



# **For the Love of Children! Why Adult Development Matters!**

**Promoting Early Childhood Conference, Green Bay, WI**

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**Presented by: Susan MacDonald, Inspiring New Perspectives**

## **Inspirational Reflections**

Vision is the first step toward building the future we desire, the life through which we can experience fulfillment and a sense of accomplishment. - Alan Seale

...We must know that children, although naturally inclined, do not acquire the art of becoming friends or teachers of one another by finding models in heaven or in manuals; rather, children extract and interpret models from adults when the adults know how to work, discuss, think, research, and live together. - Loris Malaguzzi

Young children are best able to become lifelong learners when they spend their days with teachers who are devoted to lifelong learning on their part. - Helterbran and Fennimore

We should remember that there is no creativity in the child if there is no creativity in the adult: the competent and creative child exists if there is a competent and creative adult.  
- Carlina Rinaldi

Your positive energy and vision must be greater than anyone's and everyone's negativity. Your certainty must be greater than everyone's doubt. - Jon Gordon

There are only 2,000 days between the newborn baby and when that child will show up in kindergarten. It is urgent that we use the best scientific information to make sure we support all our children so they can succeed in school. Our children can't wait.

- Dr. Andrew Melzoff, University of Washington Institute for Learning and Brain Science

If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself.- Henry Ford

...positive emotions allow us to discover and build new skills, new ties, new knowledge, and new ways of being. - Barbara Fredrickson

**Website:** [www.inspiringnewperspectives.com](http://www.inspiringnewperspectives.com)

**Email:** [inspiringnewperspectives@gmail.com](mailto:inspiringnewperspectives@gmail.com)

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/InspiringNewPerspectives/>

**Twitter:** @inspiringnew

**Linkedin:** <https://www.linkedin.com/in/susan-macdonaldinspiringnew>

**Italy Retreat June 2020:** <https://internationalstudytours.org/mercatello-sul-metauro-2020-tour/>



## Check Your **VITALS!**

- Vision** - Do you have a clear vision to guide your work?
- Intentional** - Are you intentional about establishing a Growth Culture in all aspects of your work?
- Time** - Do you effectively manage your time to achieve your goals?
- Accountable** – Have you established professional accountability as a fundamental value for yourself and everyone in your organization?
- Life-Long Learner** – Are you modeling a commitment to life-long learning through your own professional development activities?
- Strengths-Based** – Do you use positive, strengths-based and inspirational strategies to guide your daily work?

Reflective Questions:

What is the one area that is **VITAL** for you to focus on in the next six months?

What is the first thing you will commit to doing that will have a positive impact on your professional growth?

What is one impactful way you can support the professional growth and development of others?

Prepared By: Susan MacDonald, Inspiring New Perspectives  
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## TRANSFORMATIONAL PRESENCE

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To be present is an act of creation

Your presence –

How you show up to life –

No matter how powerful or subtle,

Impacts what happens in your world,

Just because you are there.

How do you choose to show up?

How do you choose to engage with the world?

How do you choose to make a difference?

How will you help to create a world that works?

Reflective Questions:

- What opportunity for growth and change is available for you?
- Who is that opportunity asking you to be?  
*Listen to the opportunity – How is it asking you to show up? What role is it asking you to play?*
- What is this opportunity asking you to do as a next step?

Adapted from: Seale, Alan. *Transformational Presence: The Tools, Skills, and Frameworks*.  
Center for Transformational Presence, 2018



## GROWTH CULTURE REFLECTION

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Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Reflect on your current school culture:
  - In what ways is it designed to support professional growth?
  - How does it inspire everyone to grow and develop?
  - How does it help all aspects of the program grow?
2. What do you see as the key benefits of establishing a growth culture in your program?
3. What are the biggest challenges you are facing in establishing a vibrant, engaging and motivating growth culture?
4. What ideas do you have for overcoming the challenges you face?
5. What is one goal you can set to establish and/or enhance the growth culture of your program?
6. What are 3 -4 action steps that will help you to achieve this goal?



## **Creating a Collaborative Vision Statement Exercise**

It is important that teachers become fully engaged in creating a shared vision for the future of the program. You can create vision boards during a staff meeting, or ask the staff to come to the staff meeting with vision boards they have already created.

Here is a sample plan for guiding staff in creating a collaborative vision statement:

- 1. Provide a Guiding Statement:** To create your vision board, you need to imagine that it is (insert date one year into the future), and the (name of your program) is vibrant, energized, and an amazing place for children and teachers to live and learn together.
- 2. Describe the Process and Provide Resources:** Using an 8x10 piece of paper, illustrate exactly what is happening in your vision. You can use magazine cut-outs, words, cartoons, drawings, or photographs to illustrate your vision. Your vision boards will form the foundation of our work together at our next staff meeting.
- 3. Facilitate a Vision Focused Staff Meeting:**

Share key thoughts on the importance of having a shared vision, use these and/or add your own thoughts on the benefits to your program:

### **Key Benefits of Having A Vibrant Vision Statement**

- Provides clarity on where the program is headed
- Fuels the energy needed to move away from the way we have always done it to and to what we desire to be
- Paints a clear picture of your program operating at its highest level of success
- Highlights the professional aspirations of everyone in the program
- Increases the passion, intentionality, and engagement of everyone in the program
- Builds collaboration that is essential to program-wide transformation
- Guides the transformational journey of growth for the program

Then divide the staff into groups of 4-5 and have them do the following:

- Share their vision boards
  - Summarize the key points of the group's visions on a flip-chart
  - Share their key points with the larger group
4. **Form a Vision Committee:** Ask for a couple of volunteers to join you in crafting a draft vision statement. The committee can begin by creating a summary of the key points from all the groups and then work on a draft vision statement that is clear, compelling, empowering and motivational. Share the draft(s) with the staff and ask for feedback before finalizing it.
5. **Live Your Vision!** Create visually appealing posters with the vision statement and post them with photos that capture the vision coming to life throughout the program. Use the vision as the foundation for creating meaningful and relevant professional development goals and learning experiences. Successfully weaving the vision into the daily life of the program will build a renewed sense of purpose and increase engagement.

**Additional Options:** This process can be replicated with board members and/or parents.

**Additional Resources:**

**More information on Vision Boards and Staff Meeting ideas can be found in my [books](#):**  
MacDonald, Susan. *Inspiring Early Childhood Leadership: Eight Strategies to Ignite Passion and Transform Program Quality*. Lewisville, NC: Gryphon House, 2016

MacDonald, Susan. *Inspiring Professional Growth: Empowering Strategies to Lead, Motivate and Engage Early Childhood Teachers*. Lewisville, NC: Gryphon House, 2019

**Vision Board Overview Video:**

How to Create a Vision Board – Jack Canfield  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iamZEW0x3dM>

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## INSPIRING PROFESSIONAL GROWTH - RESOURCES

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- Wiseman, Liz. *The Multiplier Effect. Tapping the Genius inside Our Schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2013