

Southridge Wednesday

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Head of School

Brain Training – the Good, the Bad, the Ugly . . . and the Freedom

I don't know about you but sometimes I think many of us go through our daily life "mindlessly" (that is, without a lot of intentional thought) responding and reacting to experiences in ways that are not always the best representation of our true selves. I admit to doing that from time to time. So I was naturally intrigued by the sentiment of a presenter who encouraged me and my workshop colleagues to think about how we humans tend to over think stressful experiences and how we are inclined to push away negative feelings.

Two strong reactions we have to the inevitable challenges we face is that we either stew over our discomfort or we resist it. Stewing about troubles captures our minds just as much as our inclination to push away, ignore, fix, avoid, deny, bury or get rid of harmful feelings associated with negative and stressful experiences. Surprisingly, when we stew and resist we end up intensifying our discomfort and we undermine our own well-being but hijacking our ability to focus, sapping our energy, lessening our self-compassion and leaving ourselves weary, ineffective and, ultimately, unhappy.

I've always wondered why humans tend to stew about things – especially when stewing only makes things worse. It turns out that it has to do with our default wiring as evidenced by recent brain research. Even when we are "just sitting there thinking" not really engaged in anything specific our minds are trying to solve problems. From an evolutionary perspective, a natural inclination to instinctively and constantly solve problems is a good thing. It is good for the survival of our species. In fact, we humans spend about 50% of our time "just thinking". And we also spend about 50% of our just thinking time in default mode, which directs our thinking inward and focuses on "ourselves".

You can see where this is going. Half our time we are instinctively solving problems and half of those problems are about "me". Is it any wonder we have trouble untangling ourselves from the act of stewing? Is it any wonder that we are critical of ourselves when things go wrong? It seems we are hard wired that way. When we think of problems and the problems are about ourselves we are not setting ourselves up for success and we chip away at our own well-being. In other words, what is good for the survival of our species may not be so good for our own happiness.

Luckily, we are also hard-wired for kindness and care giving. According to psychologists who study self-compassion and directing kindness toward the self intentionally, we should do so not to feel better as a means of self-improvement; rather, we should do so to become better acquainted with who we already are (the good). Brain training and mindfulness do not lead to the removal of the difficulties in life (the bad). However, they do help us in dealing with the inevitable struggles (the ugly) with thoughtful compassion (the freedom). And that, I think, is a really interesting aspect of our humanity.

Have a wonderful week!

Mr. Drew Stephens
Head of School

| Important Dates | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|
| Student-Led Conferences | Wednesday, Feb 6 th | 1:00 – 8:00 PM | Dismissal after Period 3 at 11:40 AM |
| Pro-D Day | Friday, Feb 8 th | | |
| BC Family Day | Monday, Feb 11 th | | |
| Half Term Holiday | Tuesday, Feb 12 th | | |
| Kindergarten Applicants Assessments | Friday, Feb 15 th | | No Kindergarten |

Junior School News

...is a creative and independent thinker...

Part of our mission statement at Southridge includes developing students to be creative and independent thinkers. The question of the hour is - how do we do this? One of the best ways we can improve our program at Southridge is to invest in our teachers who deliver our program. We do invest a great deal of time and resources into professionally developing our teachers so they can fine tune their craft of teaching and create classrooms for thinking and creating. Just yesterday I participated in a professional discussion with our PYP teachers based on two journal readings: one called 'The Thinking Classroom' by Lynn Erickson, the other entitled 'The Educated Person' by Ernest L. Boyer. What impressed me was the thoroughness of understanding of these educational readings, and the ready connections and implementations that our teachers had devised. Everyone was prepared for discussion, had passionate opinions, and walked away after an hour's discussion with a tangible practical practice to implement. When I speak the words 'passionate opinions', there is very little embellishment in this statement. This faculty digests educational philosophies and debates them thoroughly. It is always a respectful, healthy dialogue, but one that pushes you to be an independent thinker, and not accept ideas without dissecting and challenging them. Personally, I love it, and so do our teachers. That is precisely why we also meet once a term to discuss a variety of educational journals. Our next book is Lynn Erickson's 'Stirring the Head, Heart and Soul - Redefining Curriculum, Instruction and Concept-Based Learning'. Riveting, I know. In order to develop students who are independent thinkers, you need a faculty who are independent thinkers and model this ideal intrinsically as well. I believe that we have such a faculty at Southridge, and I can hardly wait for the next discussion to begin...

