



Poverty and Progression

The Learning Catalyst approach to raising aspirations

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Potential to move up the economic ladder



The potential to achieve is to be found in the process of development of skills such as resilience and tenacity. It is realised in the expression of a person's self-worth and self-efficacy. An individual has to believe that she can make choices and make a difference to her future if she has the chance to construct a plan which leads to the fulfilment of hope and aspiration ... If the daily work for someone is a matter for survival because of poverty, then long-term goals may never have been formed.

Joanne Waterhouse: The Learning Catalysts Project: Action Research for Raising Aspirations: University of Cambridge, 2010



We learn, when we respect the dignity of the people, that they cannot be denied the elementary right to participate fully in the solutions to their own problems. Self-respect arises only out of people who play an active role in solving their own crises and who are not helpless, passive, puppet-like recipients of private or public services. To give people help, while denying them a significant part of the action, contributes nothing to the development of the individual.

Saul D Alinsky: Rules for Radicals, 1971

The Learning Catalyst approach



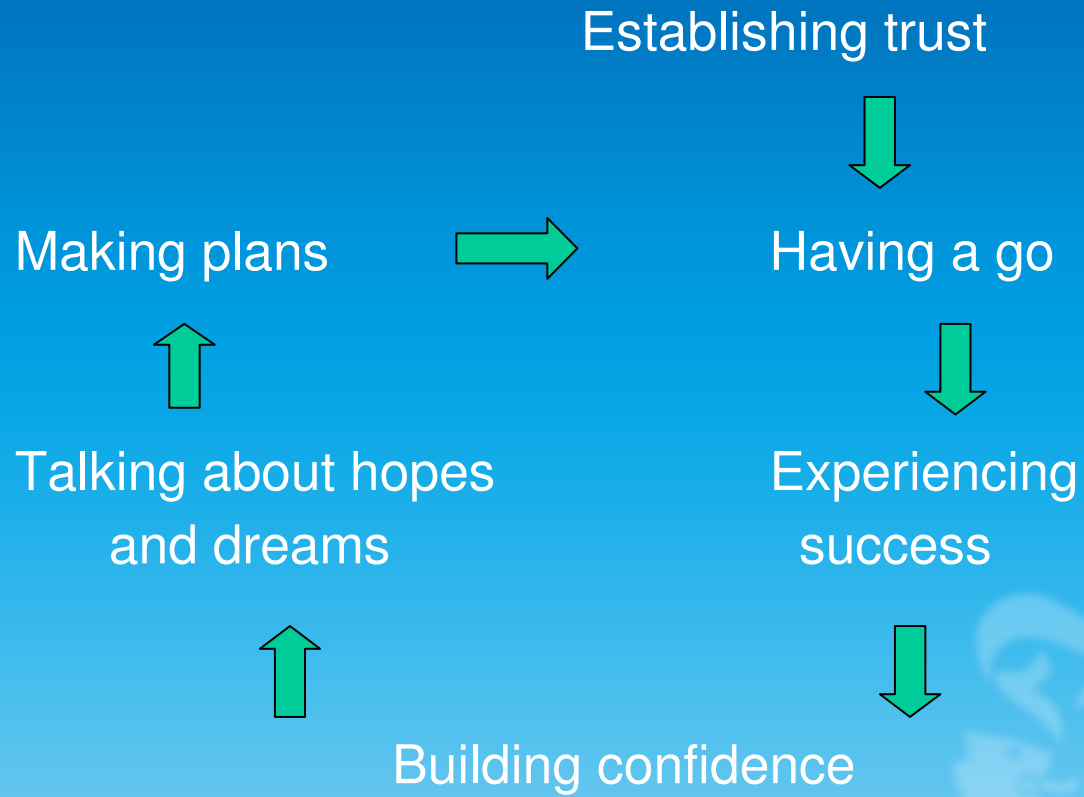
- Working with families
- Working with schools
- Working through relationships with a trusted individual

The Learning Catalyst roles



- Active, reflective and informed listener
- Initiator of conversations about hopes and dreams
- Signpost towards information, advice and guidance, translating hopes and dreams into plans
- Creator of opportunities for broadening horizons, building confidence, experiencing success, expanding the comfort zone
- Observer and recorder of progress
- Positive, 'can do' role model

A progression spiral



Resilient places need resilient people



*I said 'if you want the course, you have to do an interview first ...'
he said 'I'm not going, then' (LC case study 2009)*

*I just went into tedious, boring jobs ... the opportunities still were
never offered to you unless you obviously probably went and
found them yourself. (Family Work Stories, 2007)*

'You can do it' is almost a school mantra (Ofsted inspection 2009)

*Now I listen with more purpose, trying to encourage parents just to
try something outside their comfort zone ... they are surprised at
how much more they can do. (LC case study, 2009)*