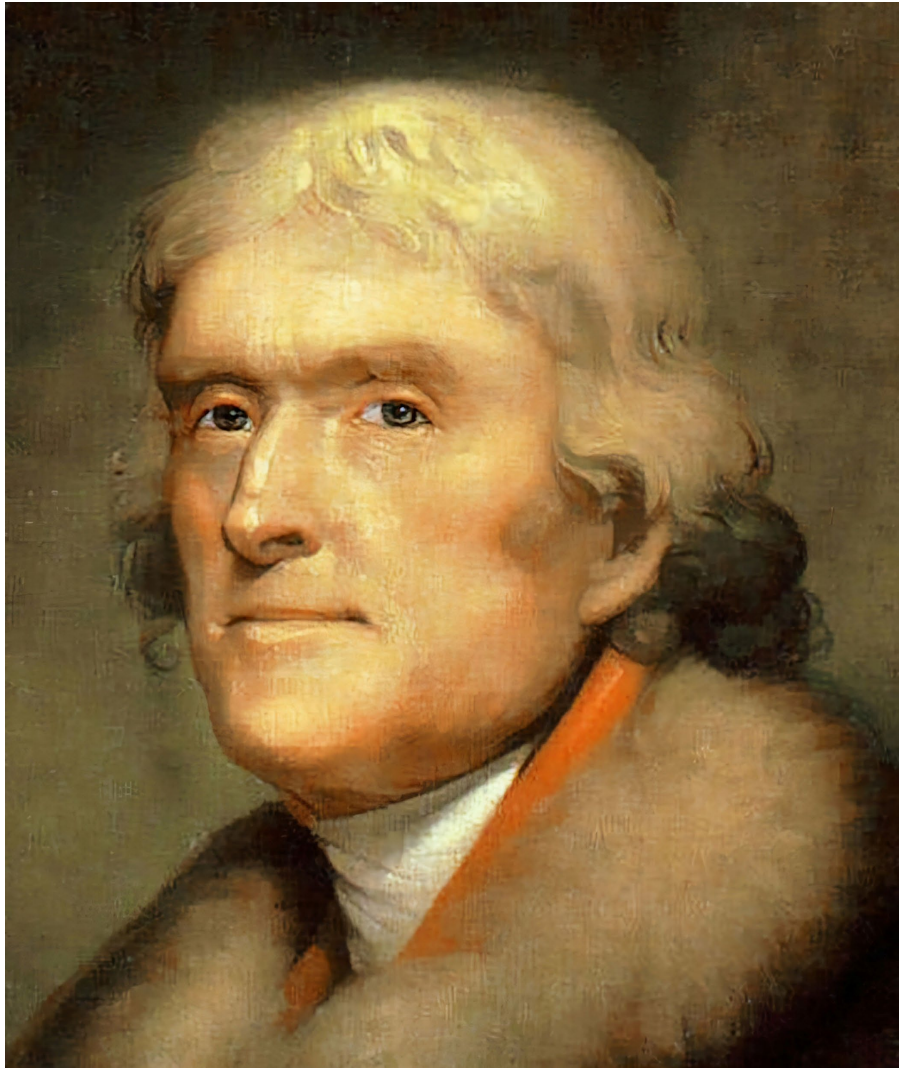


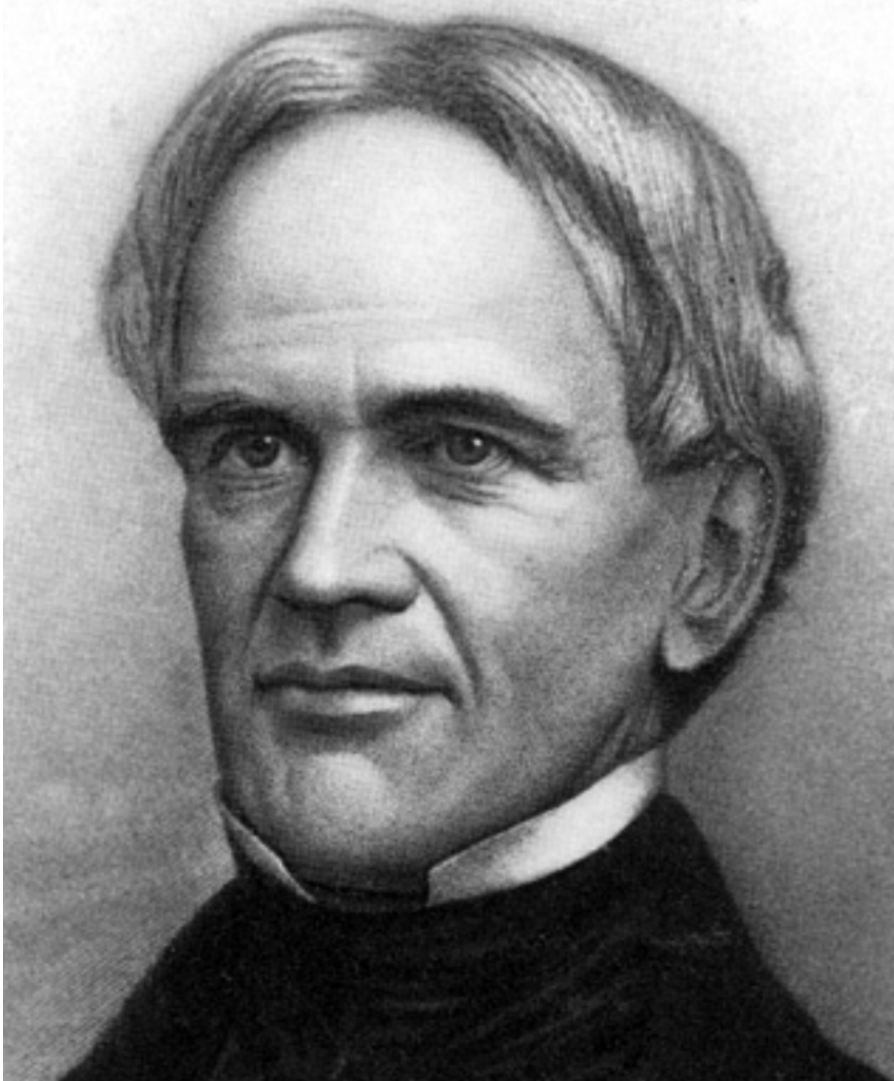
History of Western Education: How it Lost its Mind, and How the Right Brain Hemisphere Can Save it

Jane Barrash, Executive Director, Continuum Center





1) **1814** Thomas Jefferson proposed that every American child go to school, for only three years, but the proposal was revolutionary.



2) **1843** Horace Mann visited Prussia and liked their model of education, designed to mold the populace into good order-following soldiers, after the defeat to Napoleon revealed shortcomings not only in tactics but in the people's readiness and loyalty.

Mann took the ideas back home, convinced they were the answer to creating good, orderly citizens.

3) American education began to take on the character of factory assembly.

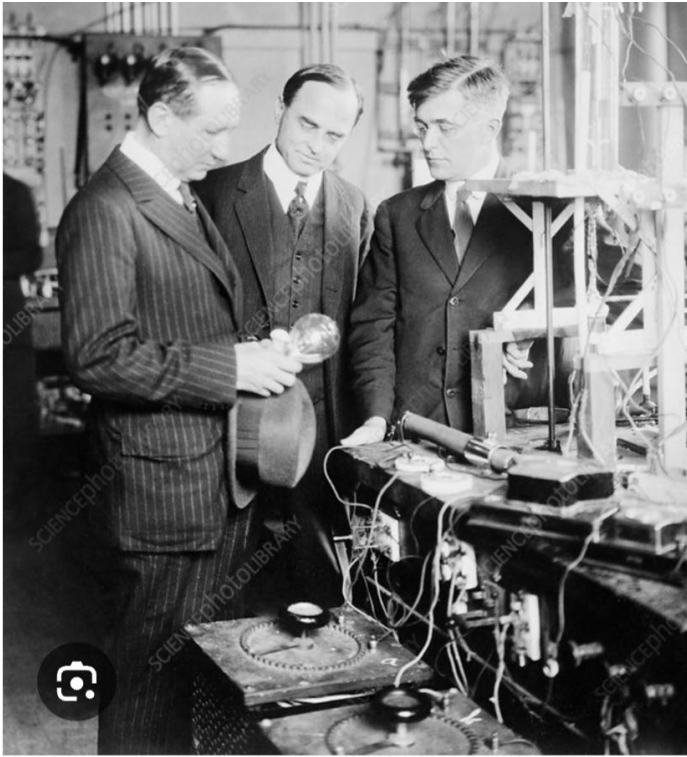
Children were sorted by age, taught the same subjects in the same ways, and evaluated based on standardized assessments.