Have a great week.

Mrs. Middelaer
Head of Junior School

Grade 7 Parent Information Session - Thursday, January 24th, 2013

This Thursday, January 24th there is a Grade 7 parent night in the Senior School Great Hall from 6:30-7:30 PM. This is a great opportunity to meet some of the Senior School team, receive information about life in the Senior School, and get answers to any burning questions you might have. See you there!

FSA Test Dates

This is a reminder to parents for the upcoming important dates for our FSA (Foundations Skills Assessment) testing. Grade 4 students will write during the month of February; Mrs. Raber and Ms. Birch will send home a complete schedule to parents. Due to the CAIS basketball trip, Grade 7 students have their testing scheduled shortly before the trip, and during the following few weeks of February. Our Grade 7 teachers will send home the schedule shortly. If you have any comments or concerns, please contact me directly at the Junior School office.

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| Pro-D Day | Friday, February 8 th , 2013 |
| BC Family Day | Monday, February 11 th , 2103 |
| Half Term Holiday | Tuesday, February 12 th , 2013 |

As a faculty, we greatly value time together for professional collaboration and growth. On Friday, February 8th, 2013 we will have a professional development day so there will be no school for the students. February 8th is a collaborative Pro-D day with all the ISA BC (Independent Schools Association of BC) schools, and we look forward to our time together.

Thank you for your support of our faculty's growth. The following Monday is BC's first Family Day holiday and Tuesday will be our half term holiday, so please enjoy this extended weekend with your family.

Student Led Conferences: Thursday, February 21st, 2013 (noon dismissal)

Throughout the school term, students have been actively selecting their own pieces of work to secure in a portfolio. These pieces reflect many different subject disciplines and should demonstrate their own personal growth as a student. On Thursday, February 21st, 2013 we will be holding student led conferences so that the students can share their portfolios with their parents. This opportunity is empowering for students as they can share their own journey as a learner and actively reflect on each piece. Please be aware also that there will be a 12:00 noon dismissal on that day to accommodate the conferences.

Kindergarten Parents - No school Friday, February 15th, 2013

Just a reminder to our kindergarten parents that there will be no school for their children on Friday, February 15th, 2013 due to entrance testing for prospective kindergarten students. Thank you for making alternate arrangements for your children on that day.

Mrs. Middelaer

PYP Parent Information Night – Wednesday, February 6th, 2013

- *What is inquiry and how do I support my child to become an inquirer?*
- *Why is inquiry important in the PYP?*
- *What is the exhibition? Why is it important?*
- *How does the school prepare my child to be equipped for the PYP exhibition?*
- *How do I support my child in the exhibition journey?*

If you have been wondering about these questions, please join us on Wednesday, February 6th from 6:00-7:30 PM. in the Junior School Great Hall for a parent information session on various areas of the PYP curriculum. The International Baccalaureate (IB) encourages every parent to be aware of the program so that you can effectively support your child's learning in the home. We will be offering two sessions during that evening. New parents to the PYP are encouraged to attend Session A. Parents whose children are in Grade 2, 3, and 4 would benefit from the Session B. Please note that Session B is not just for Grade 4 parents.

Session A: Inquiry/Inquiry units in the PYP classroom (for new parents to the PYP, and K-1 parents)

This session will highlight what inquiry is, why it is important, and the process used in exploring a unit of inquiry in the classroom. This session will enable you to gain a greater awareness of the transdisciplinary themes covered in each grade and how you can support your child in the home. The session will be hands-on and discussion based.

Session B: My child's PYP journey to exhibition (for Gr. 2-4 parents)

The Exhibition is the culmination of the PYP. This session will highlight what the exhibition is, why it is important, and how the essential elements of the program prepare your child to successfully participate in this very important process. You will be provided with tools to support your child in his/her PYP exhibition journey.

