

# Self-Directed Agile Education for Resilient and Inclusive Collaboration



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# Imprint

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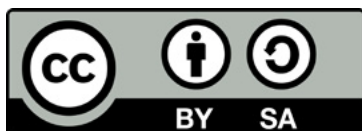
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This publication (in English, German, French, Dutch, Spanish and Romanian language) and further publications and tools produced in the project can be downloaded free of charge at: [www.agileforcollaboration.eu](http://www.agileforcollaboration.eu)



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# Introduction

Young people today will need to face a very different world than the one we've known. At the same time, many of them are taught based on curricula that do not fully prepare them for a world of change. This world is changing so rapidly that many of today's young people will work in jobs that do not yet exist (1). The challenges they are going to face in their work life are becoming larger and more complex. They need to learn to be creative, enterprising, open to change and collaboration. Curiosity, self-confidence, emotional and social intelligence are key, as is resilience – both of ourselves and the educational systems we create.

In this handbook, we share reflections, experiences and concrete tools for the design of new ways to interact between teachers and students, and design new schools within a specific frame: agile learning.

As an adjective, agile means flexible and adaptable but has come to stand for an entire way of learning. In the 1990s agile working methods began to appear in the IT industry in response to the speed of change in this sector, introducing new approaches to team collaboration, project management, and customer relations. Published in 2001, the Agile Manifesto (2) is considered to be a founding document of agile approaches and working methods.

Today, agile working methods have become widely adopted across the IT sector. More recently, these methods have also found their way into other areas, for example in marketing, healthcare, public administration, and educational institutions. With the success of agile working and specifically agile project management, educators and entrepreneurs in education saw the potential of the method and adopted it in a free learning, self-directed learning school in New York, almost a decade ago. 2013 was the birth year of the first Agile Learning Centre ("Agile Learning Center NYC").

## [Agile Manifesto](#)



Until now, most agile learning centers have been set up in the US and Mexico, as the education systems of both countries allow the existence of alternative schools. In Europe, due to different policies making the establishment of such schools much more complicated, the agile network is small but continues to grow. Today, across Europe, there are about 190 agile learning centers of different forms (schools, workshops, after-school programs, agile unschooling, sport clubs, youth centers...) offering a wide range of experiences.

Key principles of these agile learning centers are motivated individuals: “Give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done (2)” Nevertheless, while agile and self-directed learning is designed to address the individual needs of each learner, the process also involves cooperation and collaboration – literally, working together. However, conventional schooling rarely emphasizes what we have in common or how to build on each other’s strength and skills. If it does so, it is often in the form of “group work”, and many educators assume – or simply hope – that groups will somehow self-organize.

This handbook is an invitation for teachers, educators and pedagogues to explore new paths of experimenting with agile learning. To explore these in a traditional educational curriculum to varying degrees; to support educational pioneers to launch schools based on agile learning; and, to inspire policy makers to see agile learning as a feasible option for today’s changing needs and world. It is an attempt to encourage them to grasp their role as facilitators between young learners and our world from another point of view.

Our purpose is to share more widely the resources related to educating ourselves in agile learning, and to spread these across Europe to as many people and places as possible. The following pages present the concept of agile learning/self directed education, drawing on research as well as practical experience. We then introduce the concept of cultures of collaboration related to agile learning as one of its key principles. Rather than covering in detail all aspects of agile learning, this handbook expresses our vision of the world and the way we want to bring change to the educational system and create the schools we want – changing our schools in order to change the societies of which we are a part.

[Agile Learning Center  
New York City](#)



# 1 | Self-Directed Education (SDE)

Self-directed education is a philosophy that places learners at the center of the educational experience, allowing them to direct their own learning journey and pursue their interests and passions in a meaningful and gratifying way.

At its core, self-directed education is about empowering individuals to take ownership of, and become able to respond, to their own learning. This entails giving students the freedom and flexibility to follow their interests and passions, as well as the tools and resources they need in order to acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to accomplish their goals. Self-directed education acknowledges that each individual is unique and that learning is a deeply personal process best guided by the learner's own curiosity, interests, and motivations.

Self-directed education is particularly significant in the context of a meaningful life since it allows people to identify and pursue their own sense of fulfillment. By giving learners the agency to shape their own learning experiences, this philosophy fosters a sense of autonomy and self-efficacy, empowering individuals to take responsibility for their own lives and make choices that align with their values and goals.

Additionally, self-directed education can foster a strong sense of curiosity and a love of learning in students, which can be a significant factor in their personal development. When individuals are given the freedom to explore their interests and pursue their passions, they are more likely to become deeply engaged and motivated, leading to a greater sense of satisfaction.

In conclusion, self-directed education is a powerful tool for fostering personal growth and fulfillment, enabling individuals to take control of their own learning journey and pursue their interests and passions in a way that is both meaningful and rewarding. By providing learners with the freedom and flexibility to explore their interests and develop their own sense of purpose, self-directed education can help individuals live more fulfilling and meaningful lives. Self-directed education represents an exciting and transformative approach to learning, one that has the potential to empower individuals and transform the educational landscape in the years to come.



# 2 | Self-Directed Education Agile Learning

As we mentioned, education is the whole process by which one learns. This includes many kinds of experiencing, exploring, reflecting, integrating, applying, and changing. And, as we also mentioned, self-directed education is all about having choices, even the choice to rest at the school, or to play freely the whole day, and it is not only about attending self-chosen courses.