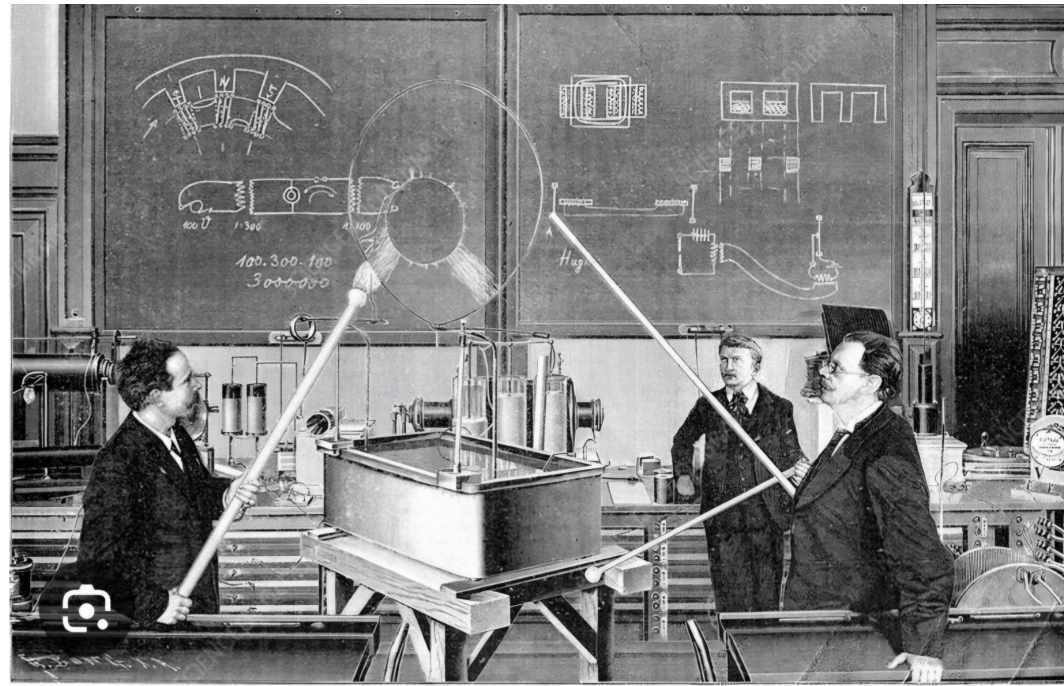
4) From the book *The Revolution in Education* (1958) by Norman Adler and Milton Mayer:

A fully developed industrial democracy was something new in human history.

"Never before have the men who thought about education had to think about educating a whole people."



General Electric research, 1900s -

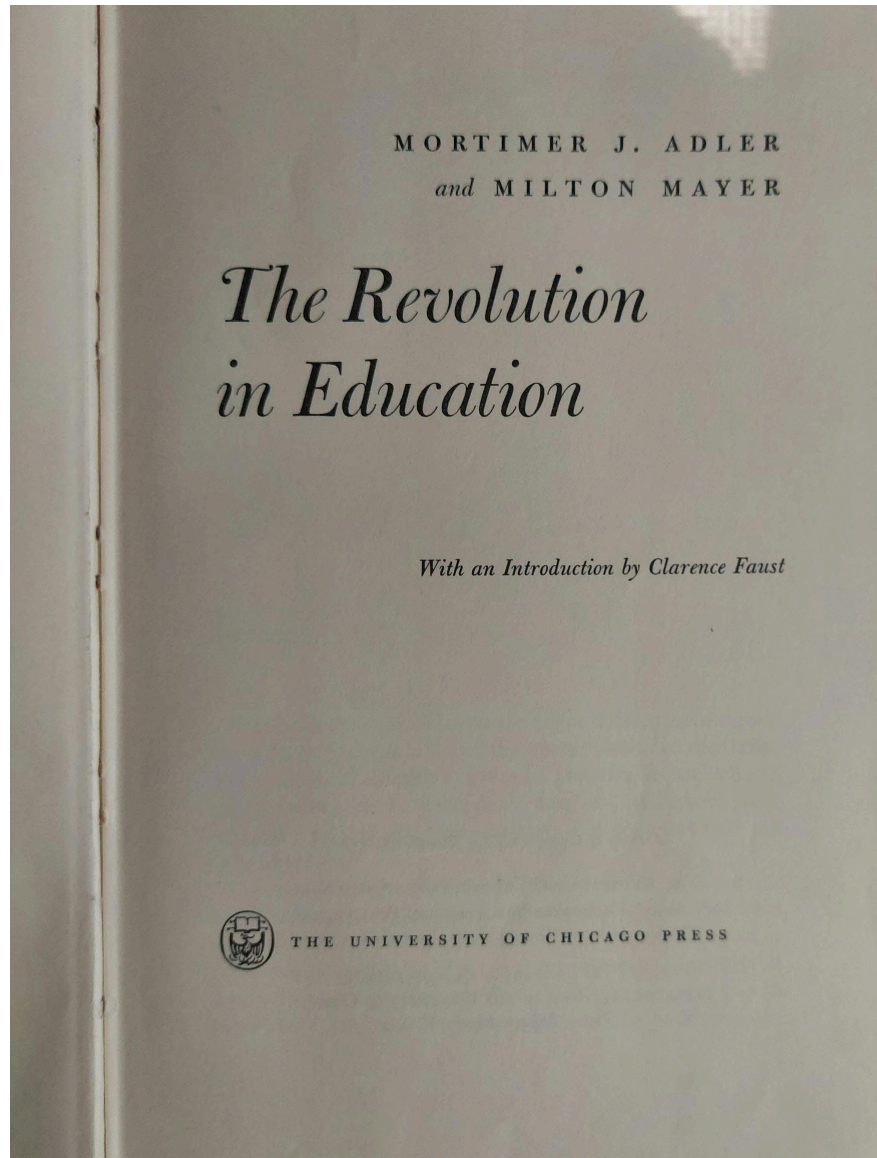


Slaby's electrotechnical laboratory, 1900 - Stock Image - ...

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5) *Con't* The forces producing political democracy and industrial production also produced the secularization of society and **"what might be called its scientization"**.

6) "Scientization" was no doubt assumed to be a good thing, not something destined to sabotage the publicly stated chief aim of education, harkening back to one-room, and real community, schools.



7) According to Adler and Mayer, first goal is the cultivation of the individual's capacity for mental growth and moral development.

It concerns itself with the training of the body and the maturation of emotions.

A very different aim from factory-like conformity.

8) The first state to adopt compulsory education at public expense was Massachusetts in **1852** and Jefferson's own Virginia did not require attendance until **1908**.

9) Unfortunately, in education the takeover of subject matter had begun, by a philosophy that would eventually turn schools into training centers of rote/robotic learning, creating the opposite of physical and emotional wellbeing.



10) Science and industry drove progress and set a direction for education. Industry pushed standardization, and "scientization" promoted a particular philosophy of science: Newtonian, mechanistic materialist, reductionist philosophy which says this is a universe of physical forces and physical matter...to be understood only through ongoing formal academic study.



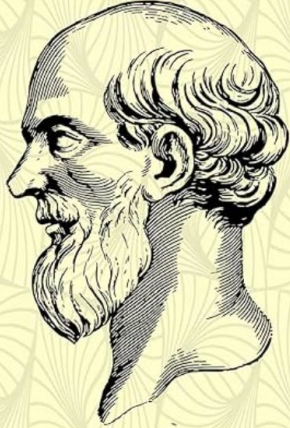
11) In that model, you sit in rows, follow directions, learn from the authorities. Physical problems are assumed to have physical causes and physical cures. Modern science will look for the treatments if not cures, industry will patent them, and education will assure those industry wheels keep turning.



12) The physicalist, Newtonian mechanistic, materialist science was shaping a new industry of biomedical healthcare, tied to business interests, particularly those of John D Rockefeller, president of Standard Oil, who realized petroleum is used to make pills.

13) The biomedical, Big Pharma model was actively launching drugs while also launching attacks on its competition: natural medicine.

THE FLEXNER REPORT



MEDICAL EDUCATION

**IN THE UNITED STATES
AND CANADA**



ABRAHAM FLEXNER

14) **1910**

Abraham Flexner delivered a proclamation that anything outside the biomedical model (like chiropractic, herbs, midwifery, acupuncture, etc.), was "quackery".

15) **Mid-1920s** John Rockefeller, president of Standard Oil, joined with IG Farben (parent to Bayer) to create the first cartel: pharmaceuticals.

IG Farben had Auschwitz as part of its campus.



16) Rockefeller then started offering huge grants to universities around the US. Once they accepted, he changed their medical school curriculum. No more natural medicine. Only biomedical (ie pharmacological) models would be taught.



17) Rockefeller, through his private foundation, spread his money and influence through all of education. He was quoted as saying:

"I don't want a national education system that creates thinkers, I want a system that creates workers."



18) **1950s** Rockefeller and other captains of industry saw great benefit from rote/robotic instruction without concern for natural intelligence, emotional development, or authentic critical thinking.

19) **1953**, Representative Carroll Reece (TN) received authority of Congress to establish a committee to investigate the power and influence of tax-exempt foundations.

Due to mounting political pressure from multiple sources high within the government itself, Reese was forced to terminate the committee's work after two years.