In order to allow us to prepare for the sessions appropriately, please send an email to your class mom by Thursday, January 31st and indicate what session you are interested in. Your class mom will forward the information to Ms. Ramji-Motani who will ensure that you are registered for your session. We are hoping to have about 25-30 participants in each session and promise you an informative evening with opportunities to network and interact with fellow parents and teachers.

We look forward to seeing you on that day!

Ms. Ramji-Motani (IB-PYP coordinator)
and members of the PYP Faculty

Jump Rope for Heart January 25th

Thank you very much for your involvement already in our Heart and Stroke Foundation fundraiser. Your pledges are of great support to research projects and medical intervention for existing patients, and to aid preventative educational initiatives. Please remember to return the pledge envelopes to the homeroom teachers by Monday, January 28th. We all look forward to Friday's jump rope activities and mindfulness about those special family members and friends who have been touched by heart and stroke challenges. As such, please consider sending your child to school wearing a personalized heart to acknowledge that certain someone and the colours of pink or red as a silent symbol of support.

Friday is also Casual Day with your donations in lieu of the usual \$2 donation. Thank you very much for your thoughtful involvement.

Ms. Jo-Ann Murchie
Junior School Service Coordinator

Senior School News

Looking to the Future this Week

In the coming weeks and months, I know that many of my Wednesday submissions will target our Graduating Class of 2013 and the impact and legacy to which they leave Southridge. However, this week, we are taking a look to the future in the Senior School and focusing on our Grade 7 class as we begin to think about the transition to Grade 8!

Two main events take place – today, (Wednesday) we had the Grade 7 students visit the Senior School and tomorrow, (Thursday) we will host the Grade 7 parents for an information evening. Both events are in place to allow an initial glimpse of what the Senior School experience will entail and also give an opportunity for students and parents to ask questions they may have.

Over the past two years, we have asked current Grade 8 students to volunteer in order to speak about the Senior School experience. Each pair of students has a particular aspect or theme to comment on such as: athletics, service or expectations with regards to homework or behavior. They craft these themselves and come from their own experience over the past 5 months. What this creates is the current Grade 7 students hearing about Grade 8 through a very authentic lens. It is not a member of faculty “telling” them what we think. I enjoy this immensely as it helps me to see how the Grade 8’s have interpreted and made sense of their year thus far. It is always very positive and, I think, reassuring to the Grade 7’s to hear it from a student voice. The event ends with small group tours of the Senior School where various facilities can be introduced and often, teachers too!

The Grade 7 Evening follows the student experience to help parents to understand what the next 5 years will look like at Southridge. We ask the Grade Reps (students) to come to speak and the SS Leadership Team divides up different aspects of the experience to share. There are always lots of questions and, from past experiences, further clarity for Grade 7 parents as they look beyond the Junior School. I encourage all Grade 7 parents to attend if possible. The evening will begin at 6:30 p.m. and take place in the Alan Brown Great Hall (Senior School).

It is important to note that we acknowledge that the transition from the Junior to Senior School is a very meaningful and symbolic step in a Southridge education. We want to ensure that this experience is as smooth as possible and with the opportunity for open dialogue to help alleviate any concerns as it occurs.

As a final thought, we are always proud of our Grade 12 students graduating from Southridge and there is much fanfare made for this. However, our Grade 7’s are graduating as well and they are ready to begin making a contribution to the life of the Senior School. Making them feel as comfortable and ready as possible can make all of the difference!

Have a great week!

Mr. Doug Palm
Head of the Senior School

Mini We Day: Sponsors Needed!

On Thursday, March 7th Southridge students will be putting on a Mini We Day event, where we will highlight issues in our local and global communities. It is an awareness raising event, where there will be an abundance of food and entertainment as well as presentations on many social issues. Right now, we are looking for sponsors who would be willing to help us out with the costs of promotions and performances. If you are interested, please feel free to email aathwal@southridge.bc.ca.

The Mini We Day Team

ISABC Art Exhibition

The third annual ISABC Art Exhibition is happening at MulgraveSchool this year. This year the theme is “PLAY.” Selected Southridge students are Ashley Andreou, Rishi Saincher, Amanda Gieschen, Mica Kantelia, Jacquie van der Made, Toryce Westgard and Kelsey Young. This show will run from January 30th until February 14th, with an opening reception from 4:30 to 6:00 PM.

