The High Road To Mindful Transformation:

How Emotionally Competent Stimuli Engage Prefrontal Cortex Rationality

Daniel J. Gliszczinski University of Minnesota Duluth & Sydney M. Savion The George Washington University
Why do some dissonance-inducing experiences promote perspective transformation while others merely incite ideological non-transformative entrenchment?

Education neuroscience research suggests transformative learning experiences travel the brain’s high road—fueled by emotionally competent stimuli that engage the rational prefrontal cortex where critical reflection on assumption takes place.

Conversely, those experiences that incite ideological entrenchment appear to be channeled by the reticular activating system to the brain’s low road, where the amygdala protects rather than probes assumptions through freeze, fight, and flight responses.

These findings are shared in a spirit of inquiry and offered as considerations for scaffolding emotionally competent, mindful transformation of teaching and learning.
Mindful Journey to TLC

What fuels our journey to this TLC?

Mindful journey to TLEs

What fuels our journey these TLEs?
Research suggests ♪:
ECS to the PFC appears to fuel the journey to the TLE

(chords: cgdg)
ECS**
to the PFC
appears to fuel the journey
to the TLE

ECS: The
“most powerful external stimuli ever measured”

Begley (2008);
Brooks (2011);
Doidge (2007);
Gardner (2004);
Goleman (2006);
Heath & Heath (2010);
Immordino-Yang & Faeth (2010);
Medina, (2008);
Sousa, 2010;
Willis, 2010;
Zull (2011).
ECS** to the PFC appears to fuel the journey to the TLE

Q: Why the asterisks?
A: Amy-g-dala

our emotional friend-emy

*  *

Glischinski & Savion
low road:
managing emotionally overwhelming stimuli
threat perception $\rightarrow$ adrenaline
pfc $\rightarrow$ flooded
(+) protective friend:
prevents us from pondering threats

(-) enemy:
truncates reflection on problematic assumptions
Research suggests:

ECS to the PFC appears to fuel the journey to the TLE (mindful of the AmyG)
Discussion, please re: content, implications, other for adding meaning to learning.

Research suggests:

ECS to the PFC appears to fuel the journey to the TLE (mindful of the AmyG)

Thanks.

Glisczinski dglisczi@d.umn.edu & Savion ssavion@gwmail.gwu.edu
Research suggests ♪:

ECS to the PFC appears to fuel the journey to the TLE mindful of the AMY-G

(chords: cgdg)
The High Road To Mindful Transformation:

Summary

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