

TGIF Taking Great Ideas Forward

Improving Northern Capital - Sustainable Development in the Northern Tier

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the author and do not reflect positions of organizations with which he is affiliated.

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“Why love if losing hurts so much? We love to know that we are not alone.”

-C.S.Lewis-

MEETINGS and EVENTS:

Links will provide additional information. Dates for recent additions are in **bold**.

<i>What</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Where</i>
Living Green Expo	May 3-4	All Day	St.Paul – Minnesota State Fair Grounds
Business Development Conference	May 7 & 8	All Day	Cable, Lakewoods
Digital Healthcare Conference	May 7 & 8	All Day	Madison
BCEDC Annual Meeting	May 12 th	10:00 – noon	TBA
Green Communities Conference	May 20 th	All Day	UW-River Falls
Manufacturing Advantage 2008	May 21	All Day	UW-Stout
Introduction to Biodiesel Fuel	June 3-5	All Day	Madison Area Technical College
Green By Design Conference	June 12-13	All Day	Washington DC area
Northern Aquaculture Demonstration Facility Field Days	June 12–13	All Day	Red Cliff / Bayfield
Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference	June 19 & 20	All Day	Cable, Telemark

FRAMING FUTURE MINDS

Harvard psychologist, **Howard Gardner**, has often been referenced as the most important thinker in education today. Gardner's main claim to fame (a contribution so enormous that it may one day be placed alongside the work of Newton and Darwin and Einstein) is the debunking of

the IQ framework for thinking about human capability. BG (before Gardner) the prevailing framework (which preceded Stanford-Binet IQ tests) was that each individual was endowed from birth with a general intelligence that could be measured with tests, be expressed as a single number (or worse a single word) and be predictive of future accomplishments. The IQ test results were administered by a trained psychologist and results, if they were divulged at all, were presented in a session reminiscent of hushed reverence in confessionals. But, mostly test scores were used for third-party efficiency; making capricious decisions about an individual's future. Above 100 you were OK. Below 100 you were “challenged.” Below 80, expectations were lower; words of derision tripped too easily off the undisciplined tongue. Above 120 expectations were high. Around 140 the word genius got into play with deep and sonorous nuances like “borderline”.

Gardner has, to the everlasting benefit of school kids (I hope), cast aside the nonsense of the IQ test and provided a framework for new thinking – multiple intelligences – or MI. The story of MI is too complex to do justice in this short space but his studies support at least eight distinctive “intelligences” that we all possess in a web of differing proportions. The intelligences are identified with the following labels: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalistic. Each of these putative “intelligences” was selected from among dozens or hundreds of proposed candidates, carefully articulated and justified with a panel of criteria that include evolutionary biology, psychology, neurology and psychoneuropathology. He, his students and followers continue to investigate and debate the potential for spiritual or existential intelligence. Originally published in the 1983 book, *Frames of Mind, the Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, these powerful ideas have great potential to alter the ways schools school; if in the deep and complex discussion of education's future there is agreement that schools should school. Gardner and his followers have played a role in school reform; unfortunately reform little heeded by the *No Child Left Behind* bandwagon. Perhaps as the wheels continue to come off the NCLB bandwagon, there will be room in federal thinking about education with due respect for complexity theory and systems thinking.

Frames of Mind was a galvanizing stimulus to my wondering, for several years now, if there might be alternatives for the lifetime of human learning (education?) that would not require schools; at least schools as we have known them. Non-school contributions to the lifetime learning of individuals seem obvious enough, but the institutionalization and credentialization of education celebrates the school to the exclusion of libraries, museums, faith-based institutions and secular organizations, neighborhoods, homes, families, parents and – of course – media; print media, broadcast media, digital media.

My recent read from Gardner is *“Five Minds for the Future.”* The five minds are the disciplined mind, the synthesizing mind, the creative mind, the respecting mind and the ethical mind. Those who think about education will find in this writing a positive, thought provoking, even refreshing, approach to the lifetime challenge of learning and a frame of reference that may well provide a scaffold for nothing short of human survival. This book is a story of how our individual profiles of intelligence may develop through our lifetimes of experience to support a future worthy of transmitting to our great, great grandchildren. Don't expect survival and sustainability as an explicit story-line; just read the book and think about it. I don't preach on it much, but that centered triangle in the encircled fractal is about ethics. Getting to the ethical

mind will take discipline, synthesis, creativity and, perhaps most important of all, respect for the dignity of our differences.

LIGHTER SIDE:

As with most jokes the original author is unknown. Whoever you are; “Thanks!” Names, when added, are intended to tease the innocent.

Gentle thoughts for today

Birds of a feather flock together...and poop on your car.

A penny saved is a government oversight.

The real art of conversation is not only to say the right thing at the right time, but also to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the tempting moment.

The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight, because by then your body and your fat have gotten to be really good friends.

The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement.

Take care and enjoy a great weekend!

/BRUCE

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Bruce Lindgren is Principal of [B.Lindgren CONSULTING](#). The consulting practice serves small business, local government, school districts and non-profits providing support for research, grant development, technical writing, marketing support and project management. Bruce brings his background in biological sciences, education, small business and media technology to generate and implement ideas contributing solutions to mission critical challenges.

In addition Bruce maintains the following affiliations:

[Bayfield County Economic Development Corporation, \(BCEDC\) Director](#)

[Bayfield CountyLakes Forum, Board Secretary](#)

[Chequamegon Institute, Inc. Initial Registered Agent](#)

[Coalition for Eco-Industrial Development](#), (CEID) *Acting President & CEO*

[IDEA Consortium LLC](#), *Owner*

[Inland Sea Society](#), (ISS) *Director*

[Lake Superior Binational Forum](#), (LSBF) *US Co-Chair*

[Northwest Wisconsin Workforce Investment Board](#), (WIB) *Member*

[Raindrop Garden Gallery](#), (RGG) *Co-owner*

The encircled fractal triangle represents an integrated cluster of seven ideas – economics, ecology, equity, ethics, experience, education and energy – that may be considered a core for sustainability studies. Bruce is available to present illustrated lectures and facilitate discussions about role of education in Industrial Ecology, Sustainable Development and the Sustainability Revolution.