Agile is an adjective meaning flexible and adaptable, but also an innovation in software development (with the 2001 Agile Manifesto as founding document) the Agile Learning Centers (ALCs) share principles with. These include welcoming change, working together, emergence, iteration, and this gem: “Build projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment and support they need, and trust them to get the job done” (2). Embracing some of these original principles, and translating them into the context of children and youth learning and development, ALC can be defined as a dynamic autonomous educational community functioning in line with the foundational beliefs and principles of ALC, while also upholding its active affiliation with the Agile Learning Centers Network (ALC Network), a worldwide association of ALC communities (3).

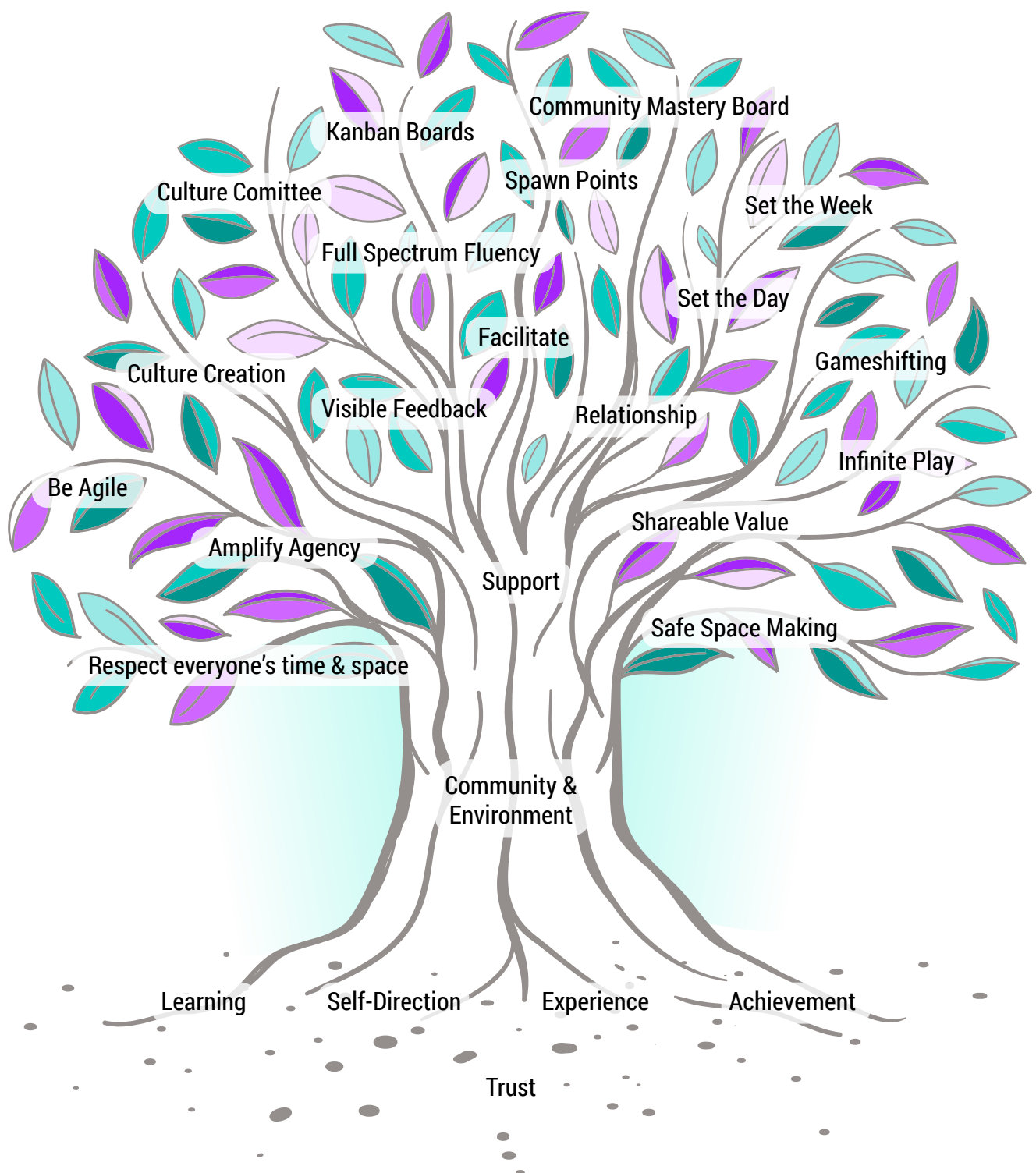
As noted in the ALC Organizational Charter, the main agreements in the ALC culture are “to be respectful of people, mindful of their time, and intentional about how you engage. The participants of the community are responsible for supporting each other, self-organizing to turn ideas into actions, and holding each other accountable to shared standards and practice facilitating from ALC roots/principles, committing to trust-building, caring without controlling, and contributing to a culture of generosity, generally working to become embodied in their relationships in ways that facilitate well-being and growth” (3).

