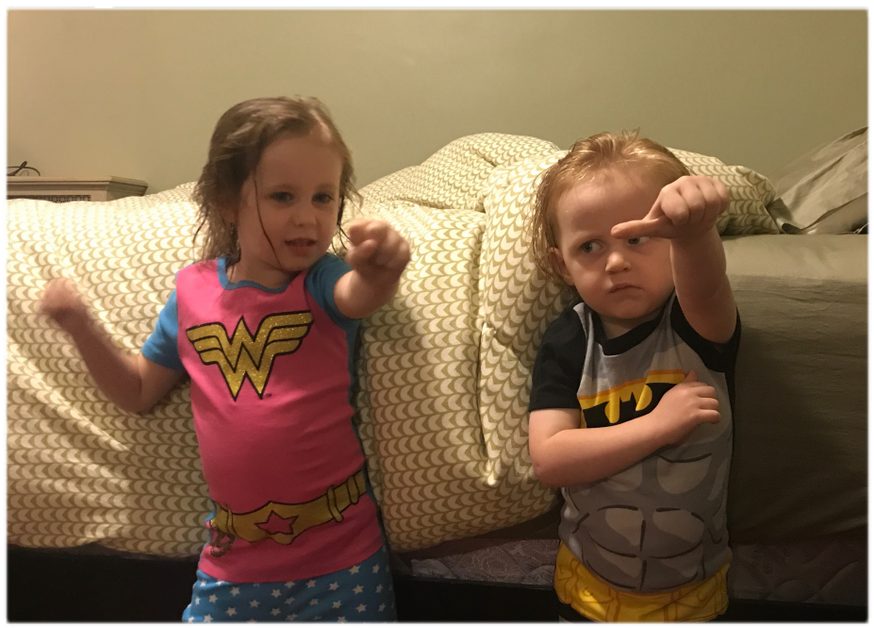
A Well-Oiled Classroom Machine

Management Mechanics and Systems Strategies



If you ever find yourself stuck in the middle of the sea,
I'll sail the world to find you
If you ever find yourself lost in the dark and you can't see,
I'll be the light to guide you
Find out what we're made of
When we are called to help our friends in need

You can count on me like one two three
I'll be there
And I know when I need it I can count on you like four three two
You'll be there
'Cause that's what friends are supposed to do, oh yeah

If you tossin' and you're turnin' and you just can't fall asleep
I'll sing a song beside you
And if you ever forget how much you really mean to me
Everyday I will remind you
Find out what we're made of
When we are called to help our friends in need

Chorus

You'll always have my shoulder when you cry
I'll never let go, never say goodbye, you know you can

Chorus

Are We There Yet?!

- The Prepared Environment
- Respect for Self Construction as the Child's Work
- Preparation of the Adult
- Work of the Adult

"You are the most important material with which the children will work."

What is a System?

A **system** is a set of connected things or parts forming a complex whole; a set of principles or procedures according to which something is done; an organized scheme or method.

