

# Character Education



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# Definition

“Character” =

“Agency, Attitudes, Behaviors, Dispositions,  
Mindsets, Personality, Temperament, Values”

= “Social & Emotional Skills” (OECD)

~~“Non-Cognitive”~~ ~~“Soft skills”~~

# Why Character Education ?

Financial instability

Religious fundamentalism

Climate change

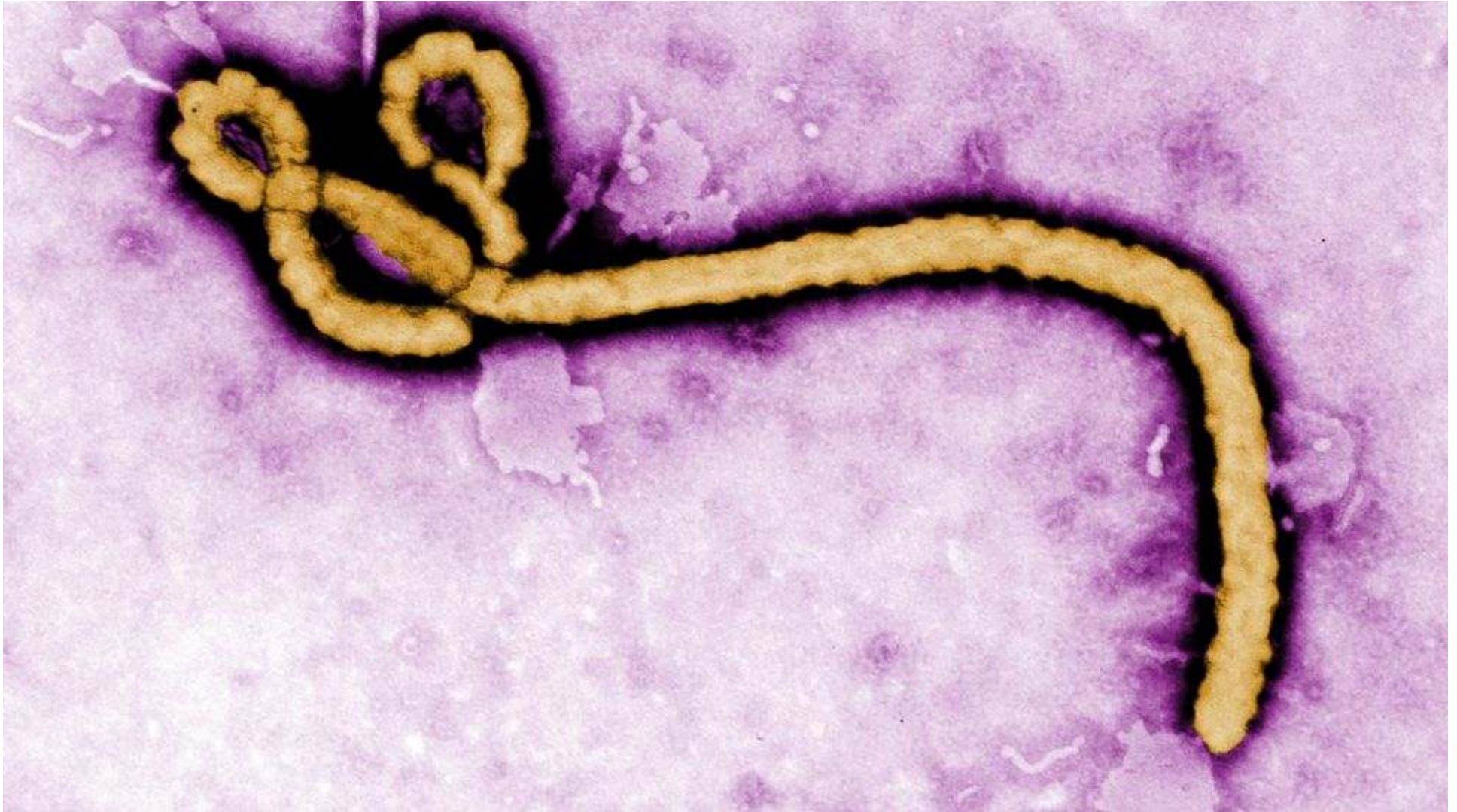
Personal privacy

Political partisanship

*Our Human Interdependency !*



# Human Interdependency...



# Per UNESCO

“There is every reason to place **renewed emphasis on the moral and cultural dimensions of education**... this process must begin with self-understanding through... knowledge, meditation and the practice of self-criticism.”

