



Partnering by Jean Oelwang

Think you might want to read this book?

[Partnering](#) unpacks the many ways that human connections can be improved. Using examples from climate change, religion, politics, and her own personal life, Jean Oelwang gives the reader reasons to reflect on the past and plan for stronger partnerships in the future. Ideas such as enduring trust, nurturing generosity, and positive amnesia are all part of the blueprint to better relationships. Schools

are, at their heart, an intricate web of relationships and this is a great read for anyone looking to make those partnerships, and therefore schools, a better place.

What would Socrates ask?

- How do you foster deep and meaningful connections with all students?
- Would you make better decisions if you sought out contrarian opinions beforehand?
- What if each school year started with a playful activity for all faculty and staff to increase the feeling of partnership?

Research

- 57% of Americans think that most of the time, people would look out for themselves rather than help others.

Concepts

- Bids for Attention - the constant, nearly unrecognizable moments of reaching out from one individual to another within a relationship
- Enduring Trust - learning to live without fear, and trusting that the choices you make will work out, allowing you to be your whole self in your partnership
- Nurturing Generosity - the idea of competing in how much we can give instead of how much we can take
- Compassionate Empathy - taking loving action, providing support that is guided by the person who owns the work and knows what's needed
- Proximate Experiences - getting close to each other in a meaningful way to truly understand each other and the issues we need to solve together
- Moais - a tradition from Okinawa, Japan, where groups of five friends commit to come together and support one another for the rest of their lives.
- Positive Amnesia - working through bad experiences and then releasing them

Quotes from the author

- “Very little energy is put into teaching us how to find and build diverse relationships across all aspects of our lives, with those who are different from us and will challenge us to become better people - who will support us, and whom we will support in return - on our way toward achieving a bigger mission.”

- “When we get it right, we create unshakable mutual respect, able to weather mistakes, embarrassment, and times when our self-respect might be a bit wobbly.”
- “... takers, who focus on self-interest, might win in the short term, but people tire of constantly giving to them. It is the givers, as long as they protect themselves from being exploited, who have better prospects for success and happiness in the long run.”
- “... magnetic moments fall into four key categories: joy and play, curiosity and wonder, space for honest communication, and time with a supportive community. They are ‘magnetic’ because they ultimately bring us closer, deepen our connections, and help us stay connected....”
- “It’s not about agreeing with your partner all the time. It’s about the way in which you disagree.”
- “Remember the ninety-nine things you love about someone when that one irritating thing happens.”
- “Language is also important. Stay away from blood pressure-raising words like *always* and *never* - these all - or nothing phrases are usually exaggerations showing that you’ve forgotten the other ninety-nine times your partner actually didn’t (or did) do something.”

Quotes from others

- “Two people may have a partnership or be in one, but for a partnership to reap the true benefits of the dynamic, it must be active. It must be a verb.” - Simon Sinek
- “Life turns on good relationships. All of life.” - Lord Hastings of Scarisbrick CBE
- “We are nothing other than the summation of our relationships.” Richard Reed, Cofounder of Innocent Drinks and JamJar Investments
- “First and foremost, you need to listen. Not listening to someone is as good as saying to that person: you don’t exist.” - Uzodinma Iweala, author, film director, and entrepreneur
- “You learn more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation.” - (possibly) Plato
- “The joy of connection, whether to a person, animal, flower, idea, or sensation, is the most profound of all the joys.” - Susan Piver, mindfulness expert
- “The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in service of others.” - Mahatma Gandhi
- “Friction can offer opportunities to learn, to step back and say what went badly... Having a growth mindset means putting your ego aside and asking yourself, how did I contribute to that problem?” - Rebecca Zucher, leadership consultant and founding partner at Next Step Partners

Organizations/schools working on answers

- [Flocabulary](#)

Gateways to further learning

- [The Knowledge Project](#)

Referenced books with the potential to impact leading and learning in education

Author(s) Last Name	Title
Tzu	<i>The Art of War</i>
Grant	<i>Give and Take</i>
Lawry	<i>Beyond Left and Right: Breaking the Political Stalemate</i>
Fuller	<i>Operation Manual for Spaceship Earth</i>

The applicability of this book to education is



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