Ludwig von Bertalanffy

General Systems Theory

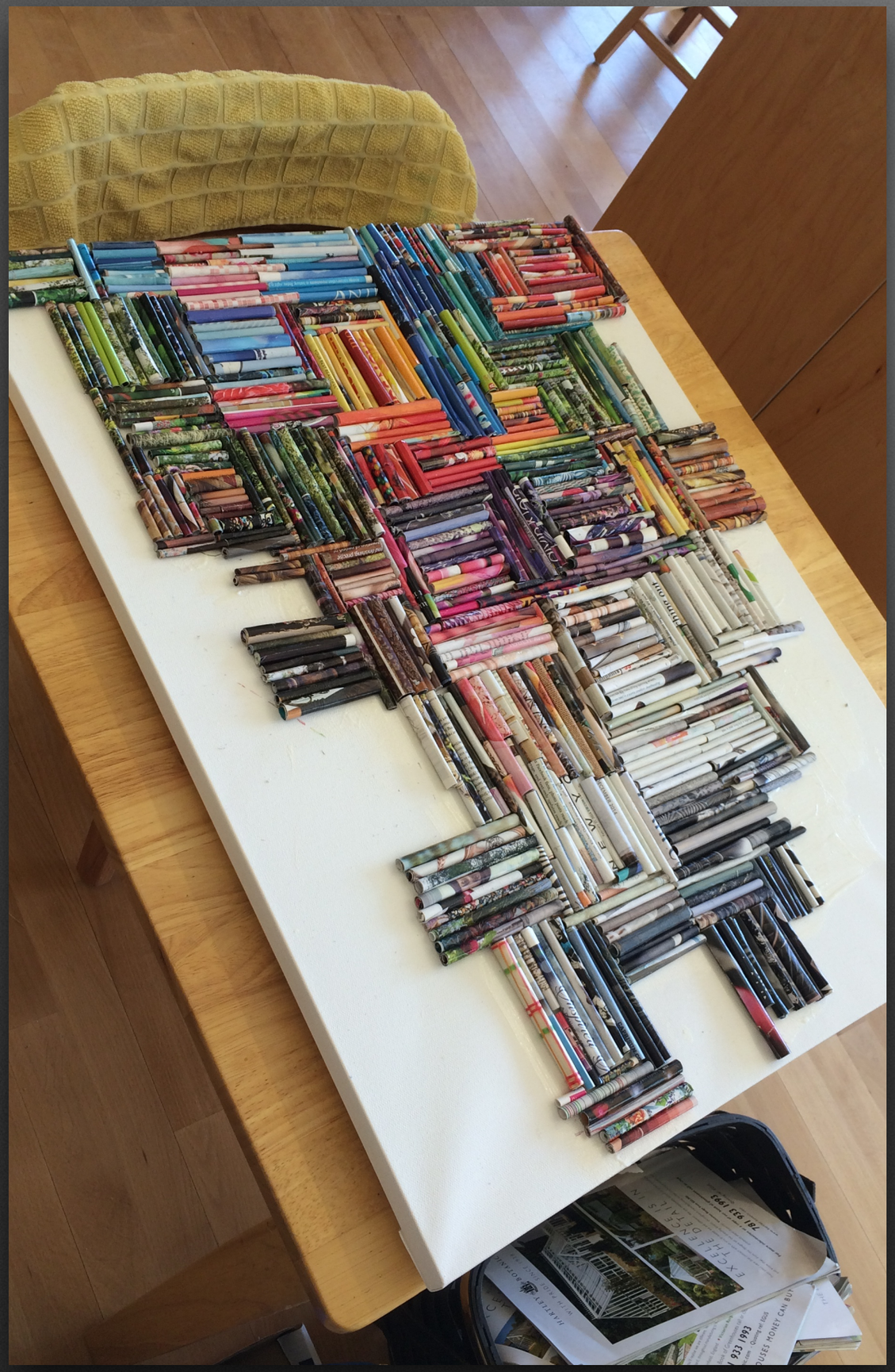
whole school, each classroom, managing transition times, learning journals, how the dishwasher gets unloaded….. we will brainstorm some more later!!

- *a system is composed of parts*
- *a system is other than the sum of its parts*
- *all the parts of a system must be related (directly or indirectly), else there are really two or more distinct systems*
- *a system can be nested inside another system*
- *a system can overlap with another system*
- *a system receives input from, and sends output into, the wider environment*
- *a system consists of processes that transform inputs into outputs*

What is Systems Thinking?

Systems Thinking is a disciplined way of understanding dynamic relationships that enables you to make better choices and avoid unintended consequences. Through Systems Thinking, a practitioner will have a better understanding of the interdependent components that create a system and be able to identify the leverage points for effective intervention.

(iseesystems.com)



Why Should We Think Like Systems Analysts?

"…enables you to make better choices and avoid unintended consequences."

Let’s Brainstorm!

I AM NOT AN
EARLY BIRD OR A
NIGHT OWL.
I AM SOME FORM
OF PERMANENTLY
EXHAUSTED
PIGEON.

How Can We Think Like Systems Analysts?

