no average student

understanding and fostering
an inclusive learning environment

Grow your understanding
of learners with Autism Spectrum
Disorder, mental illness and
learning disabilities.

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YOUR HOST

PRESENTER AMBER HARDING has been working with learners with developmental disabilities, dual diagnosis, and autism spectrum disorder for seven years and earned diplomas from Lambton College in Developmental Service Work and Seneca College in Behavioral Sciences.

She has applied her skills to teaching respite clients activities of daily living, job coaching, and job development for those facing barriers due to a developmental disability at Goodwill Career Centre, and teaching sports/co-curricular to those with physical and developmental barriers at Pathways Health Care Centre for Children.

She currently works as a Learning Specialist in the Community Integration through Co-operative Education Program at Lambton College, modifying and adapting learning for students with exceptionalities. In her time there she has facilitated the Inclusive Spaces Committee to increase opportunities for inclusion and decrease barriers at a post-secondary level. She has been awarded as an Emerging Leader for Accessibility and Inclusion from the City of Sarnia for these efforts.

STATEMENT OF RECOGNITION

While we meet today on a virtual platform, let's take a moment to recognize, respect and acknowledge the importance of the lands we occupy and from which we benefit.

Today, let's reaffirm our commitment and responsibility to improve relationships between nations -- and our own understanding of local Indigenous peoples and their cultures.

Let's remind ourselves that, wherever we are, we live on the ancestral and unceded territory of Inuit, Métis, and First Nations people.

ABOUT POP UP PD FOR LITERACY EDUCATORS

- free webinar series developed by Ontario's LBS Regional Networks & the Provincial Support Organizations for Literacy

- supports LBS practitioners with presentations on topics important to them

- English language webinars presented for LBS practitioners annually since 2015-2016

- all webinar presentations, recording links & transcripts here: Pop Up PD Resources for LBS Educators

- webinar topic ideas welcome at: e-channel@contactnorth.ca

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NO AVERAGE STUDENT

01 Introduction

02 Learn how teaching for average is a disadvantage.

03 Information on Specific Types of Learners

04 Universal Design for Learning

05 Resources

06 Questions

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A STUDY ON AVERAGE

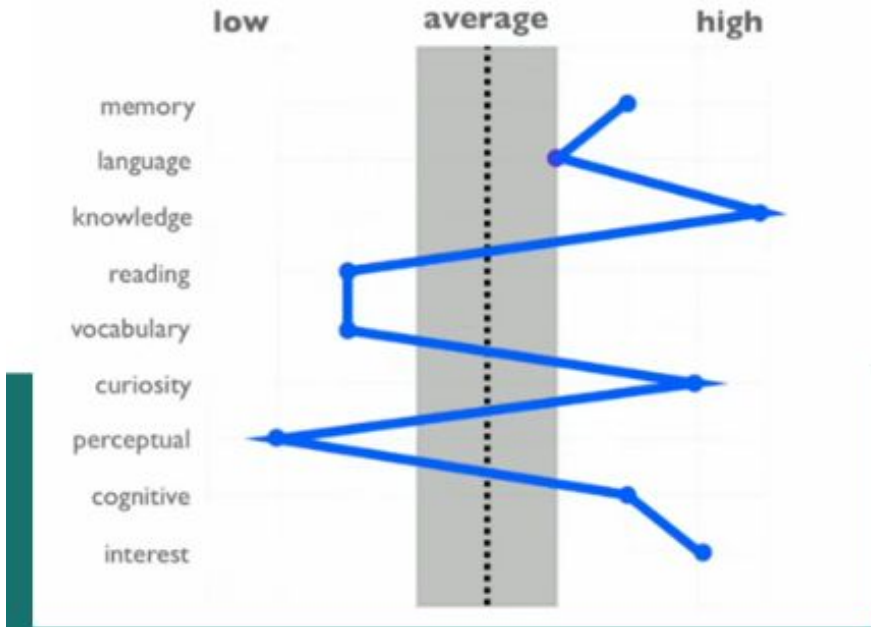In the 1950's fighter jet pilots weren't performing well and injuries were occuring. A researcher went and found 4000 pilots and took their measurements. The researcher took those measurements and standarized the plane. How many of those 4000 pilots fit in the plane?

