



# Developing, Supporting and Growing an “Education for All” Community of Practice

CODE Webinar 3

24 November 2008

3:00 - 4:00 PM





# Welcome to Webinar 3

- Heather Campbell
  - Rainy River District School Board
- Sheila McWatters
  - Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
- Jim Costello
  - Lambton Kent District School Board
- John Fauteux
  - Council of Ontario Directors of Education
- Peter Levesque
  - Knowledge Mobilization Works



# Outline

- Recap: Systems thinking, re-culturing
- The Big Idea: Community of Practice
  - What is a CoP?
  - Who is using CoPs?
  - What are the benefits?
- Central Focus
  - Success for students with special needs
  - How to come together with the constraints we all face?
- What emerged from the Summit?



# Recap: Systems Thinking



- “Systems thinking is a discipline for seeing wholes. It is a framework for seeing **interrelationships** rather than things, for seeing **patterns** of change rather than static “snapshots.”



The Fifth Discipline, The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization, Senge, (Doubleday: 1990)



# Recap: Reculturing

call **education**. More recently, the notion of “**reculturing**” has emerged. This term goes beyond the idea of a new structure (although changes to the structure may certainly be involved) and refers, instead, to the challenge of “transforming mind-sets, visions, paradigms, images, metaphors, beliefs and shared meaning that sustain existing realities. . . . It is about inventing what amounts to a new way of life.”<sup>5</sup> This means

Creating Emotionally Safe Schools by Jane Bluestein (2001)

# How do we each reculture while systems thinking?

- Education for All
  - (framework)
- CODE projects
  - (data, information)
- Individual and collective Leadership
  - contexts
- Relationships
  - Capacities, access to resources
- Including Outside Education
  - Complex environment/ecology





# Community of Practice



- Community of practice - An affinity group. An informal network or forum where tips are exchanged and ideas generated. Thomas A. Stewart



- A group of professionals, informally bound to one another through exposure to a common class of problems, common pursuit of solutions, and thereby themselves embodying a store of knowledge. McKinsey & Co





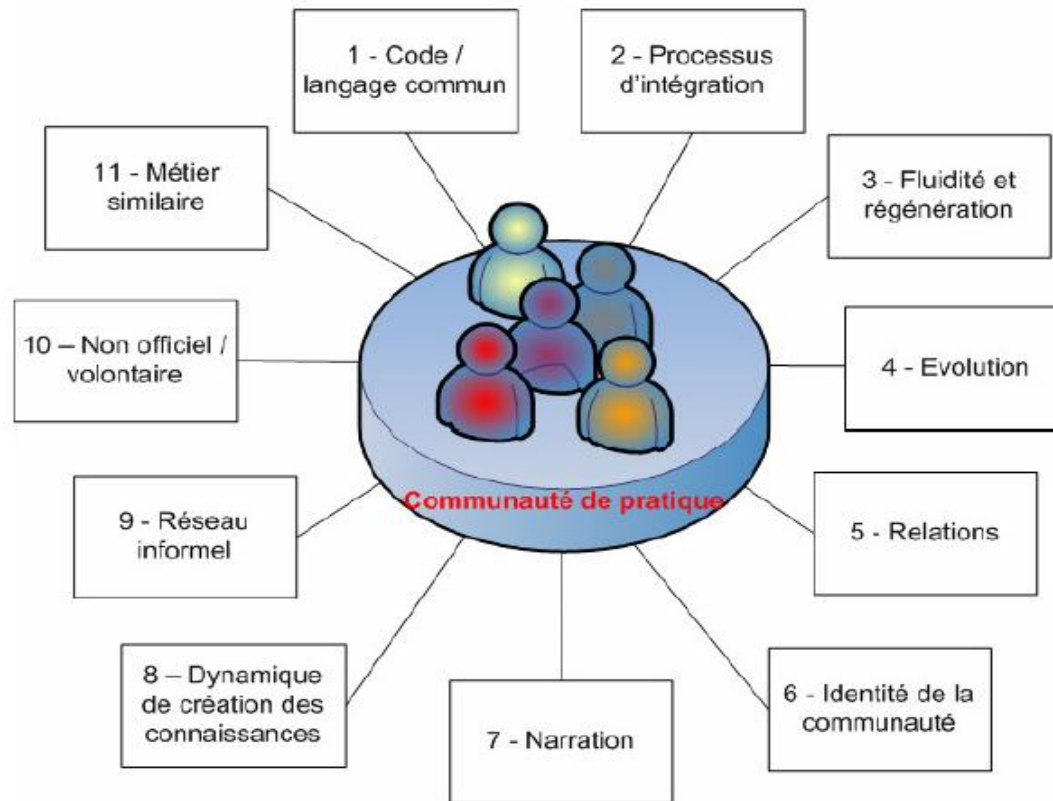
# Community of practice

« the process of social learning that occurs and shared sociocultural practices that emerge and evolve when people who have common goals interact as they strive towards those goals. »

Lave, J & Wenger E, *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*,  
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