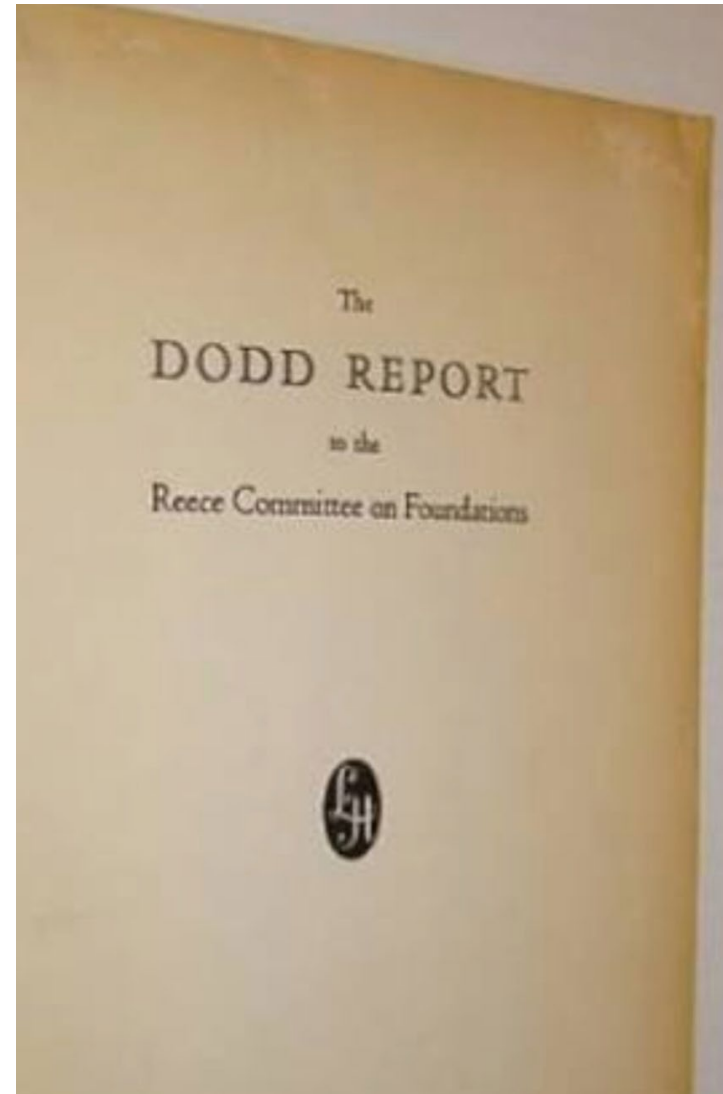


20) Norman Dodd, the committee's director of research testified:

"Through financial support, private foundations seem to have provided this country with what is tantamount to a national system of education under tight control of organizations and persons little known to the American public."



21) *Con't* "The curriculum in this tightly controlled scheme of education is designed to indoctrinate the American student from matriculation to the consummation of his education."



22) What was some of the popular messaging back in the '50s and '60s?

"Curiosity killed the cat."

(What kind of sick conditioning is that?)

"*Women's* intuition".

(In other words, not to be taken seriously.)

"It's just your imagination".

(As if it's worthless.)

Einstein said imagination is more important than knowledge.

23) **New Scientist May 2025/Your imagination holds the power to make you healthier and happier**

"Imagination might feel like the trivial stuff of childhood fairy tales and senseless daydreams, [but] is something neurologists and neuroscientists now understand...isn't to be underestimated."





24) Are Kids Losing the Magic of Imagination? Ron Beghetto, education psychologist, U of Oregon: “It’s not that creativity can disappear. But it can be silenced. Children urgently need more free time to spark their imaginations, cultivate a sense of wonder, and identify their interests and purposes.”

25) A 2010 study of 300,000 creativity tests dating to the 1970s found that since 1990 children have become less able to produce unique and unusual ideas, are less humorous, less imaginative, and less able to elaborate on ideas. **Live Science Aug 2011/Kyung Hee Kim, College of William and Mary**

26) "Do as you're told".

Schools teach rules and facts to remember.

Draw and stay inside the lines.

Imagination isn't real.

Daydreaming is a waste of time.

It's as if education was designed to create rule-following,
other-directed, workers not thinkers.

Oh wait...it was. Horace Mann, John Rockefeller, No Child
Left Behind...

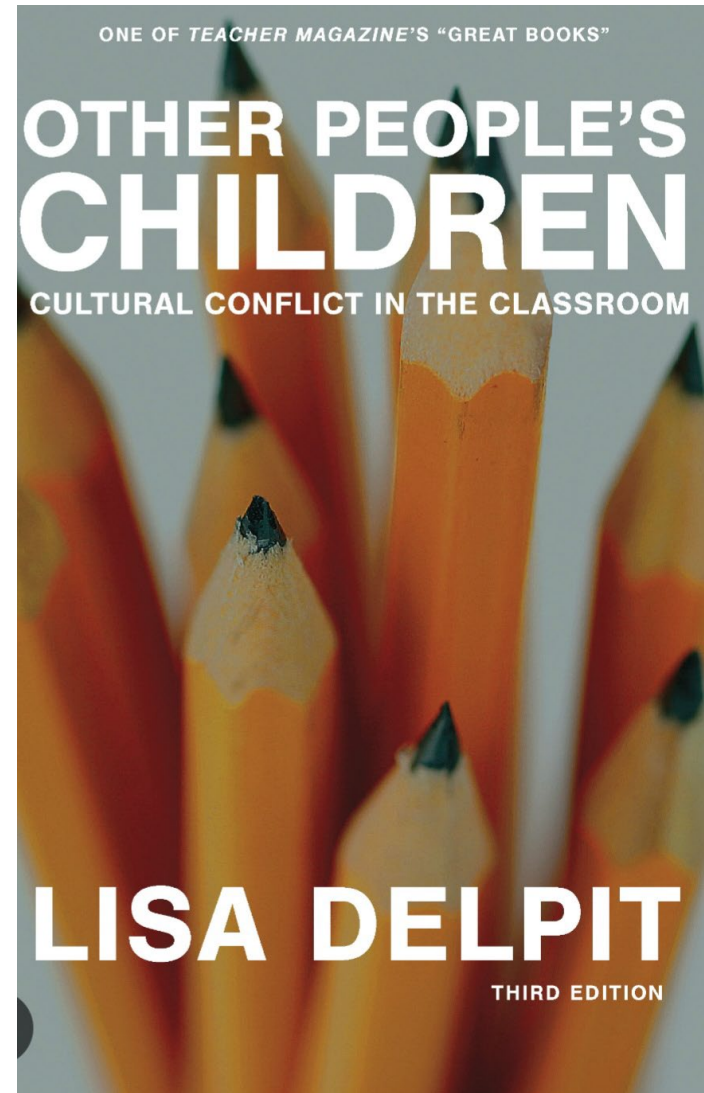
27) That's one reason why schools are failing and churning out so many anxious, depressed, angry, checked-out, addicted, neurotic, and suicidal students.

Issues far more common than anyone should think is acceptable, and for decades before Covid.



28) Lisa Delpit, education executive and author: "When we strip away a focus on developing the humanity of our children, we are left with programmed mechanistic strategies designed to achieve the programmed goal of raising test scores. [T]eachers and students are treated as non thinking objects to be manipulated and managed."

29) The meaningless curricula fails not just students of color but, in her book, *Other People's Children* (which came out shortly after Columbine), she said you're going to see more white teenage assassins. (Some wait until a little older.)



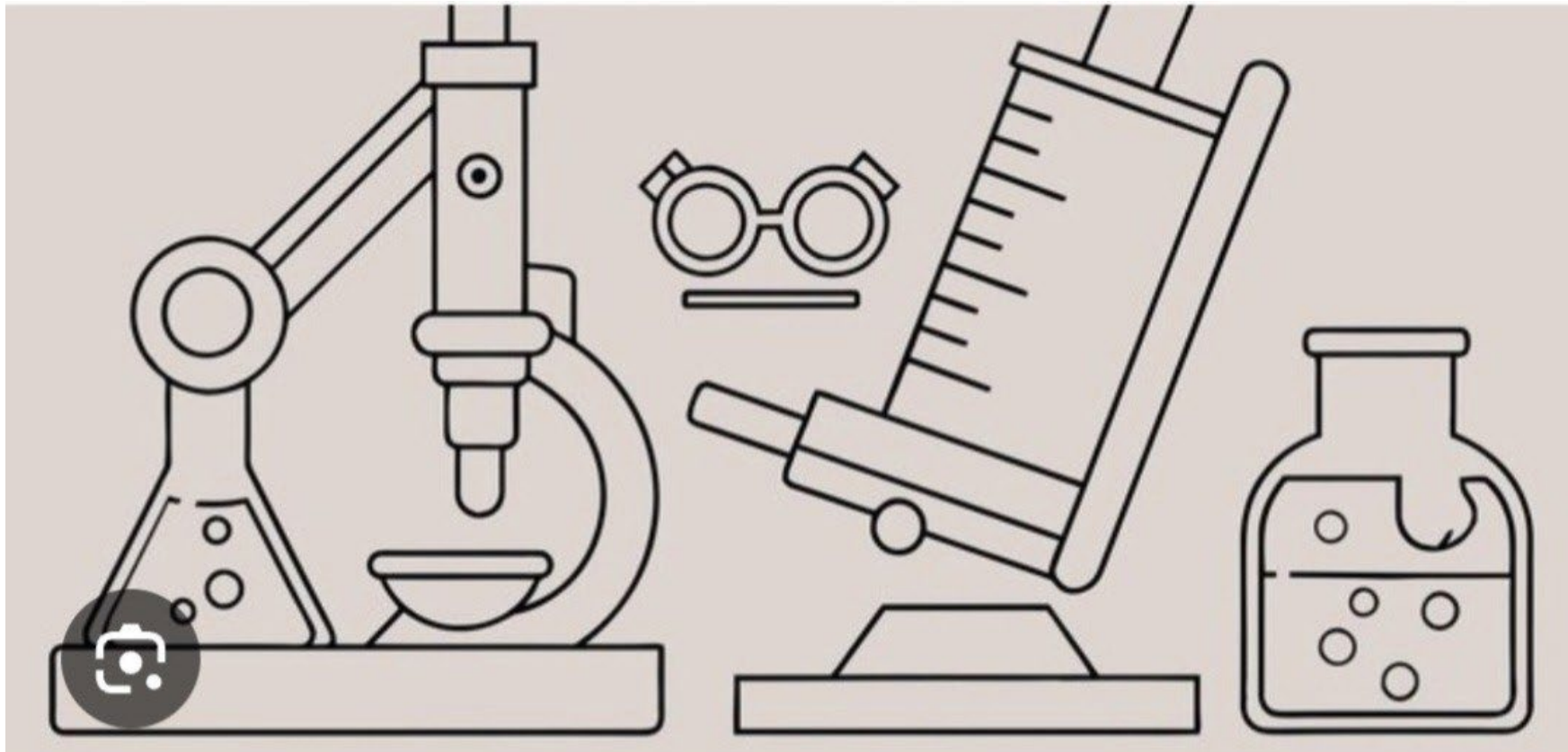
30) We are not robots. But our education system focuses on only a narrow band of intelligence, left-brain heavy, math, science, and verbal skills: intellect. The very kind of mental processes that are replicated by machines.



