



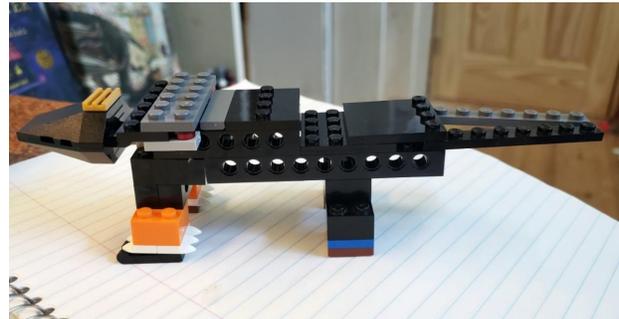
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Early Years Muskoka Professional Development Newsletter



WELCOME!

My son, who is 6 years old, loves to build with LEGO. He can build from “plans” and he can build without them. The photo that accompanies this paragraph is of a crocodile he built the other day. He was pleased to tell me that the head and the tail moved □ As you can imagine, building a crocodile requires a variety of skills; most importantly the ability to problem solve. A skill that, perhaps especially at this challenging time, is more important than ever.



This edition of Muskoka Early Years Professional Development newsletter focuses on problem solving. I hope you find it useful!

Keep in touch!

K. Oxley

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TREASURE CHEST THAT IS YOURS TO DISCOVER

I have recently discovered Shane Parrish. Shane is a former CSIS agent and the master mind behind the Farnam Street blog website. The wealth of knowledge about problem solving that his blog showcases is such that I found it impossible to pick and choose what I would consider worthiest of attention so I decided to simply include an excerpt of one of his writings on the matter and include a link to the guide he and his team created. Here it is:

Making Effective Decisions and Fewer Errors

Few things will change your trajectory in life or

In this guide, we’ll cover:

- No One Taught You How to Decide
- Your Mind is a Pattern Matching Machine

business as much as learning to make effective decisions.

The decision-making principles in this article aren't pulled out of thin air. They're the result of many years of experience and experimentation. They draw upon the combined expertise of some of history's deepest thinkers. They summarize the core insights and skills from influential books on decision-making.

- Decision Making
- Smart People Make Terrible Decisions
- Sources of Stupidity
- Intelligent Preparation: The World Is Multidisciplinary
- How We Make Decisions
- General Thinking Concepts
- Add To Your Decision Making Skills
- Books to Improve Decisions

Ready? Ok, Let's dig in.
[Click here to visit Shane's blog!](#)

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUR ATTITUDE TOWARDS PROBLEMS; IT MIGHT BE THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THE PROBLEM SOLVING EQUATION

"Unexpected problems? GOOD. We have an opportunity to figure out the solution. When things go bad, don't get frustrated..."

(Source:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ldTMDpizis8>)

Jocko Willink is an American retired officer of the United States Navy, who served in the Navy SEAL teams. He is also a podcaster and author. His military service saw combat actions in the war in Iraq, where he eventually commanded the SEAL Team 3's Task Unit Bruiser that fought in the battle against the Iraqi insurgents in Ramadi, and was honored with the Silver Star and Bronze Star for his service. He achieved the rank of Lieutenant Commander.

(source:https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jocko_Willink)

HOW SOME MEMBERS OF OUR DEPARTMENT APPROACH PROBLEMS

Stephanie Turner, Case Manager, **Children's Programs**

Personally I find that I follow a plan similar to George Polya's famous four-step process for problem solving which is:

- Step 1: Understand the problem.
- Step 2: Devise a plan (translate).
- Step 3: Carry out the plan (solve).
- Step 4: Look back (check and interpret).

When it comes to children and problem solving, all I need is this quote:

We don't have to teach [children] to ask "why?" because inside each human being is the need to understand the reasons, the meaning of the world around us and the meaning of our life. ... But children not only ask "why?" They are also able to find the answers to their whys, to create their own theories. ... Observe and listen to children because when they ask "why?" they are not simply asking for the answer from you. They are requesting the courage to find a collection of possible answers. —*Rinaldi*

Katelynn Laarakker, Seniors Wellness Outreach Coordinator, **Seniors Services**

Adele Gant, Administrative Support, **Children's and Seniors Services**

First, identify the problem and determine if you need to deal with it. Sometimes we take on problems that might not be ours to deal with! Determine the urgency. Depending on the problem and timeline you may want to ask others for suggestions. Explore each option and see which might best solve the problem. If it involves others, always try to put yourself in their shoes or hear their side of the story without jumping to conclusions. Ideally you want a win-win solution for all parties which may mean everyone has to compromise a little.

Pam Rennie, Manager, **Early Years Program, Children's Services**

Every 'problem' comes with its own characteristics, ranging from an immediate crisis to something that allows more time for resolution. Whatever the problem, my best approach (although not always practiced ☐) is to breathe, take time to assess the

When I encounter a problem, I try to take a step back. Depending on the scale of the problem, I will generate different options for overcoming the challenge, analyze the pros and cons of each option, and then make a decision based on my analysis. For larger challenges, the process will often involve researching additional information or reaching out to field experts for advice. It sounds cliché, but I see problems as opportunities to exercise creative thinking and find new ways to approach situations.

problem, get a responsive perspective rather than a reactive one, receive input from others (if applicable) and approach resolution calmly. It is important to me to try not to get caught up in the energy of the situation.

Problems truly are opportunities to grow, gain new perspectives and think differently.

Email Kasia and let her know how you approach problems for a chance to win a resource of your choice (value of up to \$25.00!)

The winner of the “How do I stay positive in this challenging time” submission challenge is Sarah MacKay. Congratulations Sarah!