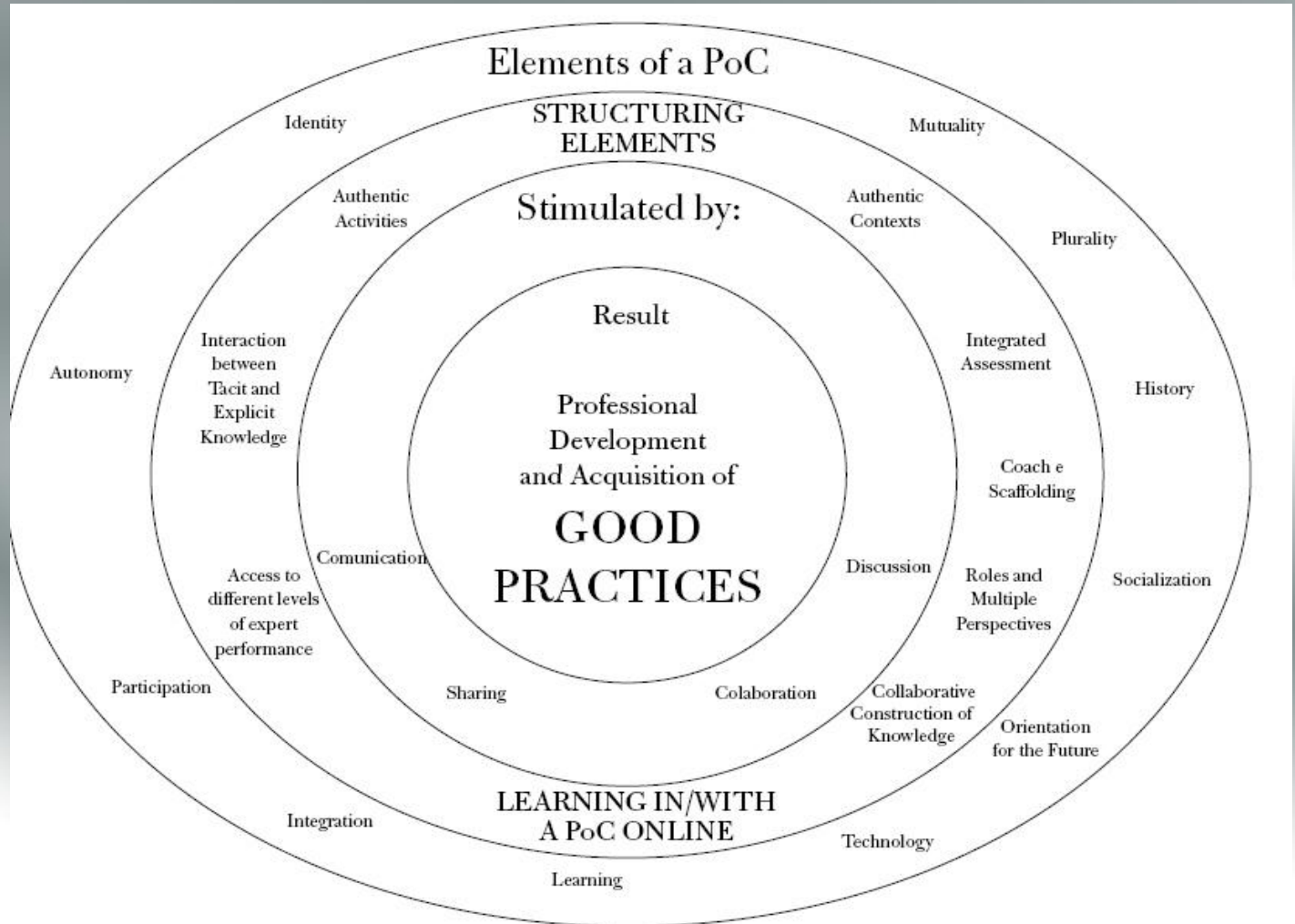
# CoP Characteristics

## Caractéristiques structurantes d'une communauté de pratique



<http://www.stefdem.com/maxdorane/CaracteristiquesCOP.pdf>

# Elements in a CoP



Scheme 2. Succinct view of the *Webheads in Action*.



# Who is using CoPs

- Learning Software Engineering
  - University of North London
- Learning about special education
  - Canadian Journal of Education
- Business Planning
  - University of Southampton
- UK Government
  - <http://www.idea.gov.uk>
- Green Building Technologies
  - New Brunswick





# Benefits of CoPs

- Problem solving
- Developing new capabilities
- Leveraging best practices
- Standardizing practices
- Time savings
- Increase in talent
- Avoiding mistakes



## Remember - Understanding the Change Process

- The goal is not to innovate the most
- It is not enough to have the best ideas
- Implementation dip
- Redefine Resistance
- Reculturing is the name of the game
- Never a checklist, always complexity



# Discussion:

- Success for students with special needs is the collective goal
  - People are the best conduits of information
  - How best to bring people together?
  - What is working/not working now?



# Discussion:

- What kind of Community of Practice?
  - Communities of Action
  - Communities of Circumstance
  - Communities of Inquiry
  - Communities of Interest
  - Communities of Position
  - Communities of Purpose
- Moderated How?
  - Face to face?
  - Video?
  - Virtual Forum online?



# Discussion:

- Who to include?
  - Parents, Teachers, Students, Business, Government, NGOs?
- What are the contributions of each?
- How is this sustained?
- How does the idea grow?

# Discussion: One or many?

- Where to start?
  - Should there be one SpecEd CoP or many looking at focused aspects?
- Is this voluntary or required?
- Constraints?
  - Reactions from Summit?
  - Reactions from local perspective?
  - Reactions from experience?



# Discussion: Next?

- Regional Meetings
- Webinars
- Summit
- NEXT?





# Remember

- "Every child is gifted. They just unwrap their packages at different times." -- unknown
- "Happiness is like a butterfly which, when pursued, is always beyond our grasp, but, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you." -- Nathaniel Hawthorne



# Contacts

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