[Agile Learning  
Centers Network](#)





## 2.1 The Agile Tree



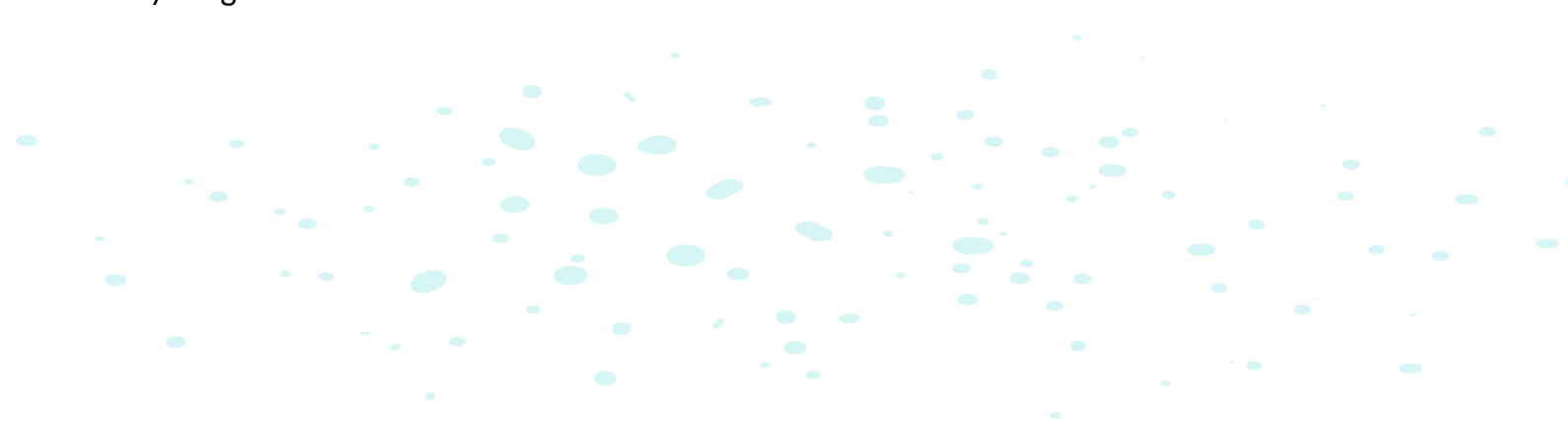
The following text has been adapted from the Agile Learning Centers Network Starter Kit (p. 10–19), the official reference document for agile methods and practices (3).

## 2.2 The Soil // Trust

The Agile educational model often employs the use of a tree metaphor to depict its principles. Within this metaphor, certain elements, referred to as the “roots” and “trunk,” embody fundamental concepts about learning that shape the practices of all successful ALCs. Conversely, the “leaves” and “fruit” represent adaptable components that can differ across communities. Although metaphors are inherently imperfect, the tree analogy was chosen and retained because it became evident that, just as a tree’s roots rely on being immersed in a living and larger entity to support the rest of the tree, the philosophical foundation forming the “roots” of the metaphorical “tree” is upheld by its connection to something greater. Thus, the metaphor appropriately commences with this relationship, where learning spaces, processes, and practices take root within a trust-based ecosystem.

The core disparity between ALCs and conventional schooling boils down to the question of whom we trust to determine an individual’s needs in their pursuit of a fulfilling and well-lived life. From this pivotal query, other inquiries naturally arise: What is the purpose of education? Whose lives and desires hold value within a particular system (and whose do not)? How are we accountable to one another? Our beliefs regarding to whom someone’s days and dreams should belong shape our responses to these and subsequent questions.

For as long as schooling has existed, people have harboured dreams and strived to realise alternative forms of education. ALCs represent a new iteration while continuing an established tradition. Agile Learning Centers trace their lineage back to both formal and informal community endeavours that place trust in children and individuals, enabling them to self-discover their identities, discern their learning needs, and make choices that contribute to a meaningful life. ALCs trust in self-determination, curiosity, and recognize the validity of diverse ways of knowing. They acknowledge that interdisciplinary interests add depth to our shared world. Moreover, offering supportive relationships and safe spaces for play and exploration serves the needs of young individuals.



## 2.3 The Roots // Foundations

Within the realm of trust, the Agile Tree derives its strength from four primary roots, representing the underlying assumptions of our educational model. These roots support all other facets of an ALC:

### 1 Learning

Learning is a natural process that occurs continuously. From infancy, individuals gather information through exploration and experimentation, guided by their development and surroundings. Play, imagination, observation, and imitation—all of these encompass learning! Individuals are supported as they focus their attention, experiment with various study methods, and discover their unique approach to learning.

### 2 Self-Direction

Optimal learning occurs when individuals are empowered to make their own choices, and this includes children. Through personal experiences, adults understand that a conducive learning environment involves emotional and psychological safety, proper nourishment, rest, and consent regarding the time and place of study. We recognize that individual preferences, such as studying with earplugs, music playing, using a pomodoro timer, or collaborating with a friend, enhance motivation and engagement. Although conventional learning environments may serve specific purposes at times, we acknowledge that supporting self-direction leads to far greater learning outcomes.

### 3 Experience

Cultural and environmental factors play a significant role in shaping an individual's learning. The context in which learning takes place holds immense influence. It is vital to recognize that individuals bring their own knowledge and contributions to the learning space. Merely conveying lessons through signs and slogans is insufficient if our actions do not reflect the beliefs that everyone's perspectives are valuable, that diversity enriches our understanding, and that consent holds paramount importance. Aligning our practices with these values becomes a priority, as it is through experience that the most profound lessons are absorbed and felt.

#### 4 Achievement

The Agile Learning Cycle: Learning and personal development follow nonlinear processes. Progress is made through cycles of intention, creation, reflection, and sharing. In these cycles, time is allocated for dreaming, contemplating, experiencing failures, and even resting, as these aspects hold equal importance in students' journeys, despite conventional schools predominantly valuing activities perceived as productive. Within ALC communities, facilitators establish daily practices that serve as supportive structures for setting clear intentions and engaging in ongoing reflection. Nuanced discussions take place with students regarding their individual definitions and perceptions of success as they pursue various goals.