Report from the International Commission on Education in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,  
UNESCO 1996



# Wisdom from movies

“Today you have to think like a hero merely to behave like a decent human being.”

Sean Connery's character in The Russia House

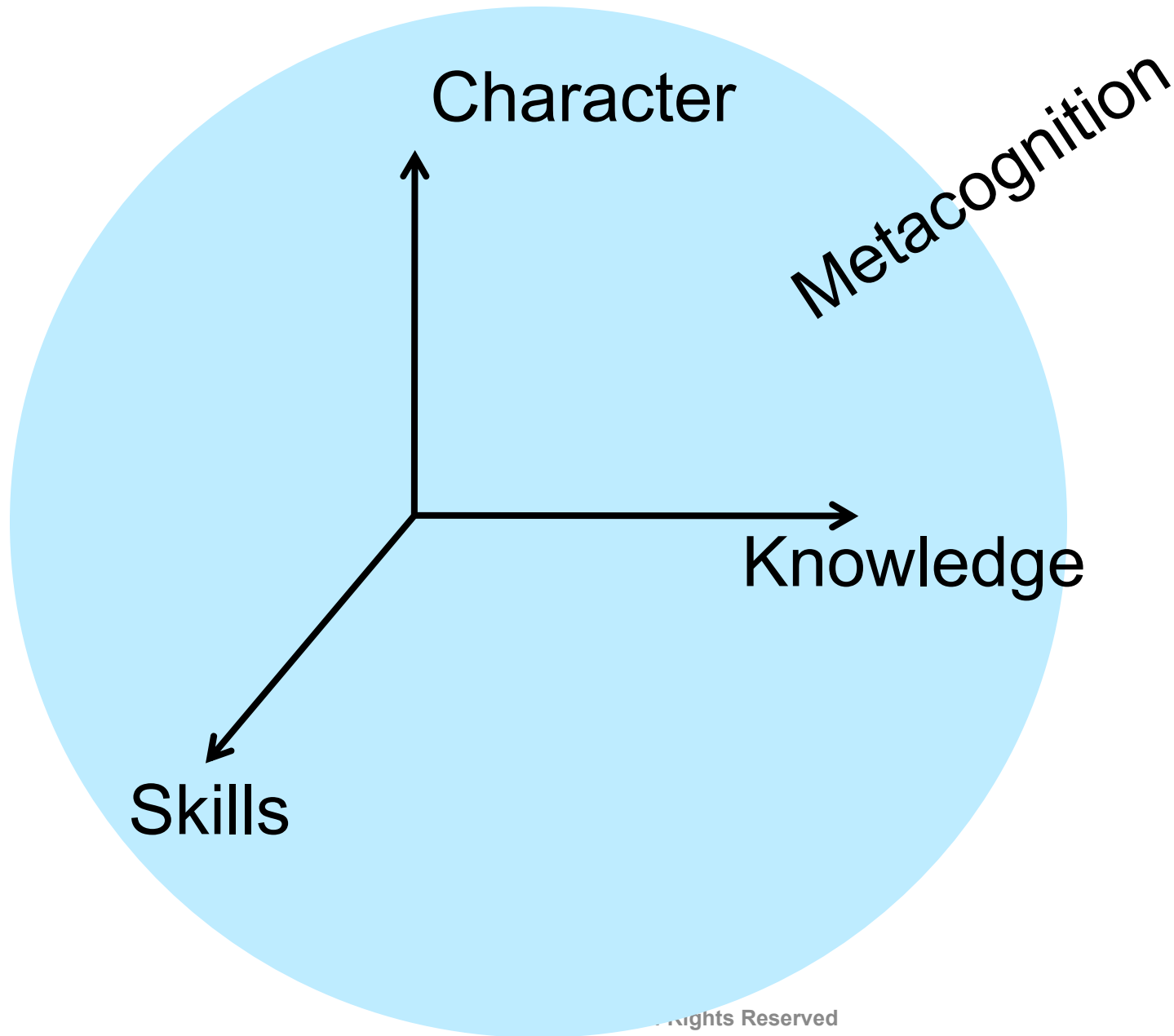


# Why should formal education systems teach Character ?

Weakening of past structures (government, religions) right when we need Character most...



# Desired: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education





# More Definitions: Skills

## The 4C's:

- Creativity/Innovation
- Critical Thinking
- Communication
- Collaboration

Source: "21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills" by Bernie Trilling & Charles Fadel, based on P21.org's framework

# Why a Framework ?

What gets expressed gets focused on !



# What makes a robust framework ?

1. Completeness → no misses
2. Compactness → actionable
3. Uncorrelated → no duplication
4. Appropriate layer of abstraction → sensical



