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Whole Person Learning Biography

"Whole person learning sees the human being as existing in a network of relationships, interconnecting arrangements and interdependent systems. We are born incomplete and unfinished. The human individual is unique and unrepeatable."

-Bryce Taylor

"Whole Person Learning and Leadership for Tomorrow – Working with the Emergent Future."

My "whole person" is an intricate network of relationships that both intertwine and spur in different directions. If you were to draw a map of the relationships in my life it would look similar to a solar system with various concentrations of strength scattered all over the place and mini-collections of largely independent relationships. Some of the relationships overlap, and some of them stray far from each other. What is common, though, is myself. I am the common link, and it is my responsibility to use my unique set of connections and planets, if you will, to change the world.

Family, friends, and work are the closest of my relationships. I was born in 1988, and am the second oldest of four children. Both of my parents are sources of wisdom and guidance for me. They have helped shape much of my relationship map

thus far. Outside of my immediate family I have a close extended family with 9 aunts and uncles, and 9 cousins. All of my grandparents are deceased, my grandmothers on the same day a year apart, also my birthday. The closeness and importance of family has fluctuated for me over the years, but I find that as I get older the family relationship becomes increasingly important to me.

For friends I subscribe to the idea of a few great friends rather than many average friendships. I have a very close-knit small group of friends and some on the outside of that who I consider friends but mostly on a casual basis. Friends provide a support system for me, and provide a significant amount of structure to my life. In terms of mapping out my friendships I have several buckets/groups of friends. This allows me to crowdsource support and solutions to problems from different demographics. These small groups are intricate, and highly inter-woven parts of my life. There is some overlap amongst the groups, but for the most part they exist independent of one another. Like a stool's legs the groups are each equally important and provide structure for me that the other groups cannot. If one of the groups were to vacate my life, the support system would be much less strong if not completely handicapped.

My work relationships are the key to my opportunities to change the world. It is through my professional network that I intend to make the moves necessary to leave my own footprint on the world. Having had numerous jobs and leveraged my network to get from one to the next, I have gained an intricate web of both high-powered and highly skilled professionals. By nurturing this network and continuing

to develop my professional career I can arrive at a place where I can make a real impact.

Where is it that I want to make an impact? Education. Educational technology to be more specific. I want to be a part, if not on the leading edge, of the educational technology revolution that is just beginning. I believe in a world where education is completely transformed (for the better) by technology. And I want to be the one to get us there.

I believe in the power of technology to transform lives. Last October I brought 9 computers to a rural village in El Salvador to refresh their cyber café. I was able to provide the students in this village with a means to connect more globally with the outside world that they may never experience otherwise. With the updated computers they could Skype, use social networks, do research, and more. With this accomplishment behind me, and another village set to be furnished with computers in March 2014, I'm confident in my ability to make a difference.

On the fringe of my relationship web I have several casual friend circles like my softball team, and just having started a new job, I have a number of fringe relationships that I expect will grow closer in time. There are also a number of people who I would classify as "Friends" but who are role models or mentors to me. By developing a relationship with these people, each one successful in their own way, I can see what success truly looks like. As a student of Media, I have a great perspective on the influence of media and how the views of the media and pop culture can easily infiltrate one's own morals and values. This is where these mentoring relationships and role models come in to play. Through them I can

redefine what I have learned from pop culture and apply it to a more personalized situation. For example, I have learned from many of the older role models that while money is certainly a “nice to have” it can’t compare to a strong family relationship and deep connections with their children. While once it was important for me to make loads of money in a high-powered job, I am now focusing on a career path that allows me to get to a place where I can have ample time for a family when the time comes.

My relationships define me. Just about everyone has the same webs as I do between work, family, and friends. However, even just one or two layers from that initial layer is going to be very different for everyone. Therefore my map is unique. Your map is unique. But they are not separate. Our webs overlap, connect, and intertwine both deeply in some places and even just tangentially in others. The members of my web have a profound impact on my life. Without them I could not be who I am today, and would never be able to become who I want to be. In short, “I need you to become you in order for me to also become me. We need each other to become more than we currently are.” (Taylor 31)

References:

Taylor, B. (2010, January). Whole person learning and leadership for tomorrow – working with the emergent future. *The GRLI Partner Magazine*.