The sharing phase of the cycle is both a distinctive characteristic of ALCs' foundational principles and often misunderstood. "Sharing" can encompass activities such as creating blog posts or social media videos, documenting reflections, conclusions, and achievements through public artifacts. Additionally, "sharing" can manifest as the moment when individuals teach what they have learned — a practice that reinforces their understanding and requires a deeper comprehension beyond mere performance on multiple-choice assessments.

Taking a moment to recognize that learning is meant for the learner, for self-realisation, and for living a personally meaningful life clarifies that success goes beyond amassing a large number of social media followers (although it does not exclude that if it aligns with one's interests). So, what is the significance of sharing? While we do not seek external judgment or seek validation through accolades, we also acknowledge that learning and life are not solitary pursuits. Our communities play a vital role in our growth. By offering our skills and insights as we learn, we not only deepen our own understanding but also enrich the community, inspire others on their own journeys, and contribute to fostering a culture of generosity where resources are abundant for everyone's growth and sharing. Sharing can take the form of public posts and offerings, as well as volunteering in meetings or following up with someone who has shown interest in our areas of expertise. It is not about the specific format; rather, it is about nurturing meaningful relationships and connections.

## 2.4 The Trunk // Community

The main body of a tree, known as the trunk, fulfills a multitude of crucial functions. It serves as a shield, providing stability, storage, record-keeping, transportation, flexibility, and growth. Similarly, active participants within an ALC community, akin to the tree trunk, embody the essence of the endeavour in the present moment. They carry the wisdom and insights from the past while aspiring towards the future. While philosophy holds significance, our projects primarily revolve around the individuals involved, emphasising the importance of human connections and interactions.



*"[Matthew] Lieberman challenges our fundamental understanding of human needs, putting social connection that supports interdependence before even food, water, and shelter. If we don't ask for or accept help because of the independence we feel we must have, we don't offer it because of the scarcity we feel...One of the things we most miss out on by not having a deep community is the abundance of support, resources, and care that exists when you've got many hearts and hands circling you. We can create more of what we all need when we are in the community."*

Mia Birdsong, How We Show Up (4)

## 2.5 The Branches // Principles

The branches of the Agile Tree represent the guiding principles that ALCs utilise to translate theoretical concepts into practical actions.

### 1 Play Infinitely

Play serves as a powerful catalyst for growth. Embracing the mindset of infinite play involves adapting games, changing rules, and expanding boundaries to create an inclusive space for all participants, enabling the game to evolve and encompass new horizons.

### 2 Be Agile

Foster flexibility, adaptability, and ease of change in tools and practices. Introduce changes gradually through multiple iterations to assess their effectiveness, avoiding overwhelming transformations.

### 3 Amplify Agency

Ensure that tools support personal choice, freedom, and the accountability that accompanies those choices. Everyone should have the opportunity to contribute to the design and improvement of the structures that guide them.

### 4 Create Intentional Culture

We have the ability to shape culture, and culture, in turn, influences us. A strong and positive culture forms the most comprehensive support system for a learning community. Instead of imposing restrictive rules, foster collective mastery. Remember that an intentional culture, driven by the learners' purpose and intentions rather than by external societal pressures, facilitates intentionality in other domains as well.

### 5 Make Feedback Visible

Render choices, patterns, and outcomes visible to participants, enabling them to adjust their future behaviour accordingly. By making the implicit explicit and promoting transparency, these practices empower individuals and foster trust among community members.

### 6 Clarify, Simplify, and Connect

Avoid unnecessary complexity. Consolidate multiple principles and intentions into a single tool or practice, rather than maintaining an excessive number of them.

**7 Support, Don't Interfere**

Recognize that support should not equate to control. Excessive support can hinder progress and become counterproductive.

**9 Build Relationships**

Be authentic, accepting, and respectful. Embrace and value differences. Support self-expression, self-awareness, and self-acceptance. Authentic relationships serve as the foundation for effective communication, collaboration, and trust between students and staff.

**11 Share Value**

Strive to be transparent and generous in sharing knowledge and experiences. As individuals and communities, we have much to offer our future selves, fellow community members, and similar communities worldwide.

**8 Respect Time and Space of Others**

Minimise unnecessary meetings. Keep meetings concise, productive, and participatory. Honour commitments and adhere to scheduled start and end times. Prioritise checking in with others before assigning tasks. Show consideration for shared spaces.

**10 Embrace Full-Spectrum Fluency**

Celebrate diversity in personality and learning preferences while fostering multiple literacies. An effective education encompasses more than just traditional academic skills. Social, relational, digital, creative, and problem-solving abilities are equally essential and should be acknowledged and developed.

**12 Make Safer Spaces**

Foster an environment of physical, social, and emotional safety. Establish and maintain necessary boundaries. Cultivate freedom within a framework of safety and legality, enabling children to focus on learning instead of self-protection. This requires continuous learning and unlearning, particularly when challenging marginalising and oppressive patterns present in the wider societal context.



## 2.6. The Leaves // Tools and practices

Tools and practices are the leaves of the Agile Tree. Together, the leaves of the tree contribute to its nourishment and sustenance. The overall well-being of the tree, though, is not reliant on any individual leaf. Some leaves are utilised regularly, while others are only needed occasionally, and their roles may shift over time. So, just like leaves, tools and practices have periods of relevance. They are employed when appropriate, adjusted when the circumstances require it, and are set aside, released, when they no longer serve a purpose.

