

Daydreaming – What Needs Teaching?



The biggest concern teachers had with me in school (in the 80'ies) was that I was inattentive, always daydreaming instead of listening and learning. But how could they blame me? Outside our windows stood the most beautiful chestnut trees. Every leaf, every branch, every tree had its own personality of rhythm, its individual swaying moving-hold cycle. The parameters of wind and season shift was also at play. An endless variation to indulge in. And whenever I lost myself to it, I was transported to fantastical worlds. When teachers yelled my name, I was violently uprooted, feverishly had to recalibrate myself into the context from which the teacher was calling.

Now, in the atomized culture of Gen-3 smartphones, with an endless scroll of short, funny videos always at hand, yelling for our attention, researchers say that kids are losing the ability to daydream.

And just as it's being lost, the vital function of it is recognized. It's essential for integrating and synthesizing what we've experienced and learned. It's the process that gives everything meaning and makes knowledge usable.

This reminds us that what, and how, we teach in schools must adapt to new realities.

What is one day a behavior the school aims to eliminate, may the next day become something it must learn to cultivate. What was once deemed disruptive might now require new ways of being re-learned. Take, for example, stimming behavior. Long regarded as rude or inattentive, it is now acknowledged as a necessary way for some to process and integrate what is being taught. The same reconsideration applies to our norms around energy use, or to skills that are only useful within this particular (collapsing? or at least rapidly changing) society or civilization.

It becomes increasingly important to ask ourselves: *For what world, for what future are we teaching?* And if we don't know what future we're teaching for, how do we teach being with "the now", being present, fully attentive?

Dedicated to Idiomdrottning.

2005 you and I revisited our old high school together. We wanted to pass on a message to the kids that go there now. We wanted to tell them what we would have needed to hear back when we went there.





I
AM
YOU