

One-to-One

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Dear Colleague,

Welcome to the October edition of the AALF newsletter. You'll notice a change in this month's newsletter. We've decided to devote each issue of the newsletter to a specific topic. Appropriately, this month's issue is focused on Change. AALF **President, Bruce Dixon** writes about Disruption, Innovation and Education; **Susan Einhorn**, Executive Director of AALF, shares her thoughts on the process of change; and, **Karen Ward**, Manager of Coaching/Consulting Services, reflects on how to think differently about technology, instruction, and learning. Ron Canuel, Director General of the Eastern Townships School Board in Quebec, Canada, shares some of his thoughts on how to create systemic change. We also introduce you to another AALF Coach, Melissa Tothoro. You will want to be sure you read the details about the upcoming AALF **Anytime Anywhere Learning and Teaching Academy** for teachers and school leaders.

Enjoy!



President's Message

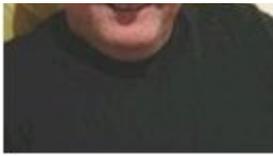
Disrupting Thought

By **Bruce Dixon**, President

[Anytime Anywhere Learning Foundation](#)



Over the past couple of months, I have been interested to see just how many people I have come across who are reading, or have read Clayton Christensen's new book *Disrupting Class, How Disruptive Innovation Will Change the Way the World Learns* (co-authored with Michael Horn and Curtis Johnson). Rarely has a book provoked such breadth, and dare I say it, depth of conversation around educational futures.



While I do not want to use this commentary to review the book, I do find the major thesis worthy of some reflection. In short, they suggest that there is a convergence of new technologies that will better address the needs of a group of learners they call non-consumers, who include a large number of students whose needs are currently not being met by the existing services of most schools.

These include school refusers, students requiring subjects not currently offered within their schools, students in remote communities, and home schooled students, amongst others. Seems there are already millions of students in these groups, who are looking to use well-crafted on-line, web 2.0 supported courses that provide learning opportunities that would not normally be available to them. Now the precedent for such groups to provide a platform on which these "disruptive technologies" could significantly impact mainstream education is clearly outlined, and if their thesis is correct, it adds a real urgency to the steps we are taking to better embrace technology within our schools.

This is not book that sets out make unfounded predictions about the impact of technology on education, but rather it seeks to draw our attention to the potential for a collection of emerging technologies to disrupt the role of the institution of school in learning. For whatever parts you may or may not agree with, it grants us a very different perspective on the nature and possibility of fundamental, truly transformative school reform.

While I constantly refer to Papert's challenge that we do not have enough discussion around the extent and depth of educational change, be it incremental or fundamental, Christensen et al, add a threat to current array of imperatives that are forcing us to rethink "what school could be". It is both an challenging and thought-provoking perspective which also puts in context the small steps that providing 1 to 1 access can add to the process. Hopefully, it will greatly expand the necessary conversations around serious school reform that have so far been sadly lacking.

Best!



[Disrupting Class: How Disruptive Innovation Will Change the Way the World Learns](#) by Clayton Christensen (co-authored with Michael Horn and Curtis Johnson).

AALF Leadership: Executive Director News and Thoughts

Monday vs. Someday, Change, part II

By **Susan Einhorn**, Executive Director
[Anytime Anywhere Learning Foundation](#)



I began talking about Change in the last issue of *One-to-One* and thought the topic important enough to devote this whole issue to its discussion. It seems to me that although I would like to think I'm a person who supports fundamental change, I'm not sure if we can get there in any way other than step by step. The question then becomes, is that good enough?

We often hear futurists describe what life will be like "Someday", which is, after all, what they do for a living. It usually doesn't take long for someone to remind futurists with a big "But" that what we need to think about is what we're going to do "Monday". Visions of the future are fine, but tell me what I can do now, today, in class.

What disturbs me about this is that there seems to be some kind of unbridgeable separation between Someday and Monday. To me this translates as; "maybe someone can make a fundamental change in the future, BUT for Monday, for us, we can only think in terms of tweaking what we did yesterday."