The Agile Learning Centers network has identified tools that prove beneficial in bringing clarity to implicit aspects, enhancing the efficiency of meetings, and facilitating effective communication among diverse neurological thinking patterns (5).

**Offerings Board**

**Personal Kanban**

**Gameshifting Board**

**Community Mastery Board**

**Documentation**

**Helpful Hand Signals**

In general, it has been found that tools are actively in use about 10% of the time. In chapter 4.3, some of these practices and tools are explained in greater detail. Suggestions on how to use them are included in a separate toolkit designed to serve as a practice guide.



# 3 | Self-Directed Education and Agile Learning in Practice

Self-Directed Education (SDE) is practiced in different forms, educational contexts, cultures, and places across the globe. Some of the SDE initiatives can be seen on the maps and lists of the Alliance for Self-directed Education (6), Agile Learning Centers (7) (see section 3.1 for more details), Liberated Learners Centers (8), and the European Democratic Education Community (EUDEC) (9).

Some of the other initiatives are difficult to map as they happen at home, organized by many families and individuals in the form of Unschooling (10).



Self-Directed Education Alliance Map

[Check an article that discusses some SDE approaches, their similarities, and their differences:](#)



All of these initiatives practice SDE, meaning that young people choose the activities they engage in and have the autonomy to decide when to execute them. Most importantly, these young people are trusted to manage their own lives and choices, including their unique educational path. Some may choose to attend an agile learning center for one year, do unschooling at home the following year and meet with peers in other places, play, write or design whole game seasons and characters, to then decide to do world schooling (11) for several months or years. Some young people might at some point pursue more standardized education or take national exams to then enroll (or not) for a university degree. Options are infinite while exercising SDE. All combinations are possible since the young person is in charge of the decision making. What matters is that decisions are taken in freedom, without coercion.

[Peter Gray, "How Our Schools Thwart Passions"](#)



Practicing SDE is easier in some countries than in others. As mentioned before, in the US and Mexico, many SDE initiatives exist, whereas in Europe, we see them in more limited numbers as compulsory schooling is the legal norm in many countries – for example in Germany. However, there are many ways of practising agile learning in Europe: in countries where homeschooling is allowed, young learners and families can get together to build agile learning communities (12). When the national context makes it difficult to create an agile learning center, creating a legally independent international school in another country can be an option (13). In many countries, alternative schools (Sudbury schools, democratic schools, Montessori schools,...) use agile pedagogical methods without being full agile learning centers. Furthermore, agile methods can also be used in a non-formal-educational contexts, such as afternoon or holiday care and leisure programs.

In this section, we will focus on agile learning in practice and describe what a day at an Agile Learning Center looks like (3.1) and introduce some of the tools and practices widely-used at ALCs (3.2).

[You will find more informations about ALCs across Europe and examples of ALC practices in our Agile4 Collaboration Digital Agile Learning Toolbox](#)



## 3.1 A day at an Agile SDE learning center

During visits to various ALCs, you will observe commonalities in terms of children, adolescents, and adults being empowered to shape the culture within their communities. At the same time, you will also witness unique expressions of particular tools or practices that arise from the foundations of agility.

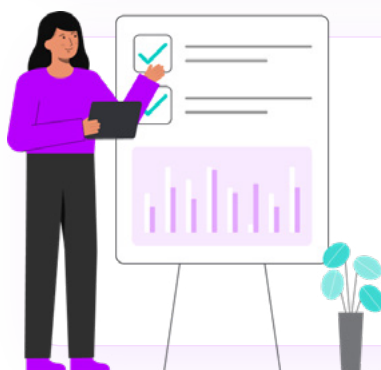
To have a concrete idea of how ALC-daily life looks like, here is a description of a typical day at the world's first ALC center, the Agile Learning Center in New York (ALC-NYC) (14), and a description of a typical day at the first ALC in Europe accredited to provide diplomas to students, the Senbazuru Agile Learning Center in Madrid (13).

### 3.1.1 Agile Learning Center New York City

This description of a day in the ALC-NYC has been adapted from the FAQ on the reference website of the Agile Learning Centers Network (15).



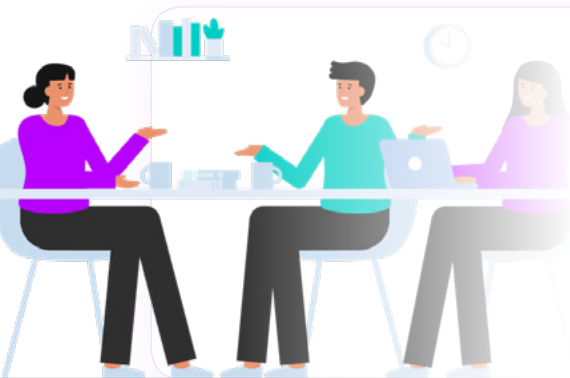
At the start of the school day, before the official time, students begin to arrive at the unlocked school premises. For instance, at ALC-NYC, learners are welcome from 9 am even though the school officially starts at 9:30 am. Other ALCs may have different start times and may allow students to enter one hour before, as per their own schedules. During this pre-school time, students are encouraged to contemplate their intentions for the day and organise any activities that require the participation of specific individuals, a practice known as scrum. The day commences punctually with either a meeting to discuss scheduling or to share intentions.



The week commences with a gathering called Set-The-Week, where all students and staff convene to coordinate and determine the schedule for the upcoming week. This includes planning offerings, workshops, trips, projects, and meetings, which can be proposed by students, staff, parents, and community members.