# Why not use an existing framework ?

We could not find one that met all our criteria...



# How did we Proceed ?

Synthesized then refined a composite of many frameworks from around the world:

- CAEC
- Character Counts! Coalition
- CharacterEd.Net
- Character Education Partnership
- China MoE
- Facing History and Ourselves
- KIPP Schools
- P21.org
- Royal Society for the Arts
- Singapore MoE
- South Korea MoE
- Success DNA
- Sweden MoE
- Thailand MoE
- Young Foundation
- Etc.

Refined even more with inputs from 500+ teachers

# Incorporating Education Philosophers

## Commonality of Concepts

Gardner:

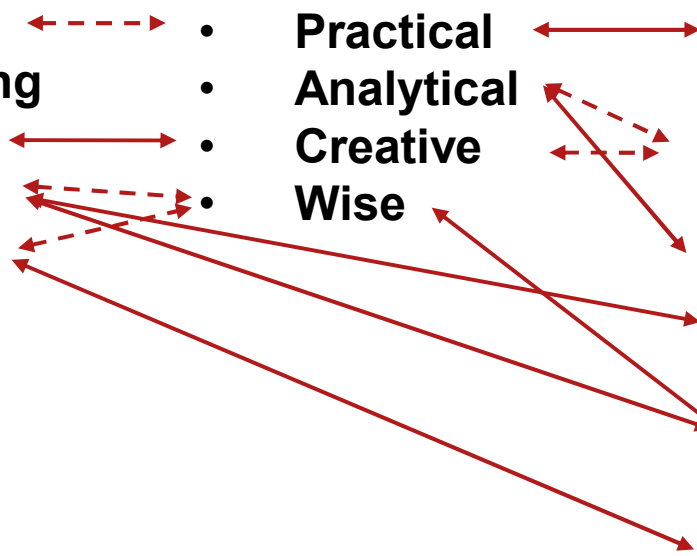
- **Disciplined**
- **Synthesizing**
- **Creating**
- **Respectful**
- **Ethical**

Sternberg:

- **Practical**
- **Analytical**
- **Creative**
- **Wise**

Morin:

- **Pertinence in knowledge**
- **Confronting uncertainties**
- **Detecting errors**
- **Understanding each other**
- **Teaching the human condition**
- **Ethics for humanity**