31) Imagination is a *human* intelligence, like intuition and dreams, specialties of the right hemisphere. But “modern science” tells us none of that is real, not worth spending school time on any of it.

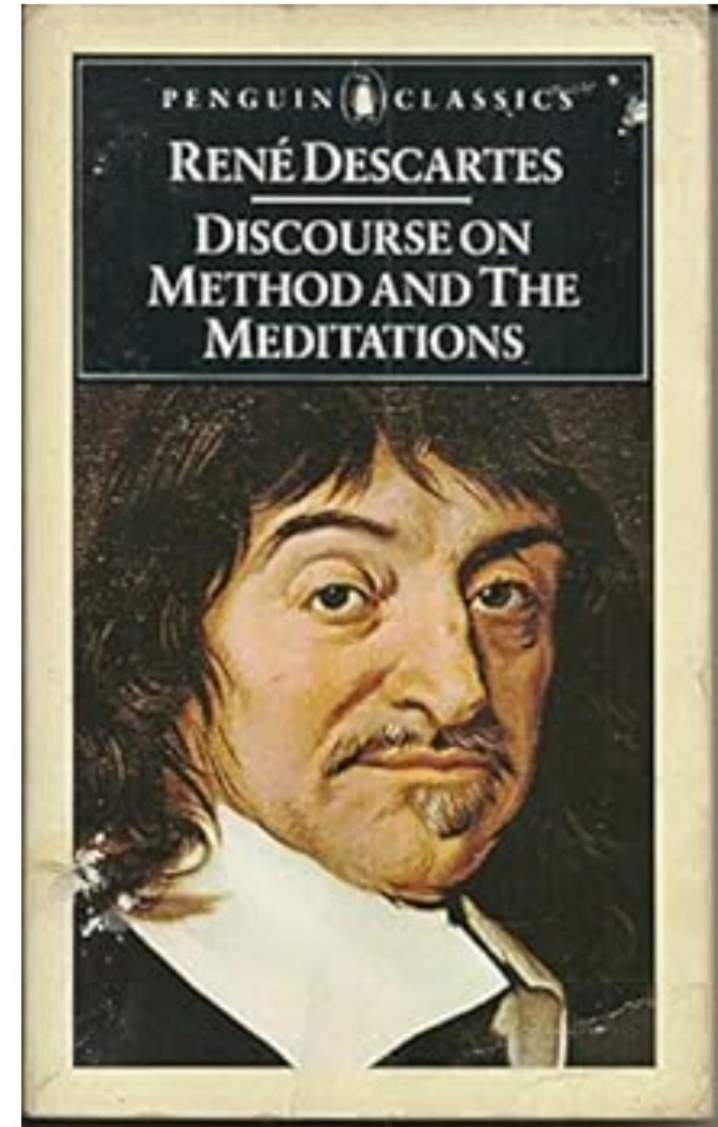


32) We are told that objective science experiments and the scientific method is how important information is learned, not from some subjective, unmeasurable "inner world".



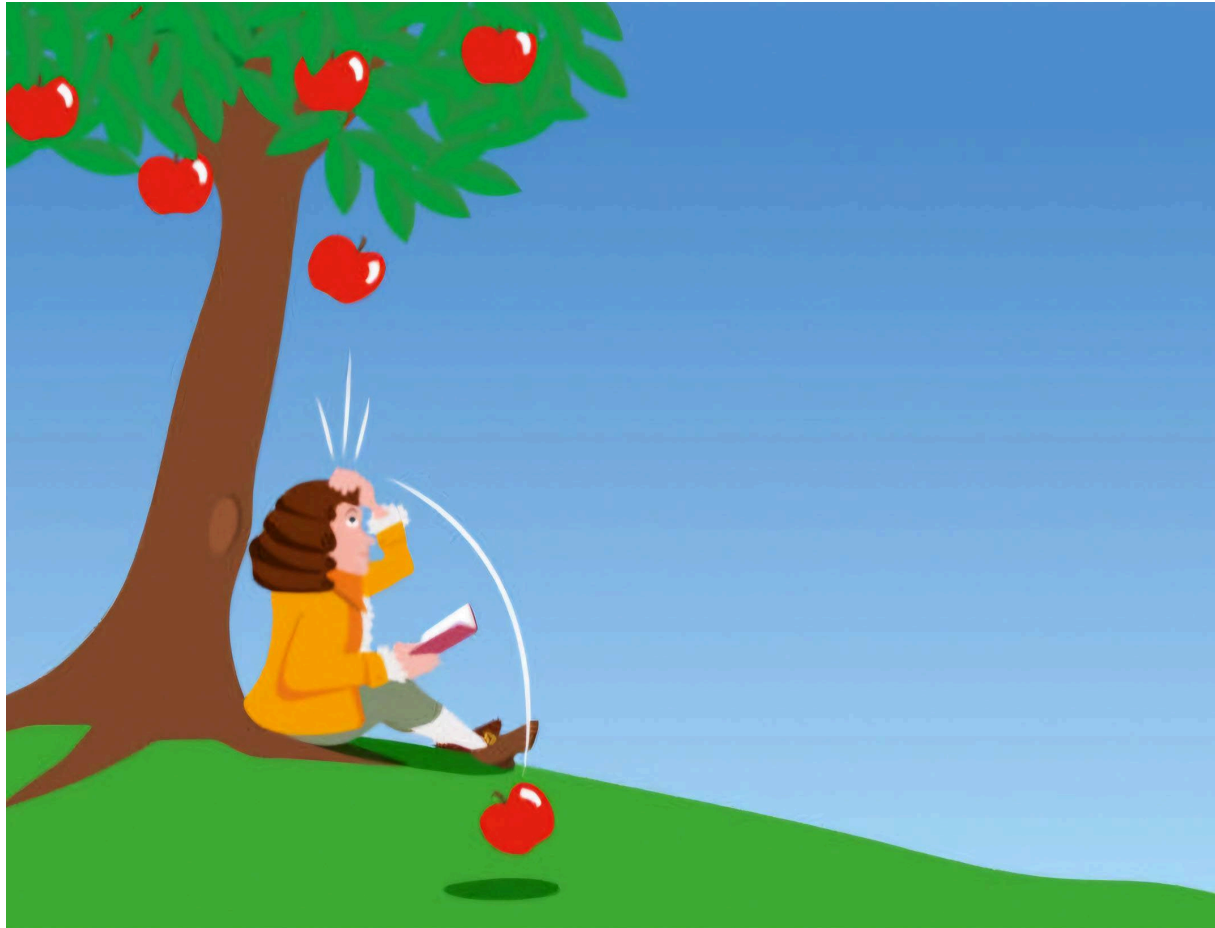
33) Renee Descartes came up with the Scientific Method (mid 1600s) which says truth can only be known through publicly observing, physically measuring, and repeatedly testing.

If something can't be physically measured, publicly observed, or repeatedly tested, it can't be "real", or provide any valuable information to understand reality.



34) Ironically, Rene Descartes got his idea for the scientific method from three dreams, then insists dreams aren't real (because you can't publicly observe, physically measure and repeatedly test them)...

...and they can't possibly provide any valid information.



36) The 500-year-old Newtonian, Cartesian, mechanistic, materialist, reductionist philosophy (strangely considered "modern") insists non-material dimensions do not exist.

37) Quantum physics demonstrated that other dimensions do exist, but education has not caught up with the implications. That is part of the failure.

38) Teens' Transcendent Thinking Spurs Brain Growth - Neuroscience News / March 2024

Transcendent = beyond the physical box.

Doesn't it make sense that the two hemispheres represent complementary faculties to best navigate the physical box by also drawing from realms outside of it?