On Mondays, during Set-The-Week, or on other weekdays, students gather in their designated “Spawn Points” (rooms or spaces where students and facilitators typically begin and end their days, inspired by the concept from video games). The facilitator provides a reminder of the day’s scheduled activities while the students update their Kanbans (visual boards for tracking tasks). Students take turns fulfilling the roles of meeting facilitator and digital Kanban keeper, leading the meeting and ensuring everyone has the opportunity to share their intentions for the day. These meetings usually last for around ten to fifteen minutes, during which each person’s plans are heard, fostering inspiration and facilitating scheduling, and intentions are documented for future reference.



Between 10 am and 3 pm, the activities that unfold can be described as ever-changing and enchanting. The nature of these activities varies on a monthly, weekly, and daily basis. The days are filled with excursions, classes, games, discussions, stories, creative endeavours, collaborations, and delightful surprises. It's a harmonious blend of work and play. To get a glimpse of the diverse happenings, one can explore ALF blogs or visit ALC social media platforms.



In the afternoon, everyone participates in a brief school clean-up session, followed by a reflective phase of the day. From Monday to Thursday, students return to their Spawn Points for a short meeting where they review their morning intentions, document their accomplishments throughout the day, and reflect on whether they achieved what they had set out to do. On Fridays, a more extensive period of time is allocated for Community Blogging, during which students and staff write weekly posts for their personal blogs, sharing their thoughts and experiences.

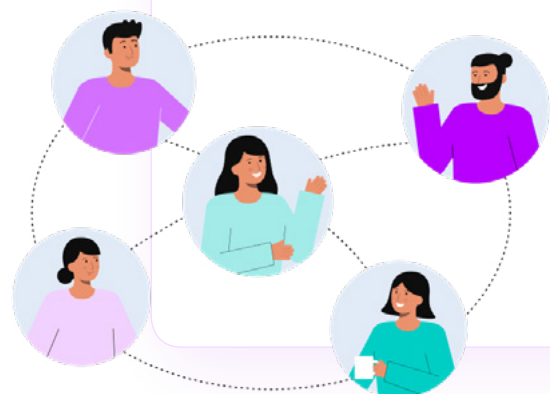
[Erez's Blog](#)



[Hugo's Blog](#)



[Blog Magical Melicorn](#)



After the afternoon Spawn Point or Blogging activities, and prior to the school's closure at 3 pm, students and staff gather in a communal area for a Gratitude Circle. It is customary for students to alternate in the role of facilitator, and expressions of gratitude can take various shapes and forms. Coming together at the end of the day provides a final opportunity to connect and express appreciation for one another before everyone goes their separate ways for the evening.



### 3.1.2 Senbazuru Agile Learning Center in Madrid

The weekly structure is always the same, as described below. Every day is spent at school except Fridays when there are excursions into the natural environment.

Starting with the early childhood entry time, it is flexible from 8:45–9:00. The groups are established with a 3-year-old mix.

These 15 minutes are always used for each student to check their boards. Here, they check to see how much time they will spend on their own tasks, and also consider the general activities they have in the daily timetable (workshops or projects). The tool used is a timeline. These individual boards are visible to the whole group and are reviewed daily by the students and, at the end of the week, are exposed to everyone: “I’m doing badly with this, I’m doing well with this, I want to achieve this...”.

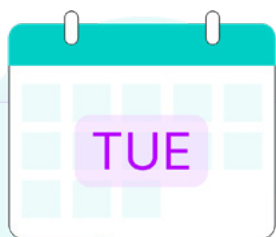
Once this process is finished, which lasts until approximately 12:00, it is time for the workshops. There are four simultaneous workshops on the same theme. When a student commits to attending one of these workshops, attendance is compulsory for the duration of the workshop. An example of this organization follows:



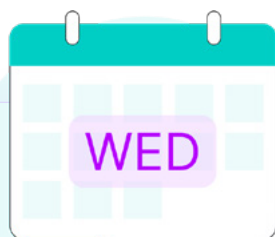
During one month, art is worked on, and workshops are offered on clay, theatre, music... The learner chooses one of these four options that have been provided. So, once the student decides which to do, she/he has to commit herself/himself and is obliged to do it unless otherwise justifying time is needed to do another activity. This must be done in writing. If the teachers or facilitators approve, the student is allowed not to attend. Once the month is over, the students present the project they have been working on to the rest of their classmates.



The workshops end at around 13:00 when the closing meetings of the day occur. These meetings always have the same structure, although it varies depending on the day of the week. Every day begins with self-assessment, where the students answer metacognitive questions in a diary and share this with everyone.



On Tuesdays, the coexistence meeting takes place, where conflicts and how they are solved are discussed.



On Wednesdays, there is the so-called 'change meeting', where decisions are made about the school's culture.



On Thursdays, the week's assessment takes place, a review of the activities carried out, and decisions are made for the following week. This is where each student presents their board.



Finally, on Friday, there is a day trip outside of the school, as well as a gratitude meeting where each person presents what he or she would like to be grateful for or celebrate.



In stages where the students are older, i.e., in secondary education, the day is more extended, and the organization of the day only varies in the following sections:

- ➔ Flexible entrance between 9–10 am and exit 4–5 pm.
- ➔ Daily, they have a standing group meeting, an individual meeting with their reference tutor to evaluate their "learning assessment pathway", and they have a contract and review it.



