

Empowering Partnerships: Academic Advising That Makes A Difference

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UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE

Learning Outcomes for the Conference

- Examined national trends, research, theories and best practices related to relationship building.
- Reframed and refreshed my philosophy on what I do every day.
- Reaffirmed the value of student/advisor relationship as an integral part of student development.
- Formed collaborations and partnerships within and across colleges, campuses, and universities.
- Learned techniques to enhance sustainable partnerships with my students

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where--" said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

"--so long as I get **SOMEWHERE**,"

Alice added as an explanation.

"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if you only walk long enough."

(Alice's Adventures in Wonderland,

[Chapter 6](#))



Academic Advising—Done Well

- Intentional
- Grounded
- Form of Teaching
- Facilitates Learning
- Supports Self-Authorship



Through academic advising, students learn to

- become members of their higher education community,
- think critically about their roles and responsibilities as students, and
- prepare to be educated citizens of a democratic society and a global community.

(NACADA Concept Statement)

Advising and Student Success

WHAT DO STUDENTS WANT FROM ADVISORS?

Accurate Information “Do they know?”

Accessibility “Are they there?”

Caring Attitude “Do they care?”

Does the relationship add value?





***People will forget what you say.
They will even forget what you do.
But they never forget how you
made them feel.***

Maya Angelou



Definitions: Retention

The ability of an institution to keep a student from admission through graduation



Definitions: Persistence

The desires and actions of a student to stay within the system of higher education from beginning through degree completion

Both Persistence and Retention are influenced by student interactions with the institution



Research Findings Point the Way

- Seidman (2004)
 - Programs, services & initiatives must be powerful enough to affect change in the institution and the student
- **Tinto (1993)**
 - **Retention is not the goal**
- Seidman (2007)
 - Retention is determined by the early identification of students' abilities, commitment and goals combined with early, intensive, and continuous interventions that affect both the institution and the student.



Research Findings Point the Way

- Kuh et al (2007)
 - Student success must be broadly defined and include
 - Academic achievement
 - Satisfaction
 - Persistence
 - Attainment of educational goals
 - Post-college performance

NSSE/CCSSE - Student Engagement

- The *intersection* of student behaviors and institutional conditions over which colleges and universities have at least marginal control.

Kuh, et al, 2007

NSSE/CCSSE – Student Engagement

- Educationally effective institutions channel student energy toward the *right* activities.
- The *right* activities are *High Impact*.



NSSE/CCSSE -- Student Behaviors

- What matters most is what students **do and the effort they expend**, not who they are.

What Is Also True...

- Who Students Are Affects What They Do and the Effort They Expend
- Understanding This is Important to the Academic Advising Relationship

Bean – Advising: Influencing Attitudes and Intentions

- Good advising should link a student's academic capabilities with his or her choice of courses and major, access to learning resources, and a belief that the academic pathway a student is traveling will lead to employment after college.
- Advising should be done well so students recognize their abilities and make informed choices.

Bean, 2005



In the End, Good Advising Can and Should Contribute To

- Academic and Social Integration resulting from positive experiences that increase:
 - *satisfaction with being a student at a given institution,*
 - *confidence in one's ability,*
 - *academic competence, and*
 - *one's understanding his/her educational, career and life goals.*



How Do We Help Students Get From “Here to There”?

- *It's all about the conversation--and the relationship*



Self-Authorship as a Central Goal for Higher Education in the 21st Century

Self-authorship stands at the core of the contemporary college learning outcomes identified in national reform reports.

Baxter-Magolda and King, 2004



Learning Outcomes for Higher Education in the 21st Century

- ***Cognitive Maturity***, characterized by intellectual power, reflective judgment, mature decision-making, and problem solving in the context of multiplicity
 - Knowledge as contextual or constructed from evidence from a particular context
 - Multiple perspectives exist

Baxter Magolda and King, 2004

Learning Outcomes for Higher Education in the 21st Century

- An ***integrated identity***, characterized by understanding one's own particular history, confidence, the capacity for autonomy and connection, and integrity
 - Ability to reflect on, explore, and choose enduring values
 - Internally constructed rather than adopted to seek external approval
 - Serves as a foundation for interpreting experience and conducting oneself in the world

Baxter Magolda and King, 2004

Learning Outcomes for Higher Education in the 21st Century

- ***Mature relationships***, characterized by respect for both one's own and others' particular identities and cultures and by productive collaboration to integrate multiple perspectives
 - Respect for one's own and others' identities and cultures
 - Productive collaboration to negotiate and integrate multiple perspectives and needs
 - Openness to other perspectives without being consumed by them