# Evolution - 2011

		Experience-based	Subject-based
		Attitudes	Values
U.S. Programs	Center for the Advancement of Ethics and Character <sup>1</sup>	Courage, Diligence, Kindness, Self-Discipline	Honesty, Justice, Responsibility, Wisdom
	Character Counts! Coalition <sup>2</sup>	Caring	Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Citizenship
	Character Education Partnership <sup>3</sup>	Self-Discipline, Caring	Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, Integrity
	Facing History and Ourselves <sup>4</sup>	Resiliency, Caring	Citizenship, Fairness, Justice, Respect, Responsibility
International Programs	China Character Education <sup>5</sup>	Patience	Equality, Justice, Citizenship, Respect, Responsibility
	Singapore Character and Moral Education (CME) <sup>6</sup>	Caring, Resiliency	Citizenship, Respect, Integrity, Responsibility
	South Korea Moral Education <sup>7</sup>	Kindness	Responsibility, Citizenship, Honesty, Respect
	Swedish National Agency for Education <sup>8</sup>	Diligence, Perseverance, Self-Discipline	Respect, Responsibility, Citizenship
	Thailand (Philosophy of "Sufficiency Economy") <sup>9</sup>	Diligence, Perseverance, Patience	Honesty, Integrity

# Evolution – 2012 (1)

**Performance** “character”: one’s mastery and thrust for excellence in life, school, and the workplace

Trait	Related Traits and concepts
<b>Adaptability</b>	Flexibility, dealing with ambiguity, feedback,
<b>Resilience</b>	Diligence, discipline, perseverance, patience, effort, grit, confidence, tenacity, ...
<b>Curiosity</b>	Open-mindedness, inquisitiveness, playfulness, passion, exploration, ...
<b>Initiative</b>	Self-direction, self-discipline, self-control, timeliness, motivation, ...
<b>Socialization</b>	Cross-cultural, diversity, listening, speaking, decorum, observation, cooperation...
<b>Productivity</b>	Accountability, conscientiousness, efficiency, project /program management, results-orientation, precision, load management, focus, execution, dependability, reliability, ...
<b>Leadership</b>	Engagement, inspiration, responsibility, following, decisiveness, consistency,, leading via example, selflessness, altruism, mentorship, goal-orientation, commitment, organization & delegation, patience, accountability, vision, self-reflection, collaboration,



# Evolution – 2012 (2)

**Moral** “character” (relational and ethical): **wisdom**, and how one treats oneself and others, in interpersonal, social and occupational matters

Trait	Related Traits and Concepts
<b>Integrity</b>	Honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, authenticity, genuineness, ethics, virtue, decency, ...
<b>Fairness</b>	Justice, civic-mindedness, equity, sportsmanship, citizenship, social perspective, forgiveness, mercy, ...
<b>Respect</b>	Self-respect, respect for others, honor, reverence, humility, receptivity
<b>Courage</b>	Fortitude, determination, resilience, grit, confidence, stability, bravery, persistence, grace, risk taking, prudence, toughness,...
<b>Zest</b>	Gratitude, optimism, passion, inspiration, enthusiasm, verve, energy, vigor, zeal, cheerfulness, spunk, spontaneity, humor, ...
<b>Empathy</b>	Care, kindness, compassion, tolerance, generosity, charity, cheerfulness, helpfulness, devotion, love, inclusiveness, belonging, camaraderie, humaneness, consideration, ...
<b>Self-Awareness</b>	Consciousness, mindfulness, presence, tranquility, spirituality, balance, self-actualization, existentiality, oneness, beauty, acceptance, appreciation, interconnectedness, insight, patience, sensibility, ...

# 2013, along OECD Classification

Type	Purpose	Trait	Leading to	and to associated Traits and Concepts
MORAL	Managing Self	<i>Self-awareness</i>	Empathy	Mindfulness, balance, self-actualization, self-esteem, vision, care, kindness, compassion, consideration
		<i>Courage</i>	Zest	Determination, fortitude, grit, confidence, persistence risk taking, toughness, enthusiasm, energy, zeal optimism, cheerfulness
		<i>Ethics</i>	Integrity, fairness, respect	Generosity, humaneness, inclusiveness, tolerance, loyalty, honesty, truthfulness, forgiveness, justice, equity
PERFORMANCE	Working with others	<i>Cooperation</i>	Socialization	listening, speaking, sharing, social awareness, execution cross-cultural awareness, efficiency, conscientiousness,
		<i>Leadership</i>	Productivity	Engagement, humbleness, commitment, mentorship, consistency, leading by example, reliability, focus
	Achieving Goal	<i>Curiosity</i>	Initiative	Open-mindedness, enthusiasm, exploration, innovation, passion, self-direction, motivation,
		<i>Resilience</i>	Adaptability	Flexibility, dealing with ambiguity, diligence, discipline, perseverance, patience, grit, confidence, tenacity