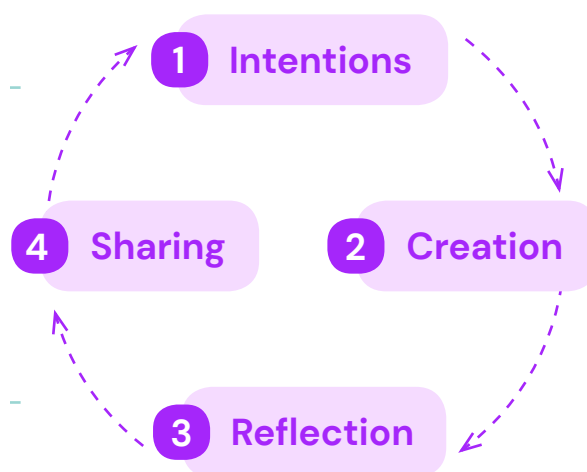
## 3.2 The ALC-Leaves explained: tools and practices

The ALC-leaves are a set of tools and practices that support students and facilitators to complete the Agile Cycle (“see point 2.3 – The Roots”). Before we mention them, let’s revisit the Agile Cycle.

The following text has been adapted from the ALC Starter Kit Volume II: Facilitation (section “Useful tools”), the network’s official documentation of selected core tools and methods. (16)

### 3.2.1 The Agile Learning Cycle

The Agile Learning Cycle is composed of four steps:



#### 1 Intentions

Intentions arise from the students and facilitators curiosity, what feels relevant for their present and future. These can shift in the scope of days, weeks or months or remain constant for long periods of time.

It becomes relevant for most ALC communities to have dedicated times, spaces, questions and conversations dedicated to set these intentions, usually on a daily and weekly basis, but these could also be established for larger extensions of time. These intentions most of the time get placed on collective (Offerings Board) and personal Kanban boards and Set the Week boards.

Intentions can look like a lot of things...programming a game, rescuing street dogs, archery lessons, Duolingo time, taking a nap, going to a museum, making cookies for grandma, dodgeball, connecting with investors for a chocolate business, organising an unconference, writing an essay to enter college ...you name it.

Also, we notice that some intentions emerge organically without anticipation. We welcome these, as well as the reflections these generate.

## 2 Creation

Creation means the manifestation of our intention. Actually doing them. The creation process varies according to the nature of the intention. Some creation processes take minutes, others days, weeks, months, years, or even lifetimes...

## 3 Reflection

ALCs foster people making sense of their own learning, of seeing if what they want and do actually leads to a sense of meaning. Not blind to the fact that humans don't always know what they don't know, facilitators play a vital role in creating generative contexts for reflection and listening for powerful questions that can allow us to observe and evaluate our learning processes (starting with our ideas of success and how to walk towards them) in many different dimensions. These include: tangible products, how we managed our time and energy around them, our sensations and feelings as we worked, the impact on our desired performance, relationships and sense of self, where inspiration invites us next, etc.

ALCs continuously strive to create a safe space and harmonious relationships. Hence some of this reflection spaces and times also gravitate towards the social fabric and how to learn and co-exist together in a way that makes sense and aligns to each community's values and the Agile Learning model.

## 4 Sharing

The sharing phase can take multiple formats (see Point 2.3 "The roots"). In all of its forms, though, it is about enhancing both the students' and projects' development. Sharing allows students to tell the story about their learning and creations and get feedback to continue improving, while making accessible and explicit the value these creations have for other people and the surrounding world.

### 3.2.2 The Offerings Board / Set-the-Week Board

The Offerings Board displays a variety of available options, activities, and resources either on a daily or weekly basis. These can include activities such as cooking a meal, building a robot, creating artwork, engaging in meaningful discussions, or playing Minecraft. These opportunities stem from the interests and curiosity of the community. The Offerings Board can either be the same as the Set-the-Week board or exclusively dedicated to the day's offerings. Having multiple Offerings boards positioned throughout the space (e.g., at the school entrance, in each spawn point, outside the room where the offerings take place) presents an opportunity to experiment with different formats to determine the most effective way to keep community members informed and engaged.

For offerings that require firm commitments, transportation, or the purchase of specific materials, a separate board can be used to list these details. Following the Set the Week meeting, students can add their names to this board, allowing adults to assist with transportation logistics and the procurement of necessary materials.

Example of Set-the-Week boards in action.



### 3.2.3 Personal Kanban

The concept of Kanban originates from Japan and refers to a “card signal.” It is an incredibly valuable tool for tracking intentions, ideas, work in progress (WIP), and achievements. A basic Kanban board consists of different columns, which can be named as desired. For this example, let’s consider the columns as Backlog, Ready, Doing, and Done. Sticky notes are used to populate the board and move participants through the various stages of work.

The “Backlog” column represents the things students want to do, explore, or create. Each day during the Morning Spawn, individuals evaluate their list of possibilities, prioritise them, visualise them, and move them into the “Ready” column as their intentions for the day. As students engage in activities, participate in offerings, and explore throughout the day, they transition the sticky notes from the “Ready” column to the “Doing” column, and finally to the “Done” column. During the Afternoon Spawn, the reflection meeting, it becomes quick and easy to visualise what they have accomplished and what remains undone.

Two key principles of Kanban are Visualise Your Work and Limit Your Work In Progress. By visualising their work, individuals create a clear path towards completing their intended tasks. It helps them stay focused and establishes a sense of accountability. Visualising work also facilitates efficient management of work in progress by providing a better understanding of what can realistically be accomplished in a day. Utilising Kanban teaches individuals, including both children and facilitators/teachers, how to effectively prioritise their time and make conscious choices about their engagements.