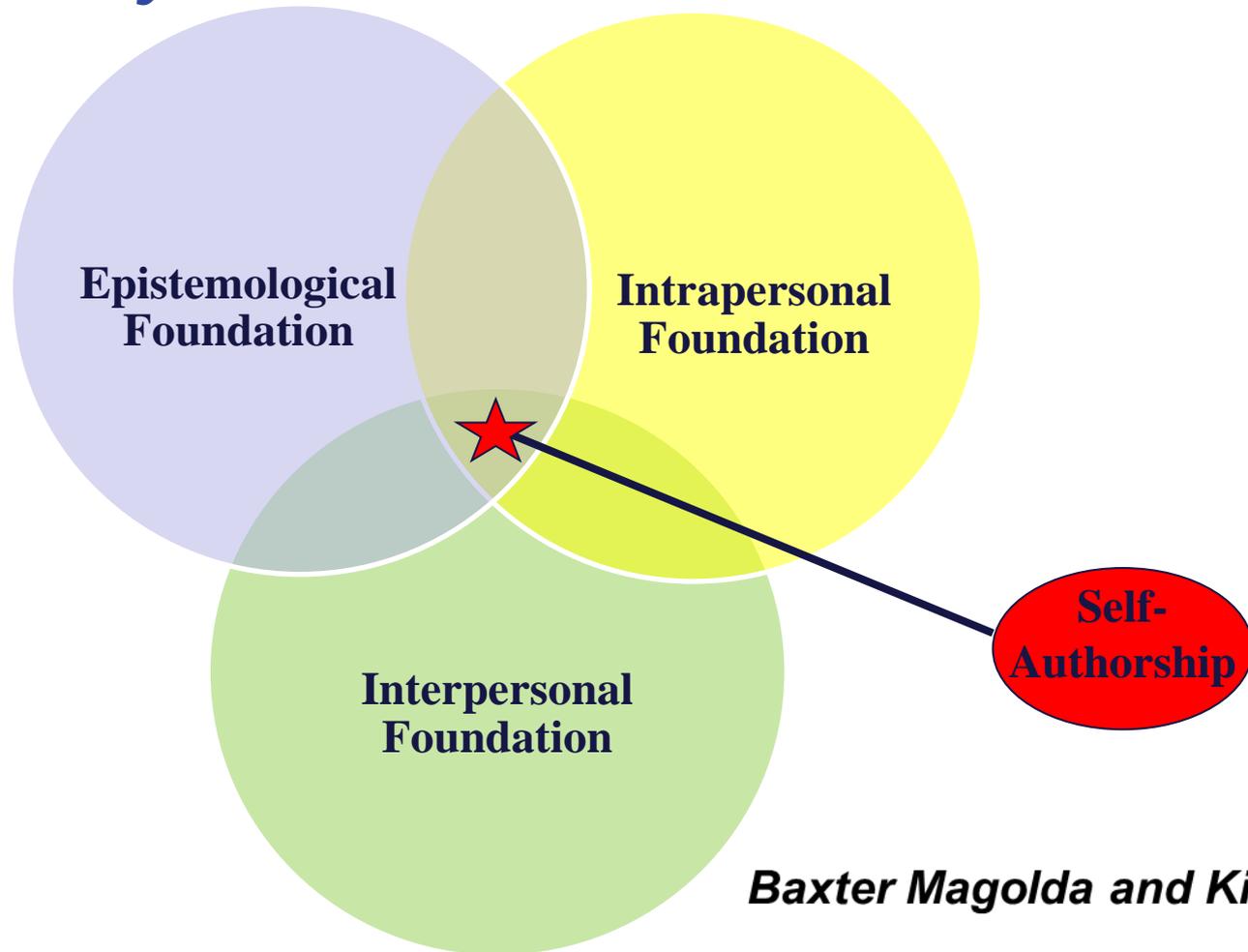
Baxter Magolda and King, 2004

Self-Authorship

Simultaneously Addresses:

- **Cognitive** - How one makes meaning of knowledge
- **Interpersonal** - How one views oneself in relationship to others
- **Intrapersonal** - How one perceives one's sense of identity

Learning Outcomes for Higher Education in the 21st Century



Baxter Magolda and King, 2004



Self-Authorship

Self-authorship is the capacity to internally define a coherent belief system and identity that coordinates engagement in mutual relations with the larger world.

