

Report by Dr Anne Malcolm to APPA.

Thank you for support funding to attend ACEL 2016 in Melbourne.

The ACEL conference provided me with some real gems of learning. I loved listening to *Sugata Mitra, a Professor of Educational Technology at the School of Education Newcastle University*. He is known for his computer hole in the wall in India, and his school in the cloud study. He believes children given access to the internet in groups can learn anything by themselves. He provided evidence that children in groups have understanding that is far greater than that of an individual and that schools need to develop collective 'hive' mind-sets.

If we purposefully create a chaotic environments within our classrooms then self-organised learning environments can evolve (SOLE). Mitre believes we need a curriculum of questions, not facts; a pedagogy that encourages collaboration and use of the internet, and an assessment system that looks for productivity over process and method.

John Hattie was refreshing. He has modified his rhetoric, moving beyond primarily talking about effect sizes. He talked about Australian academia not being the pot of gold. He described how he would like to see schools rebooting their learning and building a success narrative focussed on student effort and agency.

His work is identifying I think what we all know but needed to be said in a political forum, that we need resources to support teachers to work together, to add at least at least one year's growth for one year's learning input. Leaders need to identify and value their wide -ranging teacher's expertise and build stronger support inter school networks. We need to be opening up our schools to greater collaboration. He said tweaking class size, structural elements and curriculum do create change, but collaborating, sharing expertise and schools with a focus on developing teacher capacity are making a bigger difference to learner success.

A very human element was introduced when Rosie Batty, the Australian Domestic Violence campaigner and the 2015 Australian of the Year spoke and reminded us all of the importance of respectful relationships being modelled at school. We need to really know our kids and we need to show them we care. They need to see teachers respecting each other; they need to see parents respecting teachers and they need to know at their school children respect each other.

Daniel Goleman presented via video link what he saw as the key contributors to leadership success. Quality Leadership requires emotional balance, adaptability, teamwork and interpersonal understanding. Leaders need to know how to build relationships beyond their immediate team.

I presented a work shop with my DPs around student voice and that was well attended.

I like to feel I am inspired in some way at any conference I attend and I certainly brought back to my school some aspects of my leadership that I need to consider, around notions of improvement.

On the conference front, I know many colleagues attended the U-Learn conference in the last break and it sounds like there were also some great leadership lessons provided there. We'd love a member or reader of Leading Lights to write about that.

My research into principals learning noted the importance of networking and conferences to refresh thinking and I certainly have had that this year.

I think this whakatoki keeps my leadership focus where it should be.

Whāia te iti kahurangi ki te tūohu koe me he maunga teitei

Seek the treasure you value most dearly: if you bow your head, let it be to a lofty mountain

Certainly the opportunity to attend international conferences allows for higher level thinking.