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THE AVERAGE STUDENT SIMPLY DOES NOT EXIST

THE REALITY

Our teaching systems in North America are designed for the average student.

Average Student in North America
(Todd Rose, 2013)

THE PROBLEM

The problem.. the average student does not exsist. We have adopted a one size fits all system, standardized tests, assesments, method of teaching. This student is nothing but an illusion we have created.

LEARNING TODAY

WHAT WE KNOW

Learning Disabilities

In 2015 the Ministry of Education concluded 39.8% of school aged children were identified under the Communications/Learning Disability category in Canada. (Learning Disabilities Association of Ontario, February 2018.)

Mental Illness

The prevalence of having a mental health condition increased with age; 2.0% of children 1-4 years, 9.6% of children 5-11 years, and 15.0% of youth 12-17 years had a reported mental health condition. (Public Health Ontario, June 2024)

Developmental Disabilities

Canadians aged 15 years and older reported some type of disability, and 160,500 (0.6% of Canadian adults) were identified as having a developmental disability (Statistics Canada, December 2015)

IDENTIFYING WHERE TO BEGIN

Behaviour is a form of communication. S.E.A.T is an acronym used to determine what our students behaviour is communicating so we can adapt our teaching.

S Sensory
Why? To get sensory experience — it feels good.
How to help? Find an activity that provides the same sensory experience

E Escape
Why? To get out of unwanted activities or interactions
How to Help? Break the task down into a smaller step/ teach to ask for a break/ provide tons of praise for working hard

A Attention
Why? To get access to people or interactions
How to Help? Provide tons of praise for appropriate requests for your attention/teach to ask for attention appropriately

T Tangibile
Why? To get access to items/activities
How to Help? Offer an alternative, "you can't have this but you can do A or B." Or First-then, "first we do this, then you can have that!"

What is the function of behaviour?

You are running a small group activity. One of your students is making funny faces, and noises causing their peers to react and laugh.

Attention

The function of behaviour is **attention.**

Although each situation is individual suggestions for managing this situation would be, find a student not engaging in the laughter and attention seeking. Give that student positive reinforcement 'Name, I appreciate your attentiveness and respect! Thank you' and ignore unwanted behaviours. Reinforce each student that follows suit.

Find ways throughout teaching the initial attention-seeking student in the classroom when they are not seeking, this will create buy-in with you.

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What is the function of behaviour?

You are teaching your students to public speak. One of your students sits down on the ground and won't come inside the classroom when classtime is given for practicing for their presentations.

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Escape

The function of behaviour is escape.

Although each situation is individual, it is clear the student is uncomfortable with the task of speaking in front of people.

Break down the task into smaller more managable tasks and add them on top of eachother. Begin by sharing in the hallway to you, then one sentence or one slide to the classroom, then two an so on..

MODIFYING OUR TEACHING
FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES

Learning disabilities result from impairments in one or more processes related to perceiving, thinking, remembering or learning (Learning Disabilities Association of Canada, March 2015).

Delivering Instruction in Various Ways

When delivering instruction to your student offer the same direction in different mediums. Provide verbal instruction, provide assignment step-by-step breakdowns, model the assignment and provide examples where you can.

Provide Prompts for Students

Prompts provide a bridge to gaps for students. This can look like providing the first sentence for a student to continue writing from, verbally prompting the student, visuals to prompt the student, and checklists are all ways to aid your student.

Provide Different Options to Complete Task when Available

Offer different measures that suit the students needs when available. Maybe a test can turn into a podcast assignment, a written assignment into a presentation, a task demonstrated rather then read about.