# With thanks to three generations of researchers



Scott Cody



Michaela Horvathova



Maya Bialik



## Along the way, we found that:

- Distinction of Moral vs Performance is difficult and partially duplicative
- Distinction of Inter- vs Intra-personal is also unnecessary for the same reasons

# Finally Unveiling in 2014: 6 Qualities

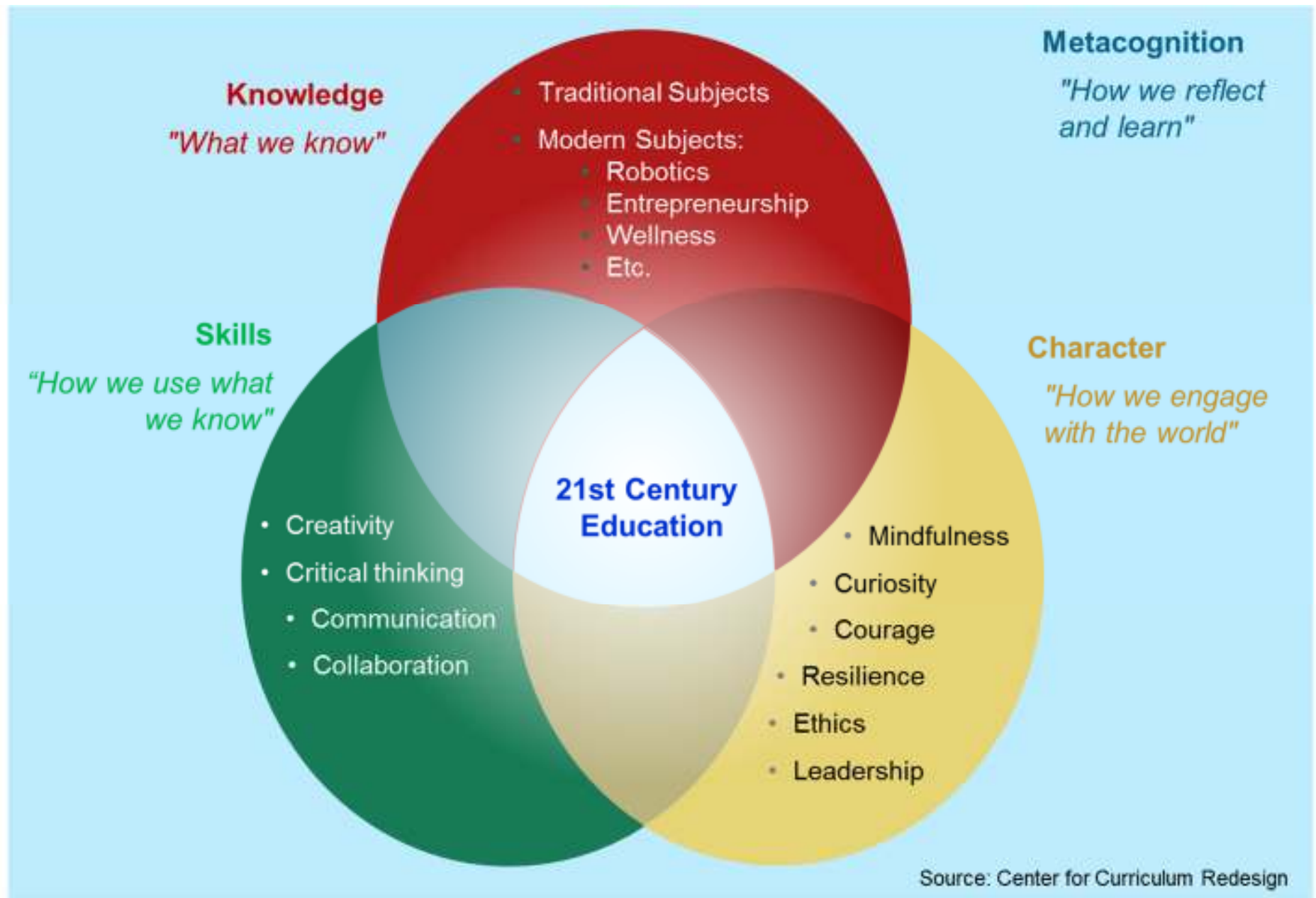
Top Qualities	Associated Traits and Concepts (non-exhaustive)
<b><i>Mindfulness</i></b>	Self-awareness, self-actualization, growth, vision, insight, observation, consciousness, compassion, equanimity, happiness, authenticity, listening, presence, sharing, interconnectedness, empathy, sensibility, patience, acceptance, appreciation, tranquility, balance, spirituality, existentiality, oneness, gratitude, interdependency, social awareness, cross-cultural awareness...
<b><i>Curiosity</i></b>	Open-mindedness, exploration, passion, self-direction, motivation, wonder, beauty, initiative, innovation, enthusiasm, spontaneity...
<b><i>Courage</i></b>	Bravery, determination, fortitude, confidence, risk taking, persistence, toughness, zest, optimism, inspiration, energy, vigor, zeal, cheerfulness, humor...
<b><i>Resilience</i></b>	Perseverance, resourcefulness, tenacity, grit, spunk, self-esteem, charisma, confidence, adaptability, stability, dealing with ambiguity, flexibility, self-discipline, commitment, self-control, feedback, effort, diligence...
<b><i>Ethics</i></b>	Benevolence, humaneness, kindness, respect, justice, equity, fairness, compassion, altruism, tolerance, inclusiveness, integrity, loyalty, honesty, truthfulness, trustworthiness, decency, authenticity, genuineness, consideration, forgiveness, virtue, love, care, helpfulness, generosity, charity, devotion, belonging...
<b><i>Leadership</i></b>	Responsibility, abnegation, accountability, selflessness, humbleness, inspiration, integrity, organization, delegation, mentorship, commitment, heroism, followership, engagement, leading by example, goal-orientation, consistency, self-reflection, dependability, reliability, conscientiousness, efficiency, results orientation, focus, precision, execution, socialization, negotiation, diversity, modesty, decorum...