Isn't Monday the first step to, the first piece of, Someday? And isn't this refocusing our attention and actions to Someday goals something in which we can all participate?

actions to Someday goals something in which we can all participate ?

Let's face it -- it's rare that fundamental change takes place suddenly. Usually fundamental changes occur as a gradual step-by-step process. Then one day we realize how different some part of life is. The introduction of revolutionary ideas and inventions is essential for any change -- but how we as a society change because of these ideas and inventions is more evolutionary than revolutionary.

Yet, is the timeframe and the size of our stride the important factors? What these revolutionary ideas do is cause us to rethink our goals and re-imagine what is possible. Look at the OLPC and the XO laptop. The XO is, in many ways, a fundamentally different interpretation of a digital device and it's interface (although it looks similar with screen, keyboard, flip top). This has made an immediate difference in the hardware industry by spawning a slew of UMPCs (ultraportable PCs) which all look like my laptop, but smaller. Most run a Windows OS (or, in some more radical instances, a Linux OS made to look like a Windows OS). More importantly, though, it has made a difference in how we think of learning and technology for both the developed and the developing world. It clearly changed the Someday for thousands of children in the developing world, and their families, and their villages. And though their world may not be fundamentally different on Tuesday from what it was on Monday, the steps they take each day bring them to a fundamentally different future. It opened our eyes to the reality that the "world" of the world wide web had previously been a very limited one indeed. Now we have the potential of including whole populations that we hadn't realized (or chose not to realize) were excluded. As we think about what we do Monday, Wednesday, and Friday of this week, we may not change a whole lot from one day to the next, but our vision for Someday has changed, and we can use the step-by-step changes of each day to bring us there.

Therefore, I would like to stop differentiating between what we do "Monday" and what we do "Someday." We should start planning each day, whether Monday, Tuesday, or Friday, as steps towards, pieces of that fundamental change, that Someday.

Please send your comments to me at: seinhorn@aalf.org, or post them in the Issues section of the AALF web site: www.aalf.org.

Until next month,

Susan

AALF Coaching and Consulting

If You Don't Like Something--What Do You Do?

By **Karen Ward**, Manager of Coaching and Consulting Services
[Anytime Anywhere Learning Foundation](#)



If you don't like 'something' change it.

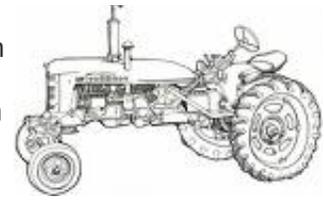
If you can't change it, change the way you think about it.

Abraham Lincoln

Michael Fullan, in his book, *The Six Secrets of Change*, tells us that a theory of action is "a way of organizing ideas that seems to make sense of the world." The simple quote above suggests a powerful theory of action for each of us around change. Either we remove the new 'something', new ideas or entities, or we identify the fact that this new idea or entity has merit and so we change our thoughts and consequently our associated actions as well. Let me relate a story to illustrate this point.

I have members of my family who are third and fourth generation ranchers in Montana. An earlier grandfather named Milt made a decision which has enabled succeeding family to continue ranching. The decision centered on changing his thinking about something new, namely horse power versus

machine power. When tractors were first becoming popular in Montana as a tool many ranchers thought they were too unsafe, too unpredictable, not worth the risk. Milt, like a few other ranchers in his region, saw an opportunity to increase his production of hay. Initially, he did not foresee the total elimination of horses in his work; instead he came to understand that tractors and horses were complimentary of one another when he employed each wisely in supporting his overall ranching endeavor. In other words, Milt identified the power behind 'something' new and changed his way of thinking about his work. His family today occasionally talks about adapting to the new, "just like Grandpa Milt."