Baxter Magolda and King, 2004, p. xxii

Getting to Self-Authorship through Academic Advising

Key Assumptions and Principles

Environments that Promote Self-Authorship: The Learning Partnerships Model

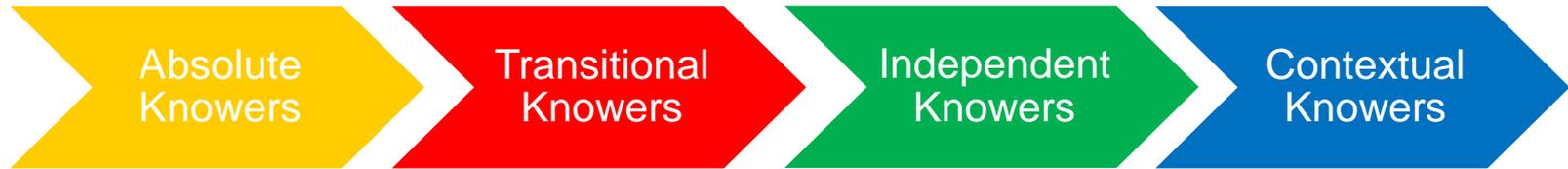
Key Assumptions (expectations that *challenge* learners)

- Assumption that knowledge is complex and socially constructed
- Assumption that self is central to knowledge construction
- Assumption that authority and expertise are shared in the mutual construction of knowledge among peers

Baxter Magolda and King, 2004, p. 41-42

Knowledge is Complex and Socially Constructed

Developmental Continuum:





Knowledge is Complex and Socially Constructed

Absolute
Knowers

knowledge exists in absolute form

Transitional
Knowers

*shift from acquiring to understanding,
particularly when faced with uncertainty*

Independent
Knowers

*shift toward thinking for oneself—
authorities and self are equal partners*

Contextual
Knowers

*look at all aspects & integrate one's own
and others' views*



Knowledge is Complex and Socially Constructed

Absolute Knowing was prevalent during the first two years of college and virtually disappeared by the senior year

Transitional Knowing was prevalent during college but dissipated after college

Independent Knowing emerged late in college and further after college

Contextual Knowing rarely occurred in college but developed for most participants after college



Knowledge is Complex and Socially Constructed

How Do We Help Students Learn to Choose from Multiple Alternatives?

Self is Central to Knowledge Construction

- The encouragement to define oneself and bring this to all of life's roles and relationships with others

Authority and Expertise are Shared in the Mutual Construction of Knowledge Among Peers

- The invitation and necessity to participate as equal partners in the construction of knowledge
- The ability to function inter-dependently with others

Conditions that Promote Self-Authorship: The Learning Partnerships Model

Key Principles (*Support for learners to move toward self-authorship*)

- Validating Learners' Capacity to Know
 - *Interest and Respect*
- Situating Learning in Learners' Experience
 - *Basis for Continued Learning & Decision-making*