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER IN THE CLASSROOM

Autism is a developmental disorder that impacts the way a person percieves and communicates information. No two students with ASD will be exactly alike.

Characteristics in the Classroom

Impaired Communication and Social Interactions
Student may have difficulties with comprehension, casual conversation skills, understanding the subtleties of language

Repetitive Behaviours
Student may engage in repetitive body movements, repeated questions or conversing on repetitive topics

Restrictive Interests Difficulty with Change
Student may have very specific or fixated interests

Sensory Sensitivies
Students may be extremely sensitive to certain aspects of the classroom environment

AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER IN THE CLASSROOM

Characteristics in the Classroom

Rules and Expectations
Student may have difficulties with rules and expectations in the classroom (The Hidden Curriculum)

Organizational Skills
Keeping their school supplies orderly, following directions, and understanding how the components of each assignment fit together.

The 'Hidden Curriculum' refers to the unwritten rules and codes of social interactions and expectations that most people naturally know or learn simply through their environment.

MODIFYING OUR TEACHING
FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurological and developmental disorder that affects how people interact with others, communicate, learn, and behave (National Institute of Mental Health, n.d)

Create a Buy-In

Tailor your lesson or phrasing to relate to something the individual has interest in. This creates a relationship between the student and what they are learning.

Create Structure and Be Clear

Make sure you are providing clear detailed instruction that can be broken down into smaller steps to limit anxiety. This is called chaining and is excellent for teaching someone to master a skill at their own pace.

Create an Environment that Limits Stimulating Factors

Classrooms and work environments can be overstimulating settngs. Avoid overcomplicated visuals, have sensory breaks, consider sensitivities.

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MODIFYING OUR TEACHING

FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER

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Priming

Priming is exposure to academic course material or tasks before instruction. Examples include explaining which concepts are most important before teaching a lesson, provide a list of potential questions the day before a class.

Visual Supports

Visual supports help students who struggle with verbal communication and can be a key to unlocking hidden knowledge within a student.

Positive Reinforcement

Use positive reinforcement that is meaningful to the student. These reinforcers may be vastly different from the 'typical' learner.

Students Facing Mental Health Barriers

Emotional Regulation

Emotional dysregulation is a symptom of several mental health conditions and tends to show in the classroom for students facing mental health barriers. Emotional dysregulation makes it difficult for the student to control emotions and their reactions to them. People with emotional dysregulation may have intense emotions that seem out of proportion to the situation.

This can present as:
- Irritablity
- Angry Outbursts
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Difficulty Resolving Conflict
- Difficulty controlling impulsive behaviours

Students Facing Mental Health Barriers

Framework for Teaching Emotional Regulation

- Teach students to name and be able to identify typical emotions.
- Teach them to connect the emotions with the events that "trigger" or elicit their reactions.
- Teach them to "replace" or change the behavior that comes from the emotions by learning new strategies and simple mindfulness techniques.

Focus on Progress NOT Perfection

UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

WHAT IS IT?

In a snowstorm are you going to shovel the staircase or the ramp first?