Sarah’s submission:

When this all first happened in March I had a hard time sitting still. As you know I have a pretty busy schedule and life LOL. We walked every day sometimes twice a day with our dog Oakley. We made a bit of a schedule to stick to in hopes to not sit in our PJs all day long. Now that we are on Month 3 I think we struggle a bit more however we continue to be active each day whether we are taking the dog for yet another walk or doing some yoga or exercise ball activities. I have also put up a screen room on my porch so I can just sit and listen to what is happening around me, taking in all the sights and sounds of our beautiful property in.

RESOURCE RECOMMENDATION

Jennifer Duncan, Administrative Assistant, Community and Planning Services

Sharing forward this really great book I got for my boys call “Together, Apart: Life During the Coronavirus”. It has beautiful images, storyline, and keepsake to remember what this time was like.

Take a look – might be a nice book to have at EarlyON, to share with the MHCCA or even for your own kids.

<http://www.oleonsonline.ca/pages/N2020051402.htm> - there is an email at the end of the article as to where to order the books. They are \$14.95, but all proceeds go to CHEO and the KidsHelp Phone.

I can’t say enough good things about it ☐

GETTING TO KNOW OTHER EARLY YEARS PROFESSIONALS IN MUSKOKA

ROXANNE SNELLINGS



1. What is your current job, and how did you arrive at it, in other words why do you do what you do?

I am an RECE and Resource Teacher at

4. What do you like to do in your spare time?

I absolutely love going back country camping with my husband, seeing and exploring our beautiful country and making new memories along the way. I also enjoy having a bonfire, spending time on the boat and fishing on a beautiful sunny day!

5. What book/resource could you recommend to our readers?

In my first year as a Resource Teacher I helped to support a family. Mom had provided me with a book called “The Spark: A mother’s story of nurturing genius” By Kristine Barnett. I can’t thank her enough for sharing this book with me.

6. What’s your favorite quote?

I am a big Harry Potter fan and have always loved this quote: “Happiness can be found even in the

Community Living South Muskoka supporting young children with special needs and developmental disabilities between the ages of 2-6. I was an Assistant Supervisor at a licensed childcare centre located in Whitby and heard of a job opening with Community Living South Muskoka. I have had personal experiences growing up with my hearing disability and I recognized as I got older I wanted to help advocate for children's needs and supports in childcare settings. I was interviewed and nervous that if I got the job it meant I would need to move out of the city. I can remember the day getting the phone call indicating I was the successful candidate. I packed up my belongings and have never looked back!

2. Without disclosing confidential information, please tell me about how your involvement within the early years profession created a better outcome for a child/family?

As a Resource Teacher and RECE, I thrive on helping and supporting my families as well as childcare staff within our community. I find joy in providing information and programs that I find would be beneficial for families to ensure their child has access to all community resources needed.

3. What's most challenging about the work you do?

I would say some challenges are to keep up with the amount of different resources within our community and ministry to ensure I provide my families with all of the appropriate information. During the past few months, I have continued to learn to adapt because things can change on a daily basis and must continue to move forward.

darkest of times, when one only remembers to turn on a light" And "Always"

7. Which famous person would you like to have lunch with and why?

I would love to sit and have lunch with Ellen Degeneres; she continues to make me laugh and promotes the importance of being unique and kind to one another. I would love to pick her brain on certain topics of conversation!

8. How do you perceive problems and how do you problem solve?

In my job as a Resource Teacher, problem solving is something that I find myself doing on a daily basis. I help support several different community agency partners, families, and we work closely together as a team to come up with solutions and answers.

9. Anything else that you would like to share?

I wanted to thank you for the incredible opportunity for being included in the monthly newsletter. I look forward to seeing what the future brings for us all as we continue to grow together and adapt to our new beginning.

INSPIRATION CORNER

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them."

Albert Einstein

"If I had 60 minutes to solve a problem, I'd spend 55 minutes defining it, and 5 minutes solving it." -- Albert Einstein.

THE WORTHWHILE PROBLEMS ARE THE ONES YOU CAN REALLY SOLVE OR HELP SOLVE, THE ONES YOU CAN REALLY CONTRIBUTE SOMETHING TO. ... NO PROBLEM IS TOO SMALL OR TOO TRIVIAL IF WE CAN REALLY DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT. YOU SAY YOU ARE A NAMELESS MAN. YOU ARE NOT TO YOUR WIFE AND TO YOUR CHILD. YOU WILL NOT LONG REMAIN SO TO YOUR IMMEDIATE COLLEAGUES IF YOU CAN ANSWER THEIR SIMPLE QUESTIONS WHEN THEY COME INTO YOUR OFFICE. YOU ARE NOT NAMELESS TO ME. DO NOT REMAIN NAMELESS TO YOURSELF - IT IS TOO SAD A WAY TO BE. KNOW YOUR PLACE IN THE WORLD AND EVALUATE YOURSELF FAIRLY, NOT IN TERMS OF THE NAÏVE IDEALS OF YOUR OWN YOUTH, NOR IN TERMS OF WHAT YOU ERRONEOUSLY IMAGINE YOUR TEACHER'S IDEALS ARE.

- RICHARD FEYNMAN -

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For a chance to win a \$25.00 local business gift card of your choice, please [submit](#) a reflection of yours that you would like us to considered for publication in one of upcoming newsletter editions.

Your submission does not have to be in a form of an essay, other forms of expression are welcome, such as: poetry, video footage, note, opinion piece, interview, photos accompanied by a short text, review, etc.

Was the content in this newsletter helpful to you?

Yes

Select

No

Select

Somewhat

Select