- Analysis: to take apart
- Identify the objectives, constraints, and alternative courses of action; consider the stakeholders
- Mental models inform decision making
- Synthesis: to put together

Be decisive.

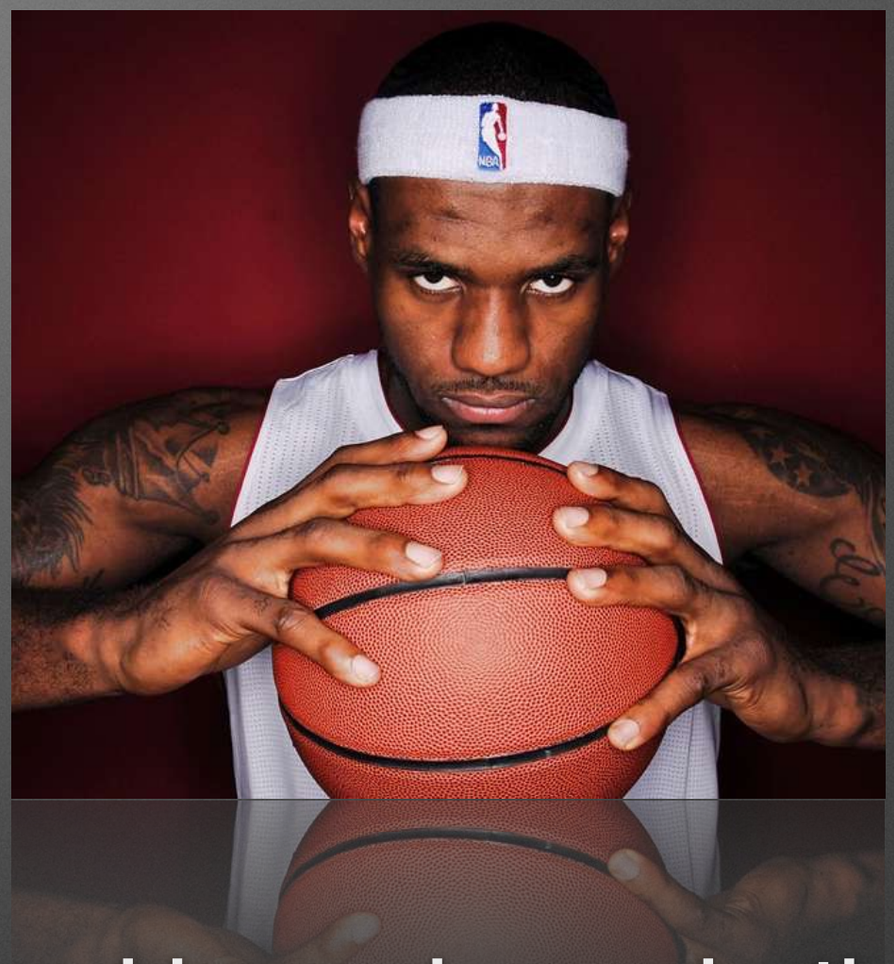
Right or wrong,
make a decision.

The road of life
is paved with
flat squirrels
who couldn't
make a decision.

Make Up Your Mind!

200-300 interactions/ exchanges per hour (Jackson, 1990)

That's 1,200-1,500 decisions per day



Teaching as improvisation

All of our on-the-spot decisions reinforce the "hidden curriculum"

Hidden Curriculum

- “The hidden curriculum consists of those things pupils learn through the experience of attending school rather than the stated educational objectives of such institutions.” (Haralambos, 1991)
- Often used when talking about social disparities and reinforcement of existing social inequalities, and has negative connotations in such use
- Anything that is not the “official curriculum”
- Transmission of norms, values, and beliefs
- “They are picking up an approach to living and an attitude to learning.” (Meighan, 1981)