## Good to Hear

“...it is already a very attractive framework for its accessibility, comprehensiveness and relevance.”

Koji Miyamoto,  
OECD

# CCR's Framework



# A Dynamic View

## *Mindfulness*

### Engage

- *Curiosity*
- *Courage*

### Sustain

- *Resilience*

### Act

- *Ethics*
- *Leadership*

## Apply to Skills and to Knowledge

- *Creativity, Critical Thinking, Communication, Collaboration*



# Practices to Learn Skills, Character, and Metacognition

Practice*	Challenge	Goal
Play	Social Interactions	Serendipity
Didactic	Engagement	Inspiration
Inquiry	Question	Answer
Debate	Issue	Position
Design	Problem	Solution
Performance	Perspective	Expression
Sport	Physical & Mental	Well-being
Contemplation	Fitness	

\* age-readiness dependent

Source: Bernie Trilling & Charles Fadel

# Forcing Education Outside the Classroom

- Sometimes out of school altogether
- Examples: Scouts; Outward Bound; etc.



**Girl Scouts**<sup>®</sup>  
Where Girls Grow Strong<sup>SM</sup>



# What about Assessments ?

Three layers:

1. Objective Assessment (tests)
2. Subjective Assessment (self, group [360, peers], etc.)
3. Anecdotal: Success + Failure stories without assessment

We cannot necessarily measure all what matters...

