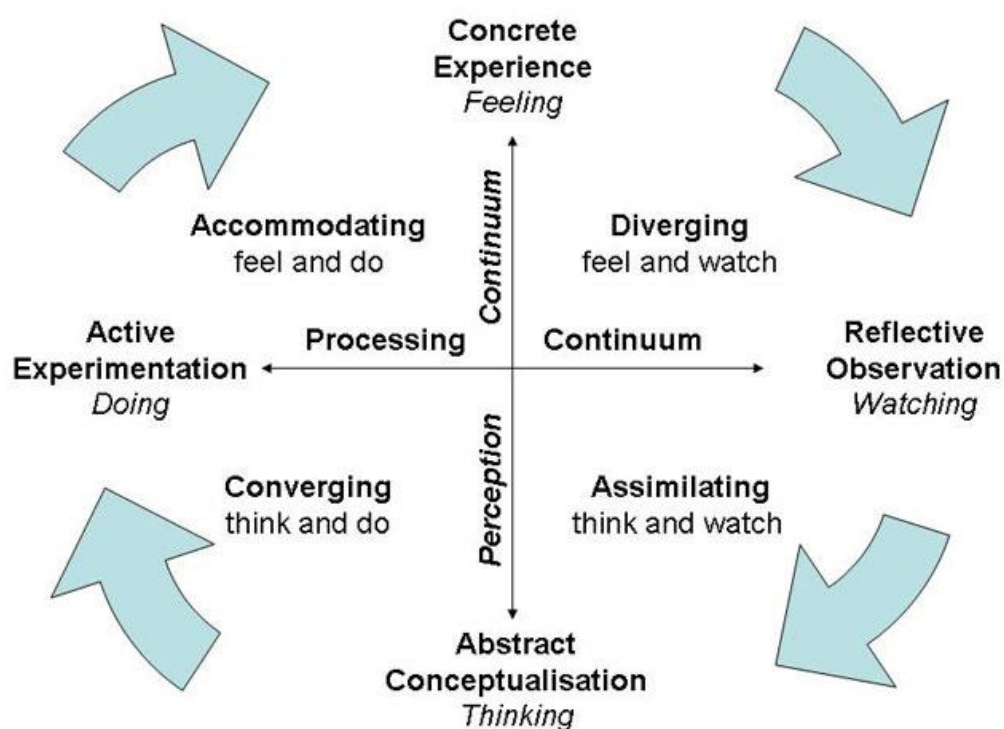


Learning Cycle

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Learning is something we do naturally while going to some different phases. These phases have been well described by Kolb in his learning cycle, and are widely accepted. Underneath you find the model as we know it:



- In a very simple way we could say that everything starts with an experience, that brings us a certain feeling.
- This experience makes us reflect upon ourselves and others. We start to reflect upon our meanings and values. Often by sharing this with others or on paper to ourselves.
- By this reflection we start to conceptualize what we noticed. We want to better understand what happened which, leads to a better knowledge since we searched for some kind of answers.
- During this process, and mainly at the end of this cycle we act upon what we understood. We start to try out the new knowledge and understanding we gained upon this first experience.

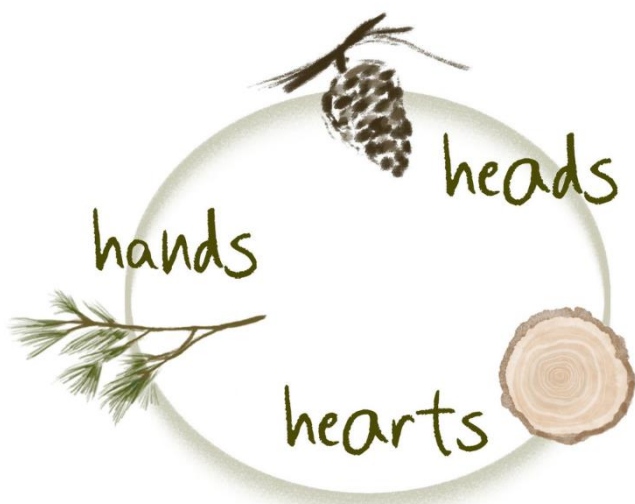




This cycle leads to new experiences, reflections, understandings and actions. We keep on growing and develop as human beings.

Heads, Hearts and Hands

While going through this cycle, different aspects of Heads, Hearts and Hands get emphasized. This shows us the importance of paying attention to all 3 aspects of how we learn.



In our search for an approach that could easily be translated to youth workers we came across this model of Head, Heart, and Hand. These three parts are crucial parts of our body, we need all three of them to survive and they are recognizable for the young people we work with.

By using these terms, we want to mark out that it is all about finding a balance between the use of our hands, hearts, and heads. They are equally important, influence each other and we need them to complete our cycle of learning!

Hands

This refers to our capacity of action, of doing in any practice. We use our hands to make active contact with the outside world as a bridge between the outside world and our inside world. By using our hands, we are in the most practical mode we can be. We are active with our whole body. In this way we get in touch with everything around us.