So how does this ranching scenario connect to 1-to-1 learning? The 21st century theory of action around learning is that when students are provided 1-to-1 environments as well as access to the world through the Internet they are each given the opportunity to engage in powerful learning. This includes both content specific learning as well as self generated learning. This theory of action requires educators to learn how to think differently about their practices. There is a cost for educators. The cost includes learning how to think differently about the way lessons are organized, planned, and taught. Students need the opportunity to learn how to think not only about the class content but also about the tools available to them. To me, this power to learn how to think about learning tools and content is comparable to the mechanization of ranching.

Questions and concerns can abound with this change. Like earlier ranchers in Montana, some teachers think that this learning environment (particularly as it involves the Internet) may be too unsafe, too unpredictable, not worth the risk. But what do students think? I have had the opportunity to visit with multiple groups of 1-to-1 students in the last few months. They see different potential risks; the risk of being stuck in lecture based classes day after day; the risk of not learning how to think through modern tools; the risk of being left behind as they prepare to compete in the world marketplace. They see the opportunity to extend learning beyond the walls of the classroom. What if students knew they could participate in an academic discussion around an assigned topic with their teacher and other students after class, say in the evening; would they participate? Student responses and my personal experiences have taught me that the answer is a resounding yes!



Have a great month!
Karen

[The Six Secrets of Change, What the Best Leaders Do to Help Their Organizations Survive and Thrive](#), by Michael Fullan.

Coaches' Corner

It's Time. Let's Get Started

By **Melissa Tothoro**, AALF Coach

With an ever-increasing body of new research demonstrating that carefully implemented 1-to-1 learning programs can vastly improve the teaching and learning process, those who are fortunate enough to find themselves in leadership positions in education today are finally free to move forward to affect much needed cultural and structural changes in our educational systems on a grand scale.

For the first time, we have the justification we need to move forward with proven models of 1-to-1 integration that bring students, teachers and support staff ubiquitous access to information and communication technologies (ICT) in our schools. Bolstered by current research in neurobiology, social psychology, and learning science that supports the need for change in our schools, and the promise that ICT integration holds for advancing our entire educational systems, school administrators together with their experienced technology coaches are discovering that the 1-to-1 learning programs they are implementing in their schools provide educational opportunities that vastly improve today's students' achievement, advance digital equity, and enhance teaching and learning across the disciplines.

What an exciting time to be an educator!

Like many of you, I have been devoted to the field of education for most of my life. I am very pleased to have this opportunity to work with you as an AALF coach as you endeavor to make big, important changes in your schools. I call what you are doing heroic leadership, and I applaud you for your vision and your courage. I want you to know that we at AALF are committed to utilizing every bit of expertise we have gained during our many years of experience in 1-to-1 learning to ensure that your efforts will unfold with relative ease and with all constituents firmly on board. The result will be increased engagement, enhanced teaching and learning, and increased student achievement across the board in your schools. It sounds ambitious, and it is, but I want you to know that the results are not overstated. I have seen it happen. Together, we can transform our schools into engaging learning environments where mutual respect, unbridled potential for achievement, and shared responsibility for the creation of knowledge are hallmarks of the program.

Many rich and varied experiences during the course of my career -- from large-scale university 1-to-1 learning program development, integration and implementation at The University of Texas at Austin to instructional multimedia authoring and development to high school physics teaching -- have afforded me a deep understanding of the unique challenges presented when implementing programs to affect change in large learning communities. I am delighted to say that this hard-won expertise has proven invaluable to the clients who have engaged me during the past years to advise them with regard to these efforts in K-20 institutions across the country.

Prior to launching into consulting in January 2007, I spent over six years at The University of Texas at Austin where I was the senior program coordinator for the College of Education's [Laptop Initiative for Future Educators \(LIFE\)](#). During my tenure at UT Austin, the LIFE program evolved to provide training and support for the 2,000+ students across the University's campus who are pursuing careers in teaching and for the faculty members who teach them. I have evangelized this model for 1-to-1 integration at numerous national and international conferences, and have hosted visiting universities from around the world for site visits at The University of Texas at Austin.

While at UT, I also managed and coordinated a United States Department of Education Preparing Tomorrow's Teachers to Use Technology implementation grant, Project INSITE (Inventing New Strategies for Integrating Technology into Education) -- a program that proved to be instrumental in bringing the International Society for Technology in Education 2002 NETS*T Distinguished Achievement Award for Excellence in Technology Integration to UTeach in 2002.