If you would like an interesting diversion on your way to the hill, visit the exhibit on your way!

Ms. Susy Baranszky-Job

Student Exchange Reflections

Cultural immersion for Avery Laird- <http://adventuresinquebec.wordpress.com/>

Regional Debate Tournament

On January 12th, 2013 two Grade 8 teams competed at the Lower Mainland East Novice Regional Debate Tournament. Representing Southridge School were the Amy Doerksen, Veer Shete, Luke Zhang and Dolphy Pradhan. Congratulations to Amy and Veer for bringing back the trophy for the top team at this tournament. This secures them a place at the Provincial Tournament in March. Individually Veer placed 1st in the tournament and Amy placed 3rd. I commend the students who attended this tournament for spending their Winter break constructing arguments for their prepared debate topic and proudly representing Southridge.

Ms. Rodriguez-Lang
Debate Coach

Volunteers Still Needed for February 2nd!

We are hosting almost 100 debaters from the Lower Mainland East and we are still looking for student volunteers to timekeep and moderate. We need adults to judge debates and parents, grandparents, siblings, uncles, aunts and neighbours are welcome. Please contact Mrs. Rodriguez-Lang at crodriguez-lang@southridge.bc.ca if you can help out.

Ms. Rodriguez-Lang
Debate Coach

BandFest 2013

Grade 8 Concert Band

Victoria, February 27th and 28th 2013

We have just received confirmation that our performance at the University of Victoria's concert band festival, BandFest, is on Wednesday, February 27th. As usual, we plan to spend one night in Victoria so that the Grade 8s can fully participate in the festival. After a clinic and performance here at Southridge, we will depart for the ferries and spend the remainder of the two days listening to other concert bands, warming up, performing, and being adjudicated. In addition to some great food and some down time, we will also be able to enjoy one or two IMAX films and some time at the Provincial Museum. A more detailed itinerary and parent consent letter will be forthcoming; please reserve Wednesday and Thursday, February 27th and 28th; we should return before 4:00 PM on the Thursday.

Mr. Burrage

US University Admissions Evening

Southridge parents & students are invited to an evening focusing on U.S. University Admissions on Tuesday, January 29th, 2013, in the Junior School Great Hall. The session will be led by Dr Whitney Laughlin, and will go from 6:30-8:30 PM.

One Act Plays!

Over the past few months, the Grade10 Drama class has been working hard directing and rehearsing entertaining and engaging One Act Plays from a variety of genres. The students have been critiquing their plays in workshop sessions and will be performing for audiences next week. Parents and students are invited to these performances in the Little Theatre. The times are listed below.

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|------------------------------------|---|---------|
| Monday, January 28 th | <i>This is a Test</i> by Stephen Gregg and <i>Actor's Nightmare</i> by Christopher Durang | 9:30am |
| | <i>Trifles</i> by Susan Glaspell | 11:45am |
| Tuesday, January 29 th | <i>This is a Test</i> by Stephen Gregg | 11:45am |
| | <i>Trifles</i> by Susan Glaspell | 2:00 pm |
| Thursday, January 31 st | <i>Actor's Nightmare</i> by Christopher Durang | 11:45am |

We look forward to seeing you there!

Ms. Kelly

News for Both Schools

Likes, Follows, New Southridge iPhone App and Communication

We want to get “social” with our social media presence, so we’re asking for your help. For the past year we have been working to build our social media platform. You will find Southridge on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. After experimenting a bit, we are now happy with the rhythm, communication and information we are able to provide. You can play an important role by joining us on these networks. A number of you have already discovered us – thanks for contributing and supporting our social community.

Southridge School iPhone App

It’s here! You can get it at the App Store – did I mention it’s free? The Southridge School iPhone native app is now available. The Android version is coming soon!

Created especially for your iPhone, this app provides you with the most important timely information at your fingertips.

