance of understanding the larger picture of how systems change. He also addressed a question from John about the relationship between language and perception, explaining that while language can influence perception, it does not create reality. Don emphasized that there is a deeper reality beyond our perception and that language is part of our universe user interface.

Reframing Education for Deep Understanding

Don and Richard discussed the concept of internal coherence in the context of educational settings. They acknowledged that while there is a significant number of influential experts who have arrived at a consensus, they have not yet moved beyond the moral hunch side of things. They also recognized the challenge of achieving deep understanding of a concept to generalize its principles on a wide scale. Don suggested reframing the challenge of education to focus on the basics, rather than just academics. The group also discussed the need for stakeholders in education to recognize the need for change and be effective advocates for change.

Nurturing Autonomy in Education

Don discussed the need for a shift in the conversation about education, emphasizing the importance of nurturing children's autonomy and psychological well-being before focusing on academics. He criticized the work of a fellow, suggesting that he hasn't fully taken on the need for play-based schooling. Peter agreed with Don's points and suggested that creating a shared vision for the end state of education is crucial. He also mentioned the need for a counterpart in education to the Flexner Report and the study "A Nation at Risk." Peter proposed that the solutions to the problems identified in these reports should be different, focusing on self-direction and self-determination theory.

Internal Coherence in Political Demands

In the meeting, Don and Derry discussed the importance of internal coherence in political demands and the need for a report equivalent to the Flexner Report to influence public opinion. They also explored the concept of coherent political demand, emphasizing the need for both the championed and opposing sides to understand the issue. Don highlighted the importance of grounding in science and the need for experts to debate and refine their understanding. Derry suggested that framing the issue around well-being could be more effective than rights, and shared a study about medical students experiencing a significant reduction in clinical depression when given self-directed time.

Well-Being in Education Advocacy Discussion

In the meeting, Derry and Don discussed the importance of well-being in education, with Don emphasizing the need for precise language when discussing well-being. They also touched on the concept of advocacy and the need for internal coherence within the movement. Wendy shared her insights on Antonofsky's model of salutogenesis, highlighting its potential to link learning in school to maintaining health. The group also discussed the need for deep canvassing and relationship-building in advocacy efforts. The conversation ended with plans for future discussions and the announcement of an upcoming IDEC event in Belgium.

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