

Autonomy- “acting with choice”

1. POLL (from end of last discussion): **How much autonomy do you have in making decisions about what happens in your classroom, what is taught, and how you teach?** (Total autonomy, 75%, 50%, 25%, none)
2. Review results of POLL: From those with autonomy, how has it impacted what you are able to achieve? For those with less autonomy, what effect has it had on you?
3. SLIDE (why teachers are leaving the profession). “Lack of autonomy” is named as one of the top four reasons teachers leave the profession. What effect has the lack of autonomy and its stress had on job satisfaction for you?
4. What are the obstacles to autonomy in education?
5. How would you create a learning environment with more autonomy? What are the considerations in making that happen?
6. What would you do on a FedEx day? How do you see it working in your building? In your classroom? Have you tried it or experimented with the concept?
7. One of the components of autonomy is **technique**, having more control over *how* you do your job. Education often embraces “one-size-fits-all” with curriculum, testing, standards, even what is taught when and with what method. What autonomy do you have over technique? Do you ever go rogue, and if so, what has been the outcome?
8. Educator Effectiveness was created to be a professional growth model, but many districts have tied it to accountability and pay. Applying what you know of autonomy, talk about the positives and problems with EE.

Mastery- “the desire to get better and better at something that matters.”

9. QUOTES: **“Control leads to compliance; autonomy leads to engagement.”** (p.110)
How would you redesign education to promote greater engagement?
“Only engagement can produce mastery.” (p.111)
Applying this to students and the classroom, how should we approach mastery? And what does that look like?
10. Our response to the pandemic was sudden-- within days teachers were asked to move to remote learning, put content online, learn a new system. Mastery was challenged, asking us to perform in ways that were unfamiliar. Think about your own experience over that past year... how did the concept of mastery become real to you?
11. Have you experienced a state of “flow,” when you forget yourself in the function, and the activity was its own reward? Mental health note: there is a “brain boost” that positively affects mood when a person enters a state of flow or experiences mastery.

Purpose- “a cause greater and more enduring than themselves.”

12. The author stated for an increasing number of people and businesses, profits are equal with purpose. Have you seen evidence of this? Is it a fluke or a trend?
13. Is even thinking about purpose a luxury enjoyed by those who are secure? Or is purpose universal to everyone regardless of your demographic or situation?
14. The author states words matter, and he talks about applying the “pronoun test”--do people use the word “they” or “we” when talking about their workplace (or school). At your school, what pronoun would teachers use? Students in your class? Parents? How does this matter in terms of purpose or engagement?
15. Random thought... We know there is a teacher shortage. According to the author, people entering the workforce and “boomer” have a greater interest in finding purposeful work. Most teachers choose the profession to make a difference, it’s their purpose. Are we missing a marketing opportunity? Should we recruit as a purpose rich profession?

Mental health implications:

- The lack of autonomy is directly related to higher levels in stress, particularly among teachers.
- The process of working toward mastery positively affects mood.
- A key element of self care is spending time outside of yourself, volunteering, caring for others, finding your purpose in life.

Autonomy, mastery, and purpose are not just elements of motivation, they are key to mental well being.

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