

Meeting Summary for RCE Making Change Stick

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Meeting summary for RCE Making Change Stick (05/20/2025)

Quick recap

The meeting focused on educational reform and the development of a unified movement around "Back to Basics 2.0," with discussions centered on the importance of student and teacher autonomy, well-being, and shared realities in education systems. Participants shared their experiences and challenges in implementing these principles, particularly regarding teacher autonomy and the need for effective communication across different educational models and paradigms. The group concluded by discussing strategies to expand collaboration and networking among participants, emphasizing the importance of collective action and global transformation in educational reform.

Next steps

- [Don to share resources on specific teacher behaviors that boost well-being in classrooms with Sophie.](#)
- [All participants to complete the survey on the Back to Basics 2.0 handout shared by Don.](#)
- [Richard to send out a follow-up request for volunteers to join a team focused on growing the "choir" of supporters.](#)
- [Selva to send Richard an email with suggestions for structuring the discussion time in the next session.](#)
- [Richard to structure the next session to include a dedicated 30-minute open discussion period at the end.](#)
- [All interested participants to schedule individual or small group conversations with Don using his shared Calendly link.](#)

Summary

Voices and Autonomy in Education

Richard and Wendy discussed the need for more opportunities for people to express their views and the challenge of managing discussions to ensure everyone's voice is heard. Bianca, who is currently teaching in a special school for gifted students in Germany, shared her experiences of feeling trapped by contradictory expectations and the lack of autonomy for both students and teachers, despite the

school's claim to be more flexible and student-centered.

Agentic Schools Manifesto Discussion

Wendy, chairing the meeting, welcomed participants and emphasized the importance of sharing thoughts and experiences to drive change in education systems. She encouraged attendees to use the chat feature for input and to keep their videos on to foster a sense of community. Wendy introduced Don, who would be discussing the Agentic Schools manifesto and Education 2.0, and she expressed hope that the session would lead to actionable outcomes rather than just discussions.

Back to Basics 2.0 Education Movement

Don discussed his book's concept of "Back to Basics 2.0," which aims to develop a coherent movement around education by focusing on the duty of care for children's well-being prior to their education. He introduced a handout and survey to gather feedback on the principles outlined in the book, emphasizing the need for internal coherence and professional consensus. Don challenged attendees to use the materials as conversation starters with colleagues and partners to identify areas of agreement and disagreement, with the ultimate goal of building a unified movement in education.

Understanding Shared Reality Concepts

Don discussed the concept of reality and how people perceive and understand it, using examples like the center of gravity and the self in psychology. He emphasized the importance of agreeing on a shared reality before moving forward with projects like Back to Basics 2.0. Don also touched on the need for a support system and careful edges around consensus, as well as the potential consequences of different realities.

Teacher Autonomy and Well-Being Discussion

Don discussed the importance of shifting the focus from individual child benefits to the broader well-being of all children, highlighting the need to address autonomy and moral consequences in education. Sophie shared her experience as a reception class teacher in the UK, emphasizing the challenges of promoting teacher autonomy and well-being due to fear and accountability issues. She also expressed concerns about early career teachers' lack of experience with autonomy. Roxanne, from Denmark, provided insights into their educational model, which emphasizes teacher autonomy and well-being, but noted challenges in defining and achieving these goals. Don suggested that "Back to Basics 2.0" could be a tool to initiate conversations about these issues.

Advocacy, Messaging, and Self-Determination

Don shared his Calendly page for scheduling advocacy talks, and the group discussed the importance of effective messaging in climate change and educational reform. Julie emphasized the urgency of addressing environmental and educational issues within the next five years, while Don cautioned against using timelines that could discourage action. The conversation explored the concept of agency in education and the challenges of implementing self-determination theory at a systemic level. Mike shared his experience with a democratic school in Berlin that incorporates self-determination theory, highlighting its success and the need to explain the concept to the broader community.

Simple Communication for Complex Ideas

Mike and Don discussed the importance of communicating complex ideas in simple terms, using the example of the germ theory's evolution as a model. They agreed on the need to create short, impactful stories to explain democratic schools and other concepts. Don emphasized the challenge of communicating across paradigm shifts and the importance of postdictable patterns. The conversation touched on the need for a new transformational consciousness that operates beyond paradigms, with a focus on aligning technology to support this evolutionary process.

Reforming Education for Autonomy

The group discussed the need to return to educational basics while focusing on learner autonomy and diversity, with Charlie emphasizing the importance of convincing educators, parents, and policymakers of these changes. They explored the potential of using human rights frameworks to support educational initiatives and highlighted the need for better collaboration with universities and institutions to share research and success stories. Don stressed the importance of building a robust movement grounded in self-determination theory, while also acknowledging the slow progress and challenges faced by the democratic education movement.

Agentic Education for Global Transformation

The group discussed the importance of an agentic education paradigm that supports collective action and global transformation, with John emphasizing the need for an infrastructure to sustain this educational approach. Don highlighted that people often resist change due to disruption of their stable states rather than fear of change itself, and stressed the importance of tuning into human needs as defined by self-determination theory. Wendy appreciated the diversity and unity underlying the educational initiatives, noting that strength comes from multiple approaches rather than a single blueprint. The discussion concluded with an agreement on the necessity of collective, collaborative, and co-creative transformation.

Choir Growth and Collaboration Strategies

The meeting focused on strategies to grow the choir and enhance collaboration among participants. Richard emphasized the importance of finding receptive individuals to expand the choir and requested volunteers to form a team to strategize on this. Sifaan highlighted the need for more sharing and support outside the choir to make it larger. Selva suggested extending the next meeting to include a longer discussion time, which Richard agreed to consider. The group discussed the value of networking and collaboration, with Selva planning to initiate discussions in the next meeting.

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Best,

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