Innovations in Thinking and Learning
Michael Fullan – Professional Learning

MICHAEL: ...embed a collaborative inquiry is how teachers get better. So they are -- most professional development, let's take that concept, professional development is not very effective. You go to a workshop, maybe it's not the right thing. Maybe you're stimulated, you start to use it, it peters out. There's a lot of the PD system is broken, in most countries, I would say.

So where does professional learning come? And we have -- I want to go back to some of our fundamental work. Andy Hargreaves and I did a book two years ago called the "Professional Capital of Teachers." And we say teachers are effective, yes, when we have human -- we've had three capitals, human capital, social capital and decisional capital. So we said human capital is the obvious one. But it's not sufficient. You have to have the group working. So this is where we got social capital, which is the quality of the group. Collaborative inquiry, collaborative cultures. Decisional capital is they get better and better at using evidence to diagnose and make changes. So if we take and embed a collaborative inquiry, it means that teachers are getting better on the job day after day, "Learning is the work," we call it. In fact, our concept of coherence, which is one of our most recent books, but that definition of coherence is the shared depth of understanding about the nature of the work, shared depth of understanding. Once you say that, you know you can't get that from a workshop or reading or discussing. You have to live it day after day, it has to accumulate. You have to get better at it.

So in this model of our collaborative inquiry, which is a very important part, teachers are learning and getting feedback built in with each other. They're getting better and better, and more specific. So I think that is a powerful tool. And it's pretty much common to a lot of the things that Ontario has grown up with in the last 15 years, with the teachers. We have the fortunate situation where a lot of the teachers know that and are good at it, they just haven't been able to do enough of it.

And then the other pieces of our actual model -- learning environment, other pedagogical practices, and leveraging digital. These are all an integrated part of the going beyond -- we still use the phrase, "Legacy, pedagogy into new pedagogy." When you get those three or four things working inside our model, that's what causes the collective change and the deeper pedagogical change. And then if you reinforce it with districts that are using integrative thinking or knowledge building, it's all the better, because it's deeper around the pedagogical part.