I am an experienced and motivated technology coach and I am delighted to be able to share my expertise with heroic educational leaders just like you.

It's time. Let's get started.

A note about [AALF Coaching](#) support:

The goal of AALF is to ensure that all children have access to unlimited opportunities for learning anytime and anywhere and that they have the tools that make this possible. AALF coaches provide support for educators at all levels in achieving this goal.

Working with individual leaders and teams of educators, AALF coaches incorporate:

- Face-to-face and additional communication sessions
- Online learning opportunities
- The use of Web 2.0 online collaborative communication tools such as blogs and wikis
- Professional development support with AALF associates who are currently working in highly effective 1-to-1 schools.

Contact Karen Ward at kward@aalf.org for additional information regarding AALF coaching support

Contact Karen Ward at kward@ednet.org for additional information regarding AALF coaching support.

1-to-1 Learning and Teaching

Creating Systemic Change

By **Ron Canuel**, Director General, Eastern Townships School Board, Quebec, Canada

As the Superintendent of a School District that has deployed 1:1 wireless laptop computers to our students from Grades 3-11, over the last five years, I have witnessed and experienced a wide range of emotions, thoughts and sensations.

([The Eastern Townships School Board](#), located in southeastern Quebec, is responsible for the first board-wide laptop initiative in Canada. The ETSB began phasing in laptops in 2003. To date, approximately 5,600 laptops have been distributed to its students and teachers.)

I have been fortunate to present our 1:1 wireless laptop deployment at various educational-technology conferences in Europe, the UK and in North/South America. However, in the past few months, a change has occurred inside of me, helping to further understand, in my estimation, some persistent issues that plague the entire technology in education world.

Here is one of my new beliefs:

Innovators don't create systemic change: Mid and late adopters are the people who need our support and encouragement. In attending conferences in technology, I am struck by the zeal and targeted vision of some of the delegates and of their impatience at how slowly technology in education is happening. As a superintendent of a school district, I can now understand why some of my colleagues are almost fearful of technology, when the IT director or consultant returns from the conference announcing even newer and more complex developments in the domain. I suspect that to many educators not as immersed in technology, it honestly sounds like baffle-gab, hearing about the latest modifications to twitter, wiki, Pluto, verve or whatever. And in this context, the superintendent is to express confidence that technology can make a difference in the classroom? I don't think so.

To complicate matters more, in our school district, we have showcased the work of our teachers from across our entire system. Yes, there are teachers using transformational teaching strategies incorporating blogs, wikis, podcasting, etc in the classroom, but there are also some teachers still getting used to PowerPoint, Garageband and Excel. Some of the delegates who visited our schools, the same IT folks in your district, leave shocked and dismayed. They state that after five years of deployment, not everybody is using Google Earth Version 9, in their cell phones or ipods and communicating, via satellite, with students!

I am also a little baffled hearing "experts" in the field who can attest to incorporating change in a classroom, one or two schools, (private or public school), yet miss the entire point of systemic change and the time that it takes to succeed. When I hear some presentations given, I am intrigued at how the assumptions that simply creative usages of a laptop will entice the Grade 2 or Grade 10 teacher to embark upon a 1:1 initiative. Those districts in the US and Canada who have successfully incorporated change, on a systemic level, fully appreciate the complexities and challenges that we faced and continue to face.

What's wrong with this picture? Well, instead of celebrating "baby steps" for some teachers who were very reluctant or hesitant users in the past, and now have accepted to use technology as an important tool in their everyday practice, some of our more proficient educators of technology pooh-pooh the deployment. My answer to them: "Shame on you." If you keep acting this way, don't ask yourself why other educators are not using technology. You are plainly making them feel dumb and inadequate and that is wrong.