We know it will make your life easier. Here’s what you’ll find:

- Personalize your school calendar feed with over 30 calendars to choose from. You see only the calendars you chose.
- Personalize your news feed with over 25 possibilities.
- Personalize your team news feed. Get athletic news for all teams or the ones you pick.
- Keep updated with the latest athletic team scores and upcoming game schedules.
- Update your profile – make address and phone number changes to school records from your phone.
- View our latest Twitter feeds.
- Read the latest headlines.
- Use the directories to locate other school families.
- See the latest photos from the Junior and Senior schools.

Go to the App store now to upload for free. Search for Southridge School.

The app doesn’t have everything the portal has, but it has all of the important dates, news and information we think you need at your fingertips. There is a login for directories and updating your profile as well as some calendars and news feeds. Everything that should be protected is behind the login. We are open to your feedback if you can think of ways to make improvements.

You can read the attached PDF file for simple instructions on how to use the App features.

Follow Us On Twitter

We are using Twitter to communicate things that happen at Southridge each day that don’t often get reported in the Wednesday. We don’t want you to miss what’s happening at the school, just because you aren’t here. It’s a “day in the life of” approach and we’ve had good feedback from those who are following. Our Heads of Schools are now tweeters, so you will also hear from them. You don’t have to tweet in order to follow. Just sign up and follow us. Here are our Twitter handles:

- **@SouthridgeNews** – all school tweets here
- **@SouthridgeSport** – for sideline and “as it happens” athletic news follow @SouthridgeSport. If you can’t be there, this is the next best thing.
- **@SouthridgeAlum** – follow our alumni interests.

Facebook

Here’s the thing. We need more likes. We know most of you are on Facebook and so are we. This year for the first time we had admissions inquiries on our page, so we plan to keep feeding the page with interesting photos and happenings. Next

time you are on, go and take a look, give us a “like” and leave a comment. This will help spread the Southridge word. We have a secret goal (not so secret anymore) of reaching 500 likes by the end of the school year. We appreciate your help in being more “liked”.

Clicking the “like” button on our page does not mean that we will have access or be able to view your feed. Just in case you are worried about that.

You Tube

We have our own You Tube channel with lots of videos you haven’t seen before. Just go to <http://www.youtube.com/user/southridgeschool> and take a look and give us a “like” there as well.

Debbie MacDougall
Director of Community Relations

Join the Southridge School 2013 Sun Run Team!

Now that the ice and snow are gone and the days are getting longer, it is the perfect time to get running – especially with the Sun Run just around the corner. This year’s event will take place on Sunday, April 21st. Last year’s Sun Run was well represented by Southridge, with a large turnout, and we would love to do the same this year! Our ‘Super Southridge School Team’ includes participants from both the Junior and Senior Schools. All ages are welcome to take part in this fun and fit community event. Whether your goal is to run the full 10K race or the 2.5K Mini Sun Run, we would love to have you join us on the Southridge team.

Beat the rush and sign up by February 15th to enjoy an ‘early bird’ discount of \$15.00 per person – making the cost only \$20.00 per student and \$30.00 per adult!

To register, go to www.sunrun.com and at the top of the page select ‘Register’ and tab ‘Register here’. When directed to the new screen, please click on ‘Teams and Members: Schools’ and then click on the link that is appropriate to you (10K Sun Run or 2.5K Mini Sun Run) to be guided through the registration process. Our team name is “Southridge School” and the password to join the team is “leteveryspiritsoar”. The online registration seems to be very user-friendly this year, but please email me at mfretter@southridge.bc.ca if you have any questions.

Happy running!

Megan Fretter
Teacher Intern

Daily Digest – Café Menu for the Week of January 28th – February 1st

It’s our no Super Bowl, Super Bowl party and you’re invited to experience our lunch menu dedicated to Super bowl weekend and let’s just throw hockey into that celebration.

The Americans got the Super Bowl but we also finally got our hockey back. Boycotting hockey just isn’t in our Canadian blood, so come down to the Southridge Café and enjoy our lunch menu in true sports style. Lots of bold flavors, and party type foods.

While you’re in the Café, don’t forget to try one of our delicious soups, maybe a lemonade and Voila, a wonderful lunch. Take a look at our BBQ catering menu as well for any upcoming events, like maybe a sports weekend party.

Marat Dreyshner
Chef