Heads

This refers to rational thinking, co-creation of knowledge and making sense of things by hearing or searching for concrete prove. Here we need to understand why something is the way it is. The sources we know best for heads are books, scientific research and other ways in which we use words to understand the world around us better. It is also important to understand that taking time to reflect is also a way of using our head(s).

Hearts

This refers to our feelings. How we act during the day is influenced by our experiences, previous ones, and actual ones. By being present from your heart on you make connections with everything around you. Since we are interconnected being present from the heart on can get intense in our modern world. Our Heart is the gate towards empathy, towards feeling belonging.

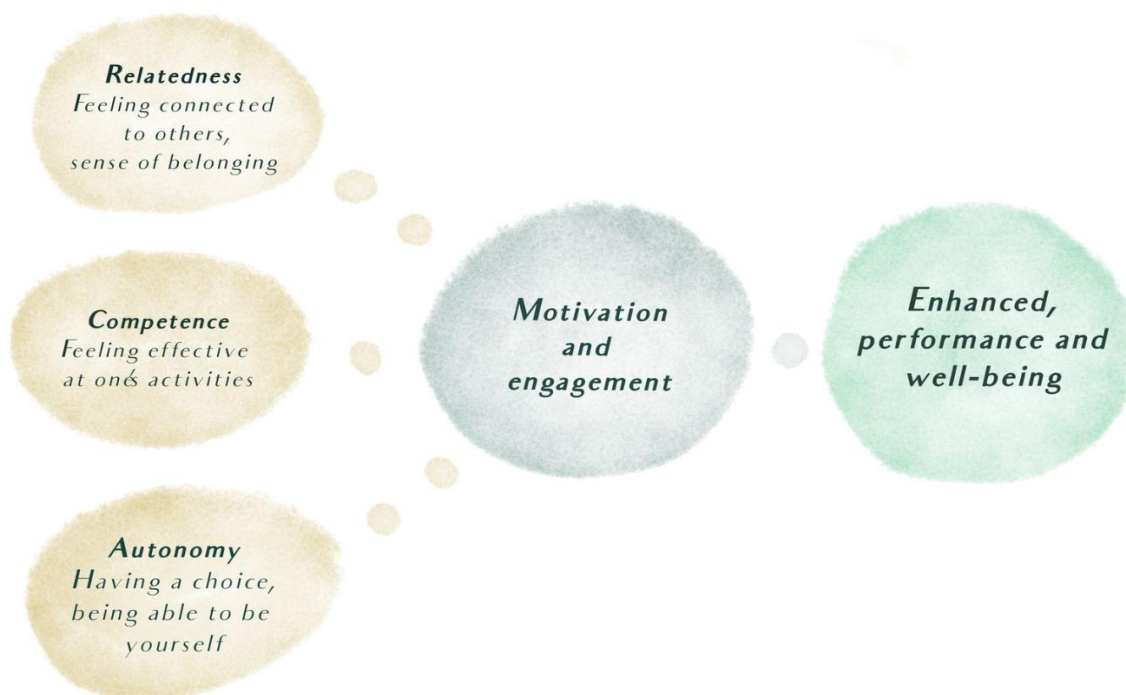




This is all about experiencing with all our senses and being able to let interactions of any kind touch you, to be able to touch others.

As you already noticed you see that we are using the terms heads, hearts and hands in plural. We believe that this plural is important since it means that we are not doing this all by ourselves. Often we see processes as individual responsibilities despite the interdependence on our surroundings. This plural brings us back to this crucial aspect of change in sharing and understanding each other in these shared processes. This is our human Nature.

This Belongingness brings us to our last piece of the puzzle when we talk about learning: *The selfdetermination theory* (Ryan & Deci, 2017).



In this model there are 3 key elements needed to fully motivate someone to make sure this person get engaged to act upon what is needed, or wanted by this person. When these are present we could say that learning will take place much faster, and has a more lasting impact on the live of this person and the wellbeing this person experiences.

The three key elements are:

- **Competence:**

When an individual feels competent they feel able to interact effectively within their environment, and they have the skills needed for success to ensure that their goals are achieved. A competent person feels a sense of mastery over their environment.





Without the feeling to be competent to archive your goal, no actual initiative will be taken. This feeling of being competent is something you get from the community (parents, friends, school, youth organisation, ...) you are in.

- **Autonomy:**

Autonomy involves being able to make your own decisions and is associated with feelings of independence. Feelings of autonomy are enhanced when individuals are given choice and are able to govern their own behaviour, and when other people acknowledge their feelings.

Autonomy shows us that every one has its own pace, the challenge for us as youthworkers is to give this space and not pressure our young people to act upon something they don't want themselves.

- **Relatedness:**

Without connections, self-determination is harder to achieve because the individual would lack access to both help and support. Feelings of relatedness are enhanced when individuals are respected and cared for by others, and are part of an inclusive environment.

This last element is key for us when we talk about Heads, hearts and hands since this model empathizes on belonging. The key is to go in interaction with others to be able to grow as individual and community.

We see the above elements as necessary ingredients for a natural growth for any human being. Our activities are set up to facilitate towards nature connection and wellbeing of young people, to stimulate this natural growth. During each activity the youngsters can act based on where they are at that point in there learning process, which is different for every single participant!