So, from now on, in any district that uses technology, in any way or format, please support them, encourage them, help them, share your insights in constructive manners because if you simply return to your district and tell your IT director or Superintendent that you witnessed a "disappointing" deployment, you are only setting the entire cause of technology in education backwards. And guess what, watch how slowly technology will evolve in your district and you'll only have yourself to blame.

AALF Worldwide Networking

Contributing to AALF

Our AALF worldwide newsletter readership continues to grow. In the past nine months our foundation enrollment and readers have grown to over 2,500 members. This is exciting news and certainly provides evidence about the relevance of 1-to-1 learning across continents! As our audience and support continues to grow, we are anxious to provide timely and relevant information regarding 1-to-1 learning and schools around the world. With this in mind, I would like to invite foundation members to get involved with the production of this monthly publication. There are several ways you can contribute to this important work:



- Get involved with a RTA group (Research-to-Action); these groups will continue to contribute to the '1-to-1 Leadership and Learning' column which explores 'best pedagogical practices'
- Volunteer your school to be a '1-to-1 Global Storybook Spotlight School'; this column provides an in depth look at 1-to-1 schools from the perspective of leaders, teachers, and students
- Volunteer to help with production of the newsletter; editors are needed as our publication continues to grow in breadth and depth
- Submit an article. Upcoming issues will focus on: Communications, the importance of a good

- Submit an article. Upcoming issues will focus on: Communications- the importance of a good communication strategy (November); International stories- 1-to-1 in a global context (December); Coaching (January/February); Games and learning, rethinking 1-to-1 policies (March); Partnerships (April); Web 2.0 (May); Rethinking PD (June); Life-long learning (July/August).
- Volunteer your unique suggestions; suggest columns or ideas you think would benefit 1-to-1 educators around the world

Please contact Karen Ward (kward@aalf.org or 425-223-3753) if you are interested in any of these opportunities.

Conferences, Institutes, Academies and Events



Join us this month at - The Anytime Anywhere Learning and Teaching Academy

This 3-day intensive academy will help you build your in-school digital pedagogical coaching team and provide hands-on experience in developing meaningful and significant learning experiences for your students. The Academy workshops focus on peer coaching skills and project-based and inquiry-based learning. Academy facilitators include expert lead coaches and mentors, school leaders experienced in project-based learning, 1-to-1 teachers who are transforming the learning environment in innovative ways, including **Gary Stager, Will Richardson, and Bernajean Porter**.

The Anytime Anywhere Learning and Teaching Academy is designed for school leaders and lead teachers from schools that already have or are beginning 1-to-1 and recognize the need to rethink their curriculum to develop a truly transformative 1-to-1 pedagogy. It is also valuable for schools that have had 1-to-1 in place for a few years and want to continue to grow their innovative thinking around pedagogy and the curriculum.

The AALTA complements the framework of the *21 Steps to 21st Century Learning* and expands the pedagogical and professional development ideas introduced in the Institutes. The AALTA will be held in **Lahaska, PA, on October 22-24, 2008**. (Lahaska is few miles from New Hope, PA, and 40 miles from Philadelphia).

If you haven't registered yet, now's the time! For more information or to register, click: [Anytime Anywhere Learning and Teaching Academy - PA](#)

Events

Check [Events](#) on the AALF website regularly to learn of other events at which AALF leaders will be speaking or leading workshops. We look forward to seeing you there.

Do you have an upcoming 1-to-1 event you would like to share with other newsletter readers? Contact Susan Einhorn (seinhorn@aalf.org) for additional information.

Answering Your Questions

Issues & Answers



Are you implementing a 1-to-1 laptop program and struggling with a specific issue? Do you have questions about policies, communicating with parents or the community, AUPs, professional development, or any other issues that you are facing in implementing anytime, anywhere learning in your school or district?

If your answer to that question is yes, let the AALF community help.

Send your questions to the AALF team, and we'll look for members of the AALF community who are knowledgeable in this area and are willing to share their expertise and provide some insights and

suggestions. Although we may not be able to answer all your questions, we'll try to answer as many questions as we can. Send your questions to me at seinhorn@aalf.org .

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