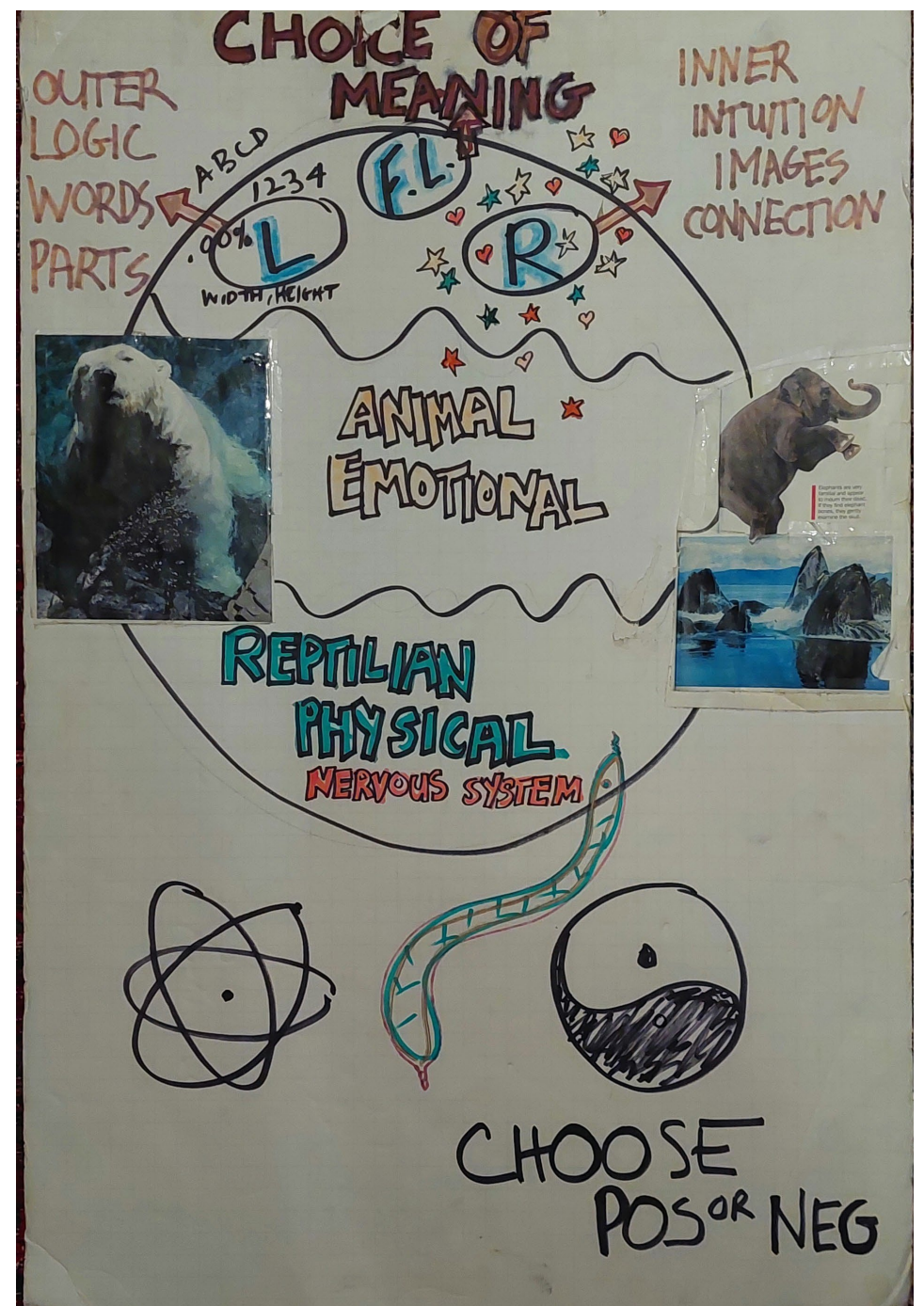
39) Our eyes see about .003% of the light spectrum, yet we think our 5 physical senses can perceive the whole of reality?

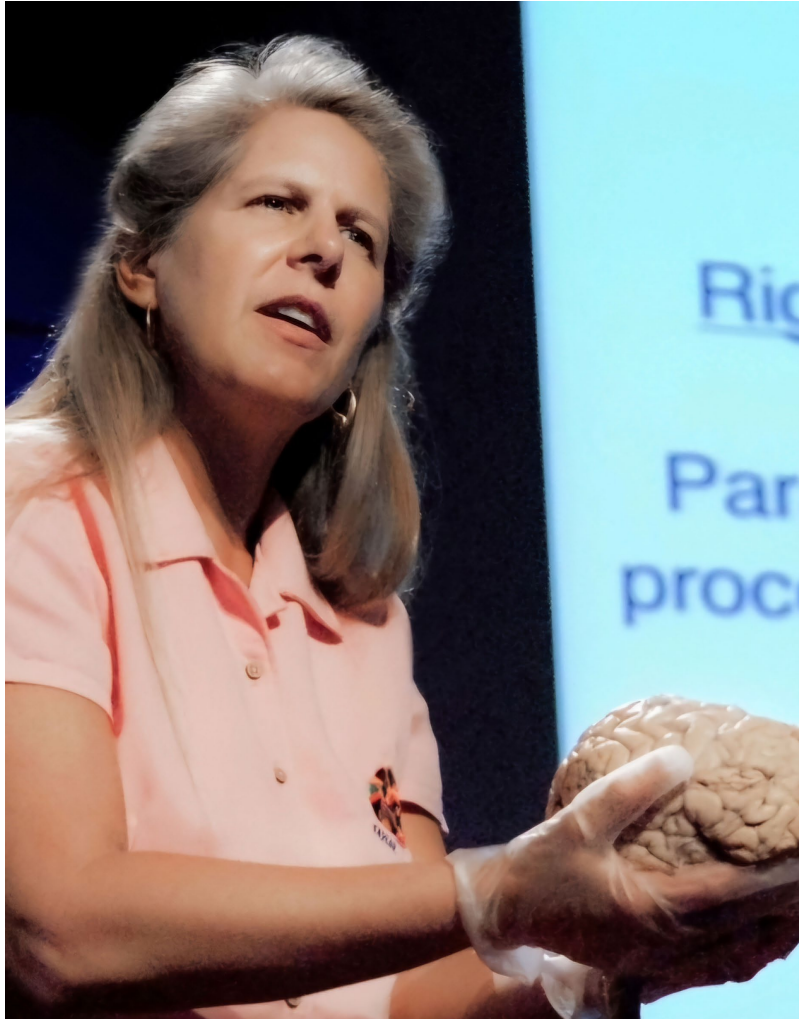


40) Not drawn with anatomical accuracy, but a helpful descriptive and developmental illustration.

Our one brain is like 3-in-1:

- 1st: reptilian brain (nervous system)
- 2nd: mammalian/animal (emotional) brain
- 3rd to emerge: neocortex (high human brain), with left and right hemispheres and frontal lobe





41) Neuroscientist Jill Bolte Taylor had a stroke that shut down her left hemisphere:

"For 8 years I did not exist as a solid, I existed as a fluid entity in a fluid environment. When I lost that defined boundary of my body, I became one with all that is, marvelous in the absence of the distraction of language that labels everything."

42) "Our academic system rewards extreme left hemisphere gifts and behaviors. If you look at levels of aggression in society, it tells what is going on in the left hemisphere.

It gets stressed out. It's on a timetable. Everything is either right or wrong. It's about hierarchy...where I sit on the ladder and fit into my little box..."

- Jill Bolte Taylor

43) Education focuses on what AI can replace. The STEM curriculum is mechanistic, standardized, teach-to-the test, meaningless-to-many content, not at all about developing creativity and *human* intelligence.

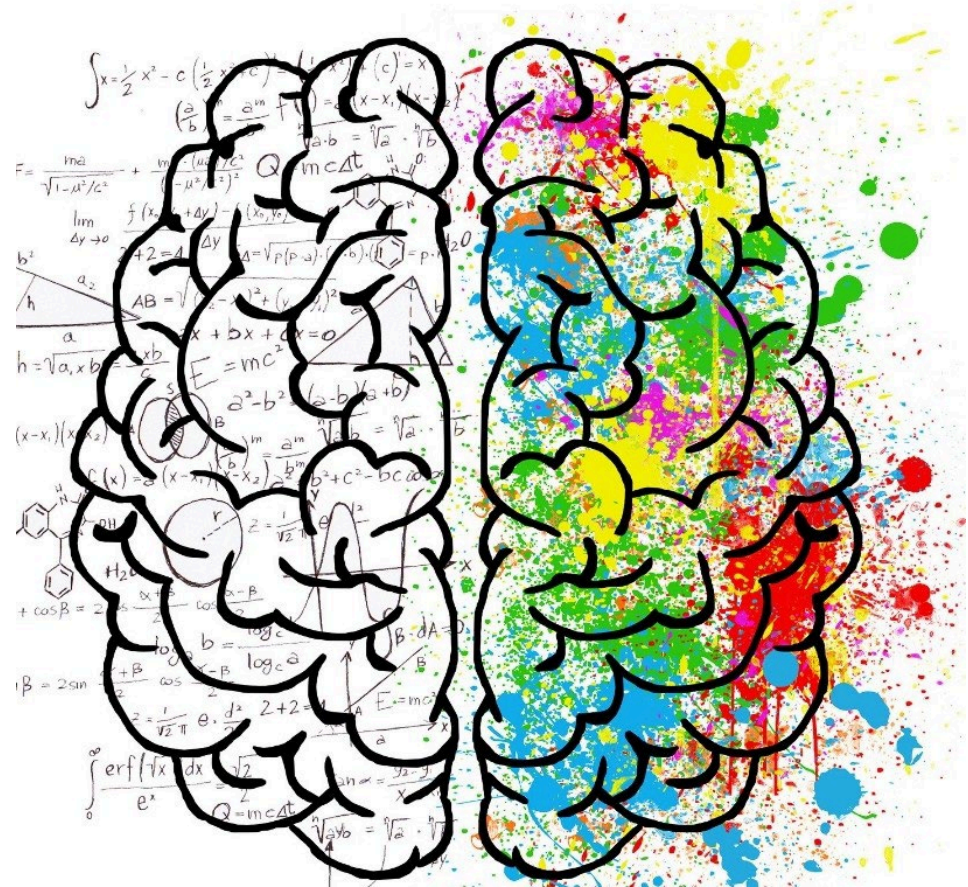
This is what you get when the focus of education is *artificial* intelligence.