UDL is design of environments and instruction to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The ultimate goal of inclusive instruction is to remove unnecesarry barriers and improve access for all learners.
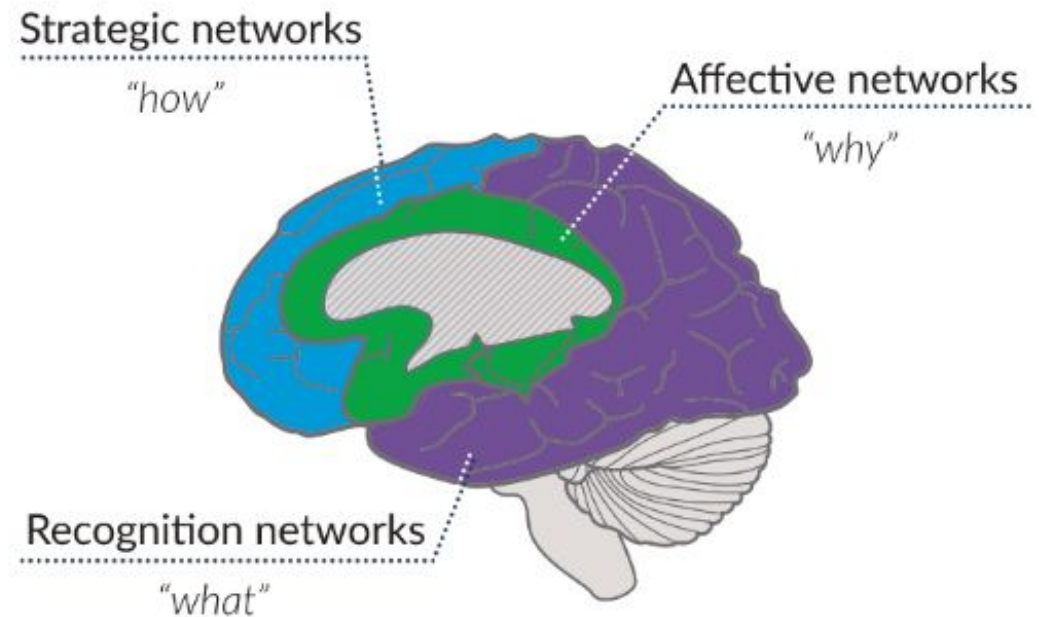
Strategic networks
"how"

Affective networks
"why"

Recognition networks
"what"

POP UP PD
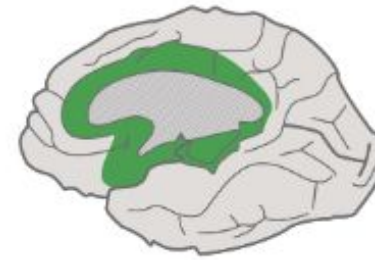free webinars for
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MULTIPLE MEANS OF ENGAGEMENT

HOW DO WE IMPLEMENT UDL?

Stimulate motivation and sustained enthusiasm for learning by promoting various ways of engaging with material.

Provide Multiple Means of

Engagement

Purposeful, motivated learners

Provide options for recruiting interest

Provide options for sustaining effort and persistance

Provide options for self regulation

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MULTIPLE MEANS OF REPRESENTATION

HOW DO WE IMPLEMENT UDL?

Present information and content in a variety of ways to support understanding by students with different learning styles/abilities.

Multiple Means of Representation

We must offer options for how new content is presented to learners.

- Provide options for perception
- Provide options for language and symbols
- Provide options for comprehension

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MULTIPLE MEANS OF ACTION/EXPRESSION

HOW DO WE IMPLEMENT UDL?

Offers options for students to demonstrate their learning in various ways (e.g. allow choice of assesment type).

Provide Multiple Means of
Action & Expression
Strategic, goal-directed learners

Provide options for physical action

Provide options for expression and communication

Provide options for executive functions

RESOURCES

UDL COURSE ASSESMENT TOOL

https://web.mohawkcollege.ca/centre-teaching-learning/apps/UDL/courseassessment/

https://www.theinclusiveclass.com/

THE INCLUSIVE CLASS BLOG

UDL LIBRARY OF RESOURCES

https://hudl.jhu.edu/resource-library/

https://www.respiteservices.com/app/media/4767

FUNCTIONS OF BEHAVIOUR RESOURCE SHEET

OPEN ACCESS

https://www.openaccess-ca.org/at-resource-flipkit

https://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/hiat-tech/udl/udl-tool-finder