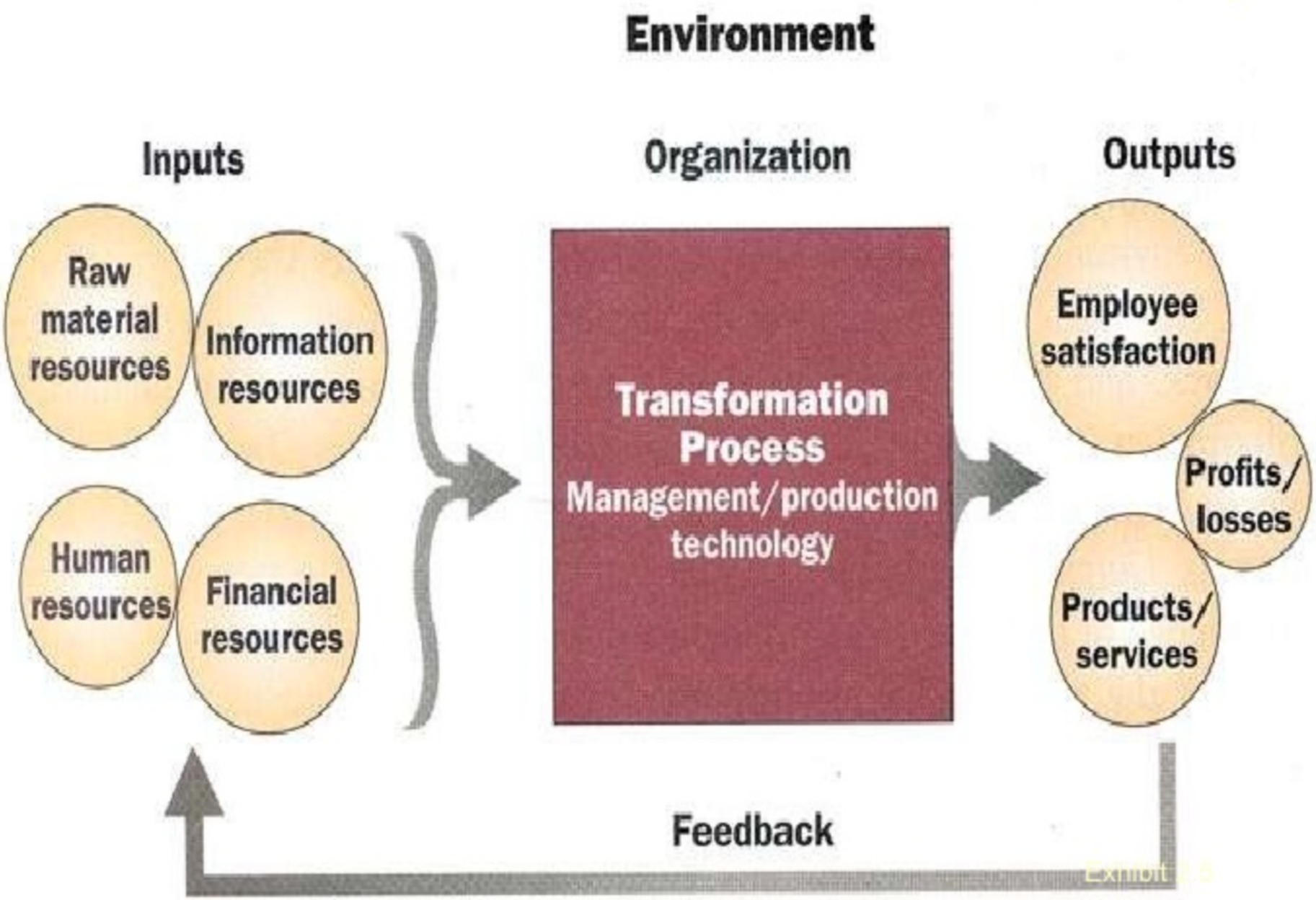
Montessori Values

The hidden curriculum is our “WHY”