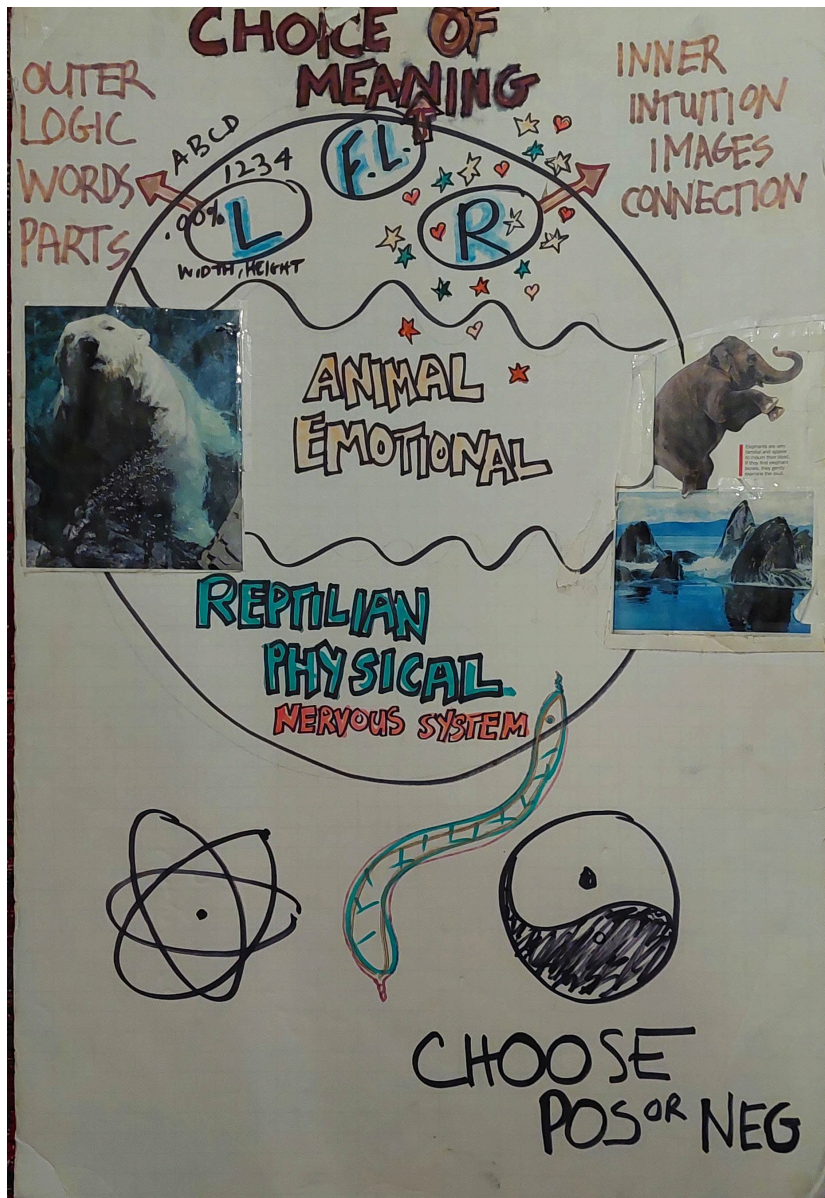
44) The European intellectual mindset is the left-brain toolkit for the physical boxes of life. The R hemisphere is specialized for out-of-the-box, imaginative, intuitive, introspective, non-linear, transcend-the-box perception....seeing big picture connections as opposed to categorizing, labeling, and analyzing separate parts.

45) The left works with physical measurement and constraints, the right transcends them. The left is probabilities the right is possibilities.

We need both.



46) For anyone who thinks it's "debunked" that many if not most people have a left or right brain *dominance* (I never claim anyone is *exclusively* one *or* the other), there is plenty of compelling evidence at www.continuumcenter.net back pages research compilations.

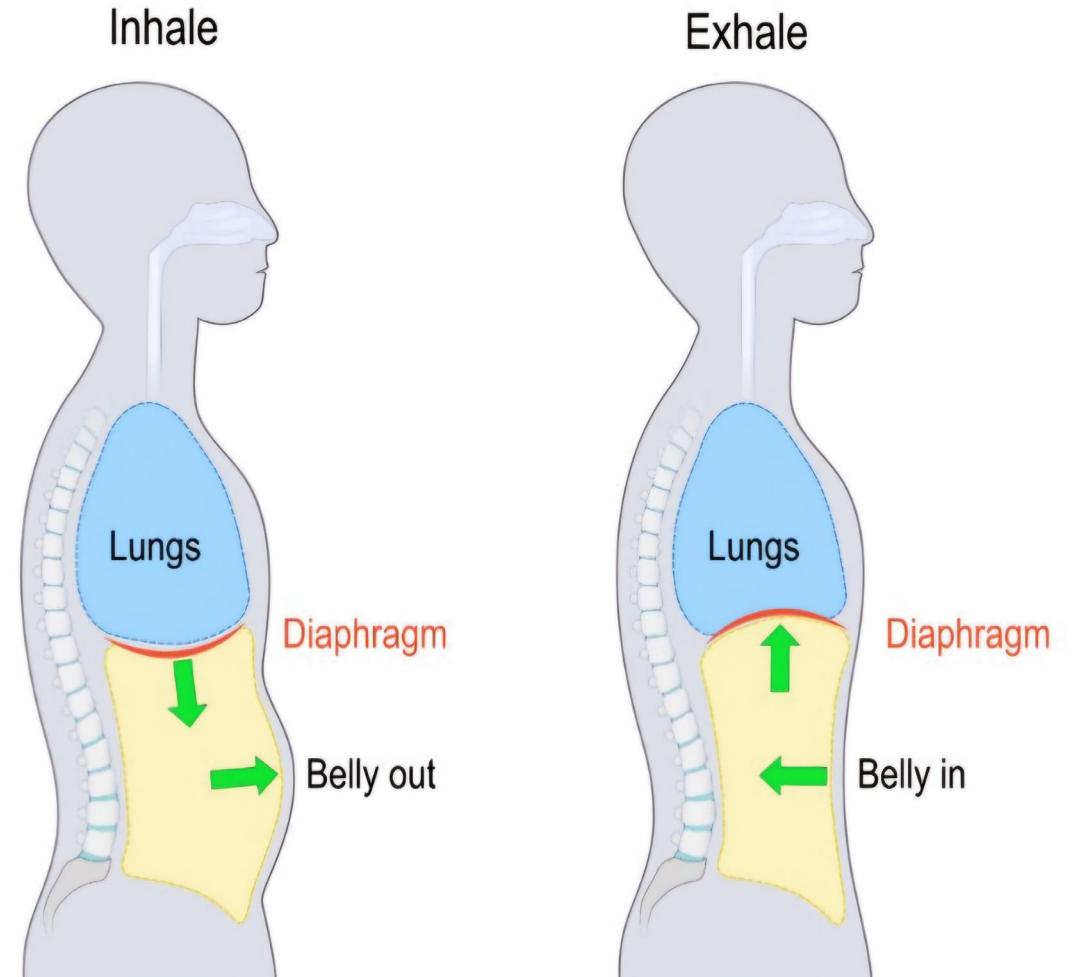


47) There's more to the brain, but in our model, these regions need more school time: **1) the reptilian brain (nervous system), 2) mammalian, animal, emotional brain (limbic system) and, of the neocortex, the 3) right hemisphere and 4) frontal lobe.** The left hemisphere needs less.

48) **A dysregulated nervous system pumps adrenaline, the heart beats fast, impossible to sit still or focus.** It loops into anxiety, hijacking brain wiring, further floods the brain with stress chemicals feeding emotions of fear or overwhelm, which become negative or distracted and flawed thinking.



49) There are non-pharma strategies to strengthen one's nervous system including diaphragmatic (belly) breathing.



50) Shallow chest breathing causes the brain to secrete stress chemicals and speed up heart rate. If your heart is racing your mind is racing...hard to sit still or concentrate. Hard to be calm, If not belly breathing.



51) Mental imagery also influences mood and physiology.

Inner resources have been ignored.