*but it is not a reason for not doing what matters.*

# Wisdom as Ultimate Goal

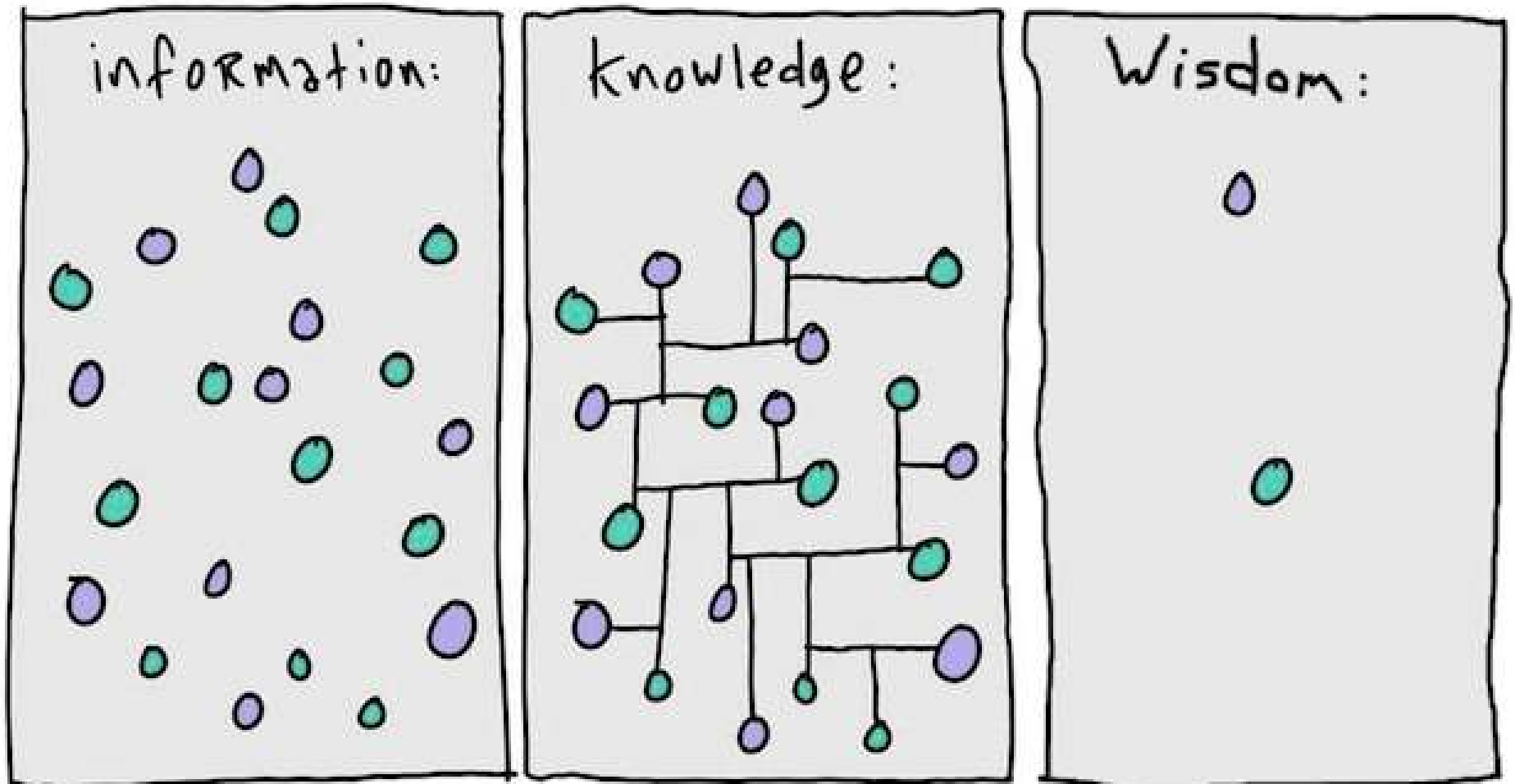
- What is Legal is not necessarily Ethical
- What is Ethical is not necessarily Wise

*“We are drowning in information, while starving for wisdom”*

E.O. Wilson

Harvard University

# What we wish to all



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# Thank you !

“What should students learn in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?”



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