

DEEP LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS @HOME

Connection and 3 Other Cs

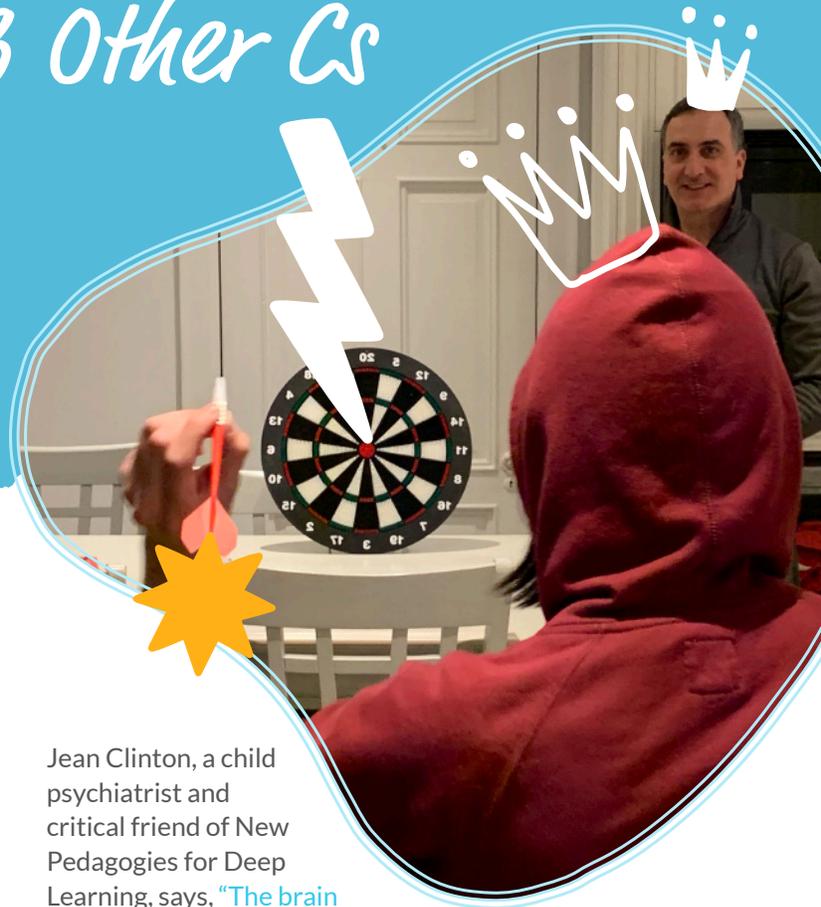
For many of us, the COVID crisis is fascinating. For others, it's scary. For my 14 year old daughter, it's downright boring. She feels like she's been grounded without deserving the punishment. They call it self-isolation. She calls it house arrest. The natural response for most teenagers is to retreat to their private spaces and sink into their devices.

My worry is that as her digital collisions increase, they will become increasingly shallow, strained, impersonal, and even cruel. Ultimately, that loneliness will only intensify. And once she is in that pit of despair, how will we pull her out?

With two educators under one roof, you would assume that we have her on a strict diet of Literacy and Numeracy. And yet, *To Kill A Mockingbird* still sits idly in her backpack. Over the next few weeks, we have chosen to position learning differently. Our family focus is on **collaboration, communication** and **citizenship**, three of the six global competencies that we know will support her through this crisis and set her up for life.

What does this look like? For this household, every day looks different. We are making dinner and doing chores together. We are taking regular dog walks together. We are giving blood. We are checking in with the neighbours and delivering food to the food bank. We are ZOOMing with family and friends. We are regularly tuned into the media and discussing COVID 19 and other world events. And on a lighter note, we have unearthed all those long-forgotten board games and transformed our dining room into a family game centre. We commit to playing something every night. The other night it was Soft Darts in the kitchen (desperate times lead to desperate measures). Simply, we have created a cocoon of connection.

Grunting and eye rolling are normal adolescent behaviours. By connecting we find it restorative to experience her childlike giggles and fresh enthusiasm again. Have we cornered the market on this COVID-learning-at-home-gig? No. Is she Harvard bound? Absolutely not. Is she growing and learning during this time? Is she well emotionally? Yes, I believe she is.



Jean Clinton, a child psychiatrist and critical friend of New Pedagogies for Deep Learning, says, "**The brain is a social organ. We are wired to connect.**" The primary environment for learning is always in relationships. Connect to collaborate, communicate and cultivate citizenship. If these Cs develop deeply during this COVID crisis, it will be time well spent.



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