"The chief aim of education should be to make our nervous system our ally not enemy." William James, MD, author

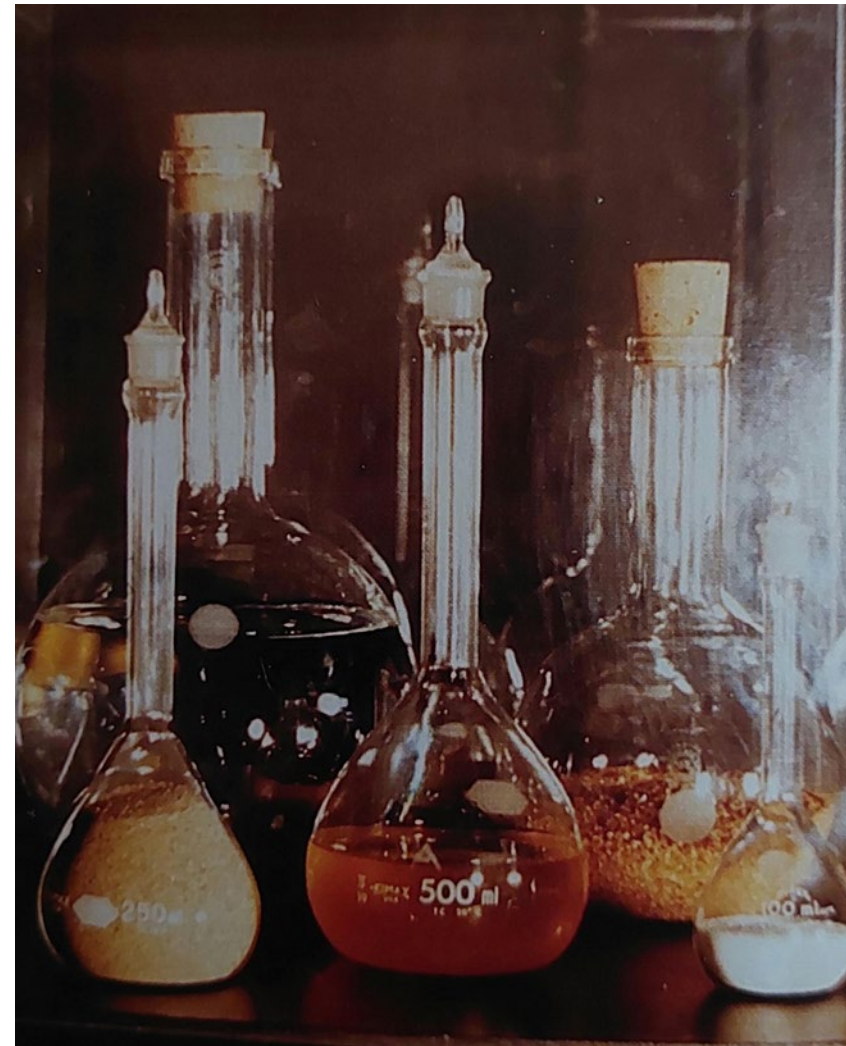


52) Then there is the task of developing the emotional brain that we share with mammals and animals...

Remember, before conformity and chemicals became the model, developing the body and emotions was the #1 goal?

53) The Newtonian, Cartesian, mechanistic, materialist operating assumptions reduce everything to physical components, claiming emotions are nothing more than chemicals.

So, if you have a problem with your thoughts or your emotions "treat" it or "manage" it with chemicals.



54) Many students struggle with drama at home or marginalization at school. Despite policies of trauma informed care and the need to nurture different styles of thinking there is a powerful push to label and medicate rather than understand or effectively address emotional pain/trauma, alienation, and nervous system dysregulation.

With big Big Pharma profits, and \$ incentives to schools/families.

55) That's led to a decades-growing epidemic of labels: ADD, ADHD, autistic, violent, defiant-oppositional etc.

It's bankrupting education and fueling exponential growth in adolescent, teen, and adult psychiatric medication and hospitalization...does that indicate good "Science" or healthy strategy?



Childhood Adversity May Damage The Brain's White Matter, Study Finds

 ScienceAlert · 1d




1998 - 2010 British Journal of Psychiatry found an avg **6.8% increase** in mental health drug prescriptions **per year**.

1998 - 2010 Cambridge University Press study: antidepressant prescriptions increased an avg **10% per year**.

2008-2019 People with any mental illness in the past year increased from 17.7%/39.8M to 20.6%/51.5M, approx **1M increase per year**.

Jan 2024 10% of children ages 3 to 17 had current diagnosed anxiety. 4% of ages 3 to 17 had current diagnosed depression... **Start them on meds even younger?**

Mid-'80s



Board of Medical Examiners. "We're concerned we may be creating a bunch of little addicts."

Attributed to everything from brain damage to low levels of sugar in the blood, hyperactivity is notoriously easy to misdiagnose. While Ritalin can be tremendously helpful for youngsters with ADD, it can have dangerous side effects, including insomnia, nervousness, weight loss and nausea. Experts believe an increasing number of non-ADD children around the country are receiving the drug—at great risk. "If you medicate a normal child who is displaying reckless behavior or has a drop in grades, you might get them to be more compliant, but you've overlooked the real cause," says California social worker Brian Conlan, who estimates that 10 percent of the children in his practice were misdiagnosed. "It's like putting someone on Valium to cope with a bad marriage."

In Georgia, parents and teachers hold each other accountable for excessive use of the drug. LaVarne Parker, who founded a parents' advocacy group, claims her son Melvin's fifth-grade teacher "harassed" her until she agreed to bring him to a doctor; a neurologist put the boy, then 10 years old, on Ritalin by day and an antidepressant by night. Melvin's behavior did not improve, his grades slipped and he threatened to commit suicide. Parker believes

MARK JEREMY KARELL

A quick fix? *CHILD's Parker and son*

EDUCATION

Behavior Pills

Disciplining unruly kids with a potent drug

56) But be optimistic! Are people slowing connecting the dots between emotionality and what is labeled "mental illness"?

Overlooked Trait Could Explain Anxiety and Depression in Millions | ScienceDaily Aug '25: "The meta-analysis of 33 studies, *the first of its kind*, concluded that highly sensitive people are more likely to experience depression and anxiety."

57) There's an effective and cost-effective remedy. First develop a healthy nervous system/self-regulation and focus. Then the animal emotional brain, in part by highlighting animals' great capacity for love, compassion, gratitude and bonding - with the desire to protect - across different species.
Like a cat nursing chicks.





58) One of the ways in which we impart those healthy emotions is with animal videos. The stories and images help counter the drum beat messaging of violence, disrespect, and anti-social behaviors.

59) A small sample that demonstrate/elicit positive behaviors and emotions:

<https://people.com/gorilla-binti-jua-became-a-hero-for-rescuing-boy-who-fell-into-an-ape-pit-chicago-1996-11752999> **Gorilla rescues boy**

<https://search.app/TMkWS> **Aggressive dog now follows his human everywhere.**

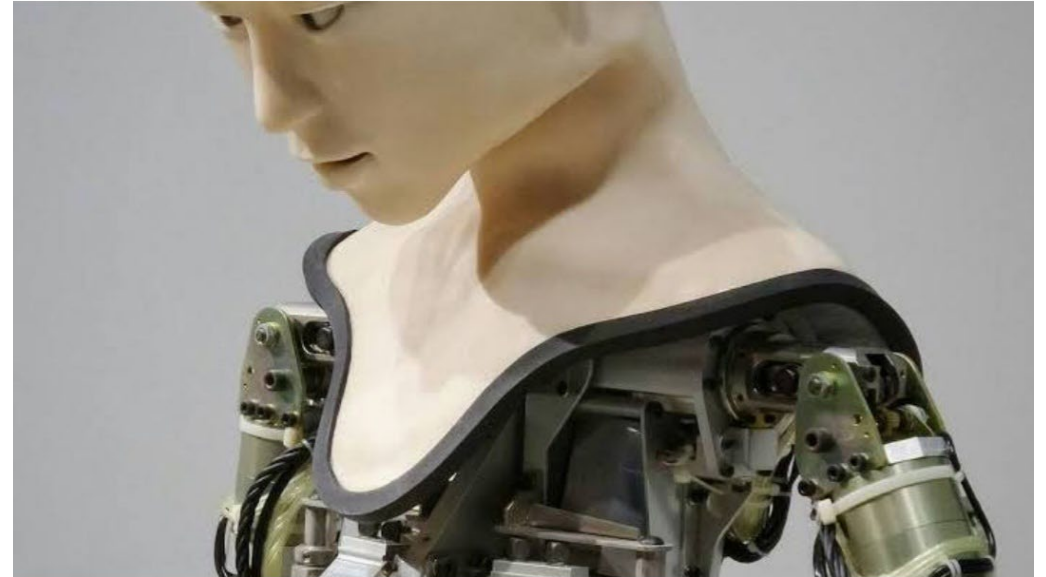
<https://search.app/SAM7z> **Cockatoo and dog share**

60) A sense of deep connection and belonging is nurturing and healing, we all are wired for it. But our 5 senses (sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell), can't perceive the deeper connectedness.

Empirical Science is based on physical senses and dimensions of reality that report separation but...

 Psychology Today

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We are all wired for connection.

61) ...our eyes see only .003% of the light spectrum.
Like the thickness of the membrane on a soap bubble.