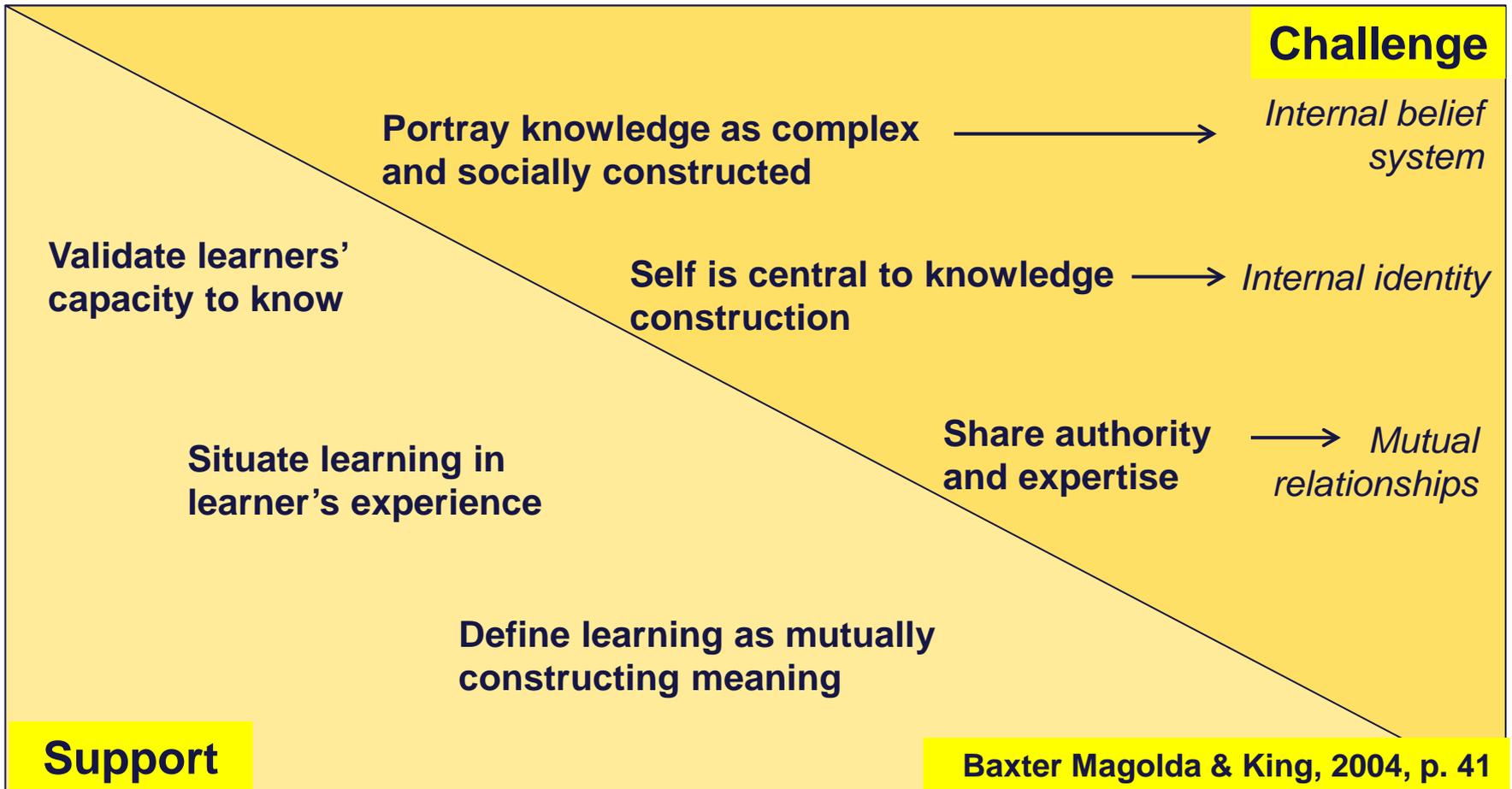
Baxter Magolda and King, 2004, p. 41-42

Conditions that Promote Self-Authorship: The Learning Partnerships Model

- Mutually Constructing Meaning
 - *Connecting one's own knowledge to that of Students' to move toward more complex ways of knowing and understanding*

Baxter Magolda and King, 2004, p. 41-42

The Learning Partnerships Model



The Learning Partnerships Model and Academic Advising

- Becoming self-authored requires transformational learning that helps students “learn to negotiate and act on [their] own purposes, values, feelings, and meanings rather than those [they] have uncritically assimilated from others”.

Mezirow, 2000

- The shift to self-authorship occurs when students
 - encounter challenges that bring their assumptions into question,
 - have opportunities to reflect on their assumptions, and
 - are supported in reframing their assumptions into more complex frames of reference.

Baxter Magolda, 2008

Creating the Context: Building the Bridge to Support Self-Authorship

Bridge must be both:

- ***Meaningful*** to students' current way of making meaning
- ***Facilitative*** of a more complex way of making meaning
-And Anchored on both sides!

Creating the Context/Building the Bridge to Support Self-Authorship

“...we cannot simply stand on our favored side of the bridge and worry or fume about the many who have not yet passed over. A bridge must be well anchored on both sides, with as much respect for where it begins as for where it ends.”

Kegan in Baxter Magolda, 1999

Academic Advising: Intentional, Self-Reflective Conversations with Students to Support Self-Authorship

Four Phases of the Conversation

- Getting Acquainted
- Encouraging Reflection About Important Experiences (what and why)
- Encouraging Interpretation of These Reflections
 - Insights and how these might inform academic decisions
- Concluding Thoughts

Magolda and King, 2008

To Be Effective in Supporting Self-Authorship

As Academic Advisors we must understand ourselves as Learners and as Teachers:

- *How do we make meaning of knowledge (**Cognitive**)*
- *How do we view ourselves in relationship to others (**Interpersonal**)*
- *How do we perceive our own sense of identity (**Intrapersonal**)*

Where are we on the developmental continuum toward self-authorship?

“Advising does for the student’s entire curriculum what the teacher does for the single course.”

Marc Lowenstein

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