UDL TOOL FINDER

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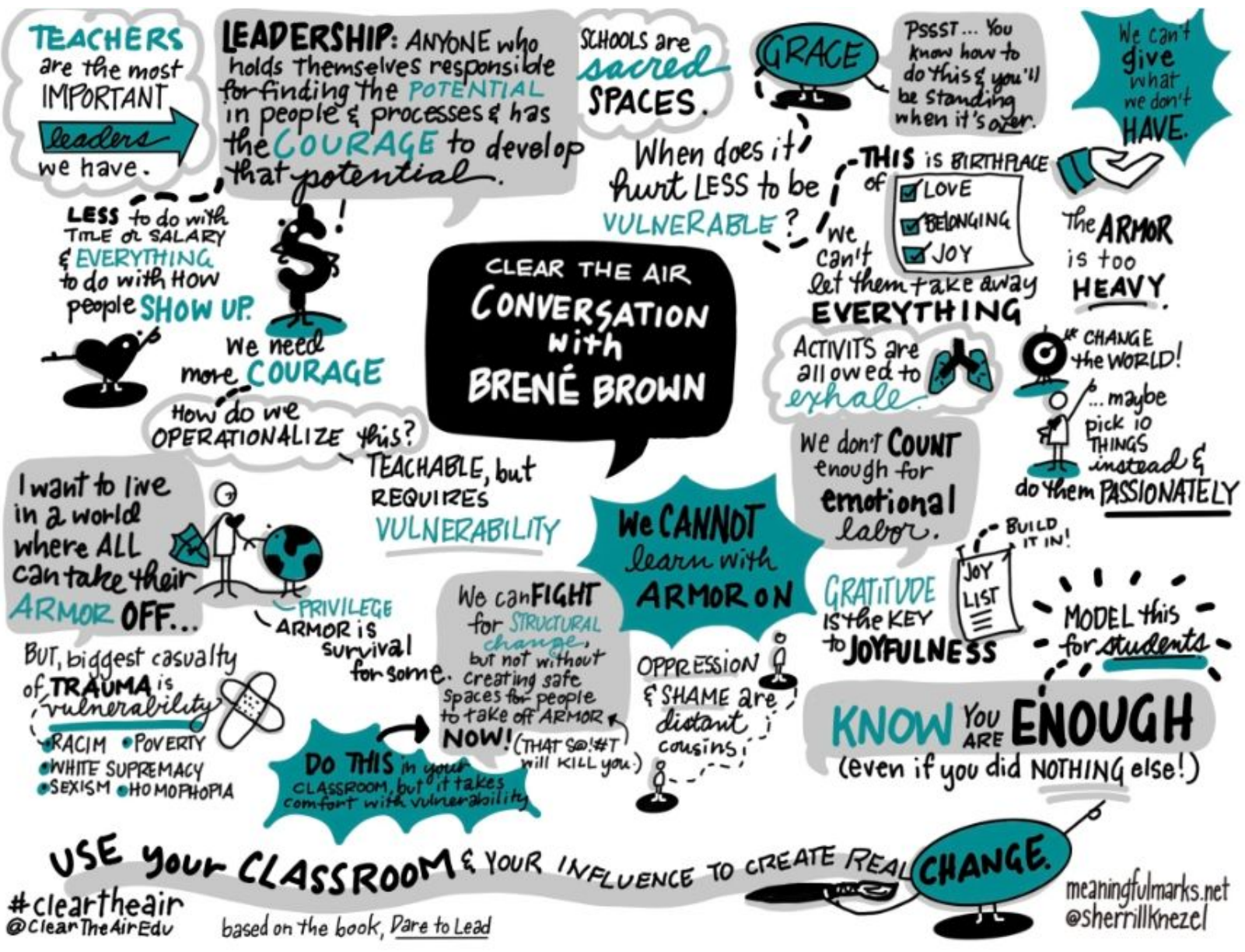
THANK YOU

● QUESTIONS

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Webinar resources: Pop Up PD Resources for LBS Educators

Webinar evaluation: https://tinyurl.com/4sd868dn

THANK
YOU

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