That's not the whole of reality.



62) Einstein called the illusion of separation the greatest tragedy of humanity. The ancient Greek philosopher-scientists warned that our 5 senses deceive us. Ancient Vedic teachings spoke of Maya, the illusion of the material world.

Things aren't always as they appear. A brick is 99.9% space.

What does that mean?



63) The frontal lobe is about choosing/assigning meaning. Don't just accept "consensus" meanings; something can mean different things. Think through what something means to you.

Is the glass half empty or half full? Is losing a job the worst thing that can happen, or what you needed to move on to something better?



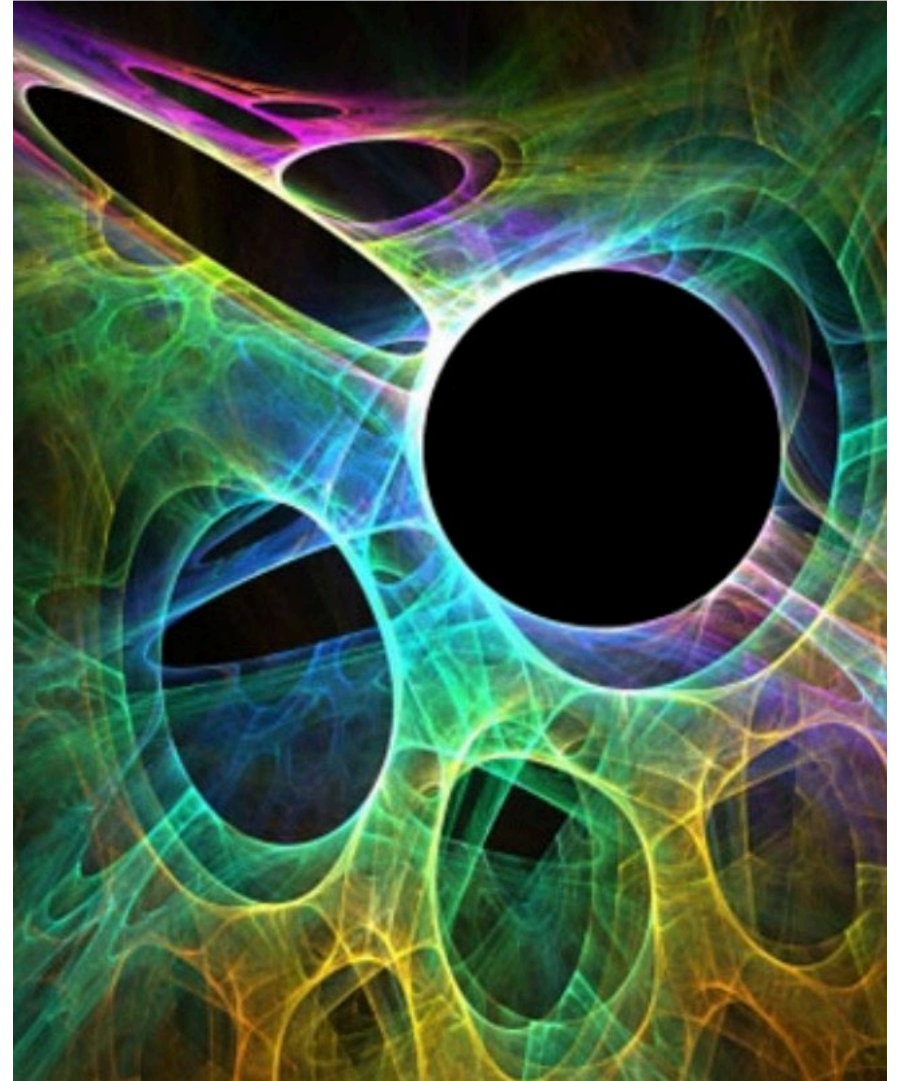
64) Decision-making and "executive functions," like hiring, firing, executing plans, is nothing too special. AI can make those decisions.

Even animals make executive decisions to avoid getting caught or to remedy a bad situation. They can plan to dig a hole to push in a sibling.



65) The Frontal lobe is about profound levels of meaning in a universe that Newtonian science insists is a meaningless accident, a cold, machine-like universe without room for anything so immeasurable as transcendent meaning or mind.

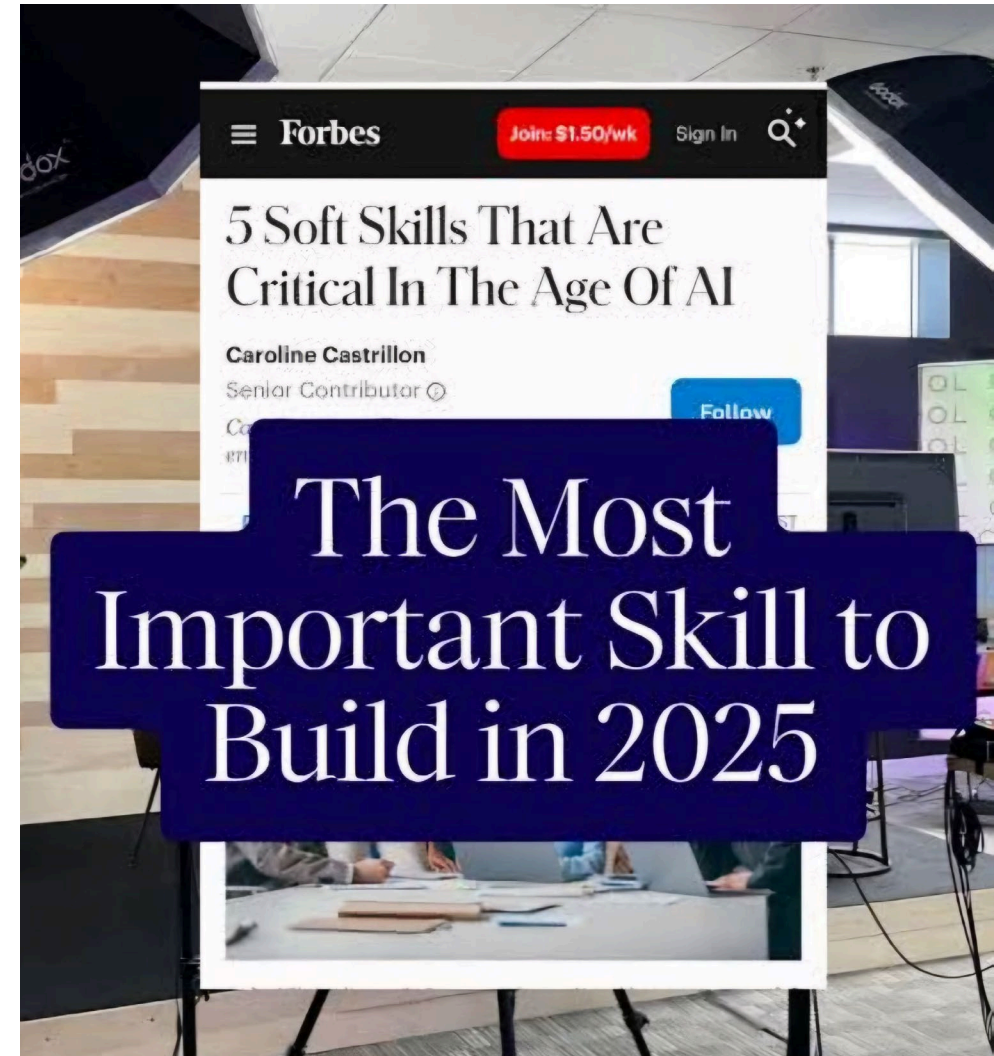
But what if the subjective meanings you assign, shape your objective reality? What if FL represents the intersection of our most human capacities and quantum processes?



66) Max Planck, founder of quantum physics: "Mind is the matrix of matter."

In other words, mind/consciousness is the source of matter. Not some unexplained by-product of the brain.

Quantum physics describes a universe of transcendent dimensions and deep interconnectedness, where imagination and dreams, inner states, and intelligence beyond the boxes, are part of the Human Intelligence toolkit and the needed direction of education.



67) If children aren't taught to look inward, think creatively, outside the lines, they will not question what they learn from textbooks and will accept all of society's negative and limiting meanings. That's conditioning.

Of course, not every child is adversely affected or has not received help to overcome. But you can't ignore that the # of students in special ed (often called a pipeline to prison) has steadily/alarmingly increased over decades.

68) The earlier, foundational parts of the brain need to be in good working order to maximize and leverage the meaningful potential we DO have.



Education can create quantum leaps and new realities. But not in a system so heavily influenced by Prussian military commanders, John Rockefeller, and the pharmaceutical industry.

69) To many parents, schools are about the path to success and good salaries. They are training centers for certain skills to get good jobs. The arts? Humanities? Poetry? Philosophy? Art craft? Shop class? Cooking? Kicked to the curb.

But guess what? Those left-brain hemisphere faculties and jobs are going AI.

We have lost our humanity and our mind...lost it in a Newtonian box when mind is a quantum matrix. The right brain is a portal. Open up the possibilities!

70) In the name of progress and career development, education has become obsolete, STEMrolling and labeling over so many students' emotions and dreams, dimming so many bright lights.

Time to focus on physiological, emotional, and attitudinal health, on a wider range of intelligence, and meaning through discovery. Time to nurture and spark!

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