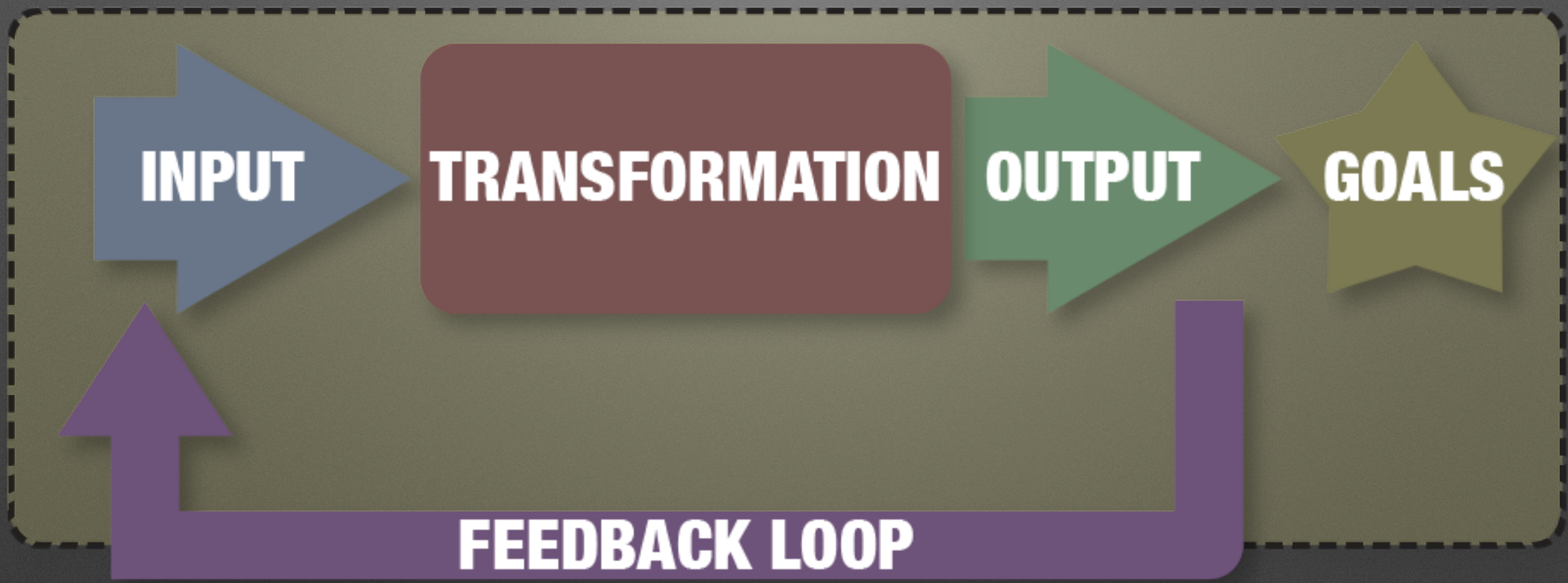
- Education for peace
- It’s what sets us apart
- Respect for children’s self-construction
- Trust in the child
- Honoring children’s work


Some days I amaze myself.
Other days I look for my phone while I´m talking on it.

Systems View of Organizations



Sociological Systems



Operate in light of goals, stakeholders, and external influences to make an organization healthy or unhealthy

A few examples…..

Think about something in your own classroom that's not working as well as you'd like. Analyze it like a system. What are the inputs? What are the outputs? How are you getting your feedback? Now…. What can you change? Where are your leverage points for effective intervention?

Break into groups:
6-9 and 9-12

Break into smaller groups and discuss.

Ambition Toward Mastery

- The most important systems of all are the ones that keep the spark of learning—the fire of discovery—alive in the child

- Google It! Ask Siri!

- We must be conscious thinkers, innovators, and decision-makers in light of a new view of the world.

Discussion

- What is mastery? How do we know what children know? Do they know what they know?

- How do we help children be conscious of their own levels of mastery? How do we encourage them to truly master things instead of getting instant answers from technology?

- How do we promote a classroom culture of self-awareness and ambition toward mastery? What support do we give to Great Work?

- What systems can we create to support children and keep them grounded and motivated to discover and work in light of this new globalized culture?

- How can we help children be the contributors to the hive mind, rather than just passive takers of information?