There are numerous variations in how Kanban can be implemented. Some students prefer using a daybook, where they create their own Kanban system in a notebook and organise their intentions accordingly. Others may opt for digital versions of Kanban. Regardless of the method chosen, it is crucial to maintain a written record of students’ daily intentions in a visible location where they can engage with them throughout the day.

Example of Kanban board





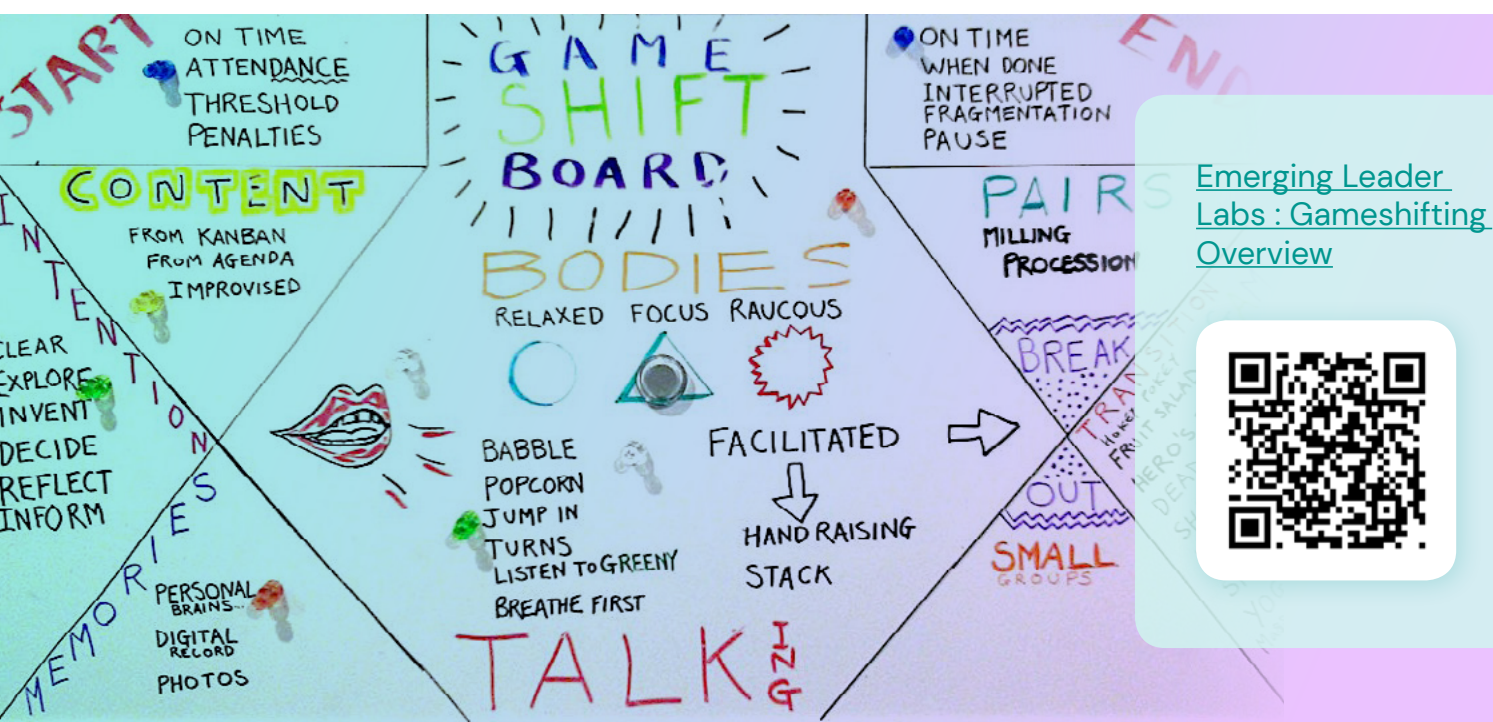
### 3.2.4 The Gameshifting Board

The Gameshifting board serves as a tool to explicitly define the implicit social rules within a meeting, so as to enhance facilitation and allow for experimentation. At its core, it can alleviate the anxiety experienced by individuals who struggle to understand social cues. Moreover, it empowers groups to modify their dynamics and address a wide range of tasks.

Groups often become trapped in fixed patterns. Sometimes, a teacher assumes control, pleasing the boss becomes paramount; other times, some individuals dominate the conversation while others only passively listen. These patterns hinder creativity and adaptability. While a particular pattern may be suitable for a specific outcome, it restricts the group to that singular outcome. By intentionally changing patterns, groups can engage in polymorphic ways, assuming various forms and achieving diverse outcomes. The Gameshifting process applies the individual cycle of intention, creation, and reflection to group dynamics. Students learn how groups can swiftly transform to accomplish different objectives, resolving conflicts and fostering collaborative exploration.

The Gameshifting board serves as a visual aid to facilitate Gameshifting. It is adaptable to different types of groups and meetings. A sample whiteboard is divided into categories such as Mode, Interaction style, Body arrangement, Body energy, Roles, and Start/End. Each category offers several options from which the Game Master (the person in charge of the Gameshifting board) can choose, based on the group's specific needs and objectives. A marker (such as a small magnet) is placed beside the chosen convention. If the group decides to switch to a different convention, the marker is moved accordingly. This powerful tool fosters intentional culture creation, enhances group dynamics, and enables groups to modify their dynamics as required.

Example of Gameshifting Board



### 3.2.5 Community Mastery Board

The Community Master Board (CMB) serves as a tool for facilitating the establishment of community agreements within Change-Up, which shapes the unique culture of your ALC. It consists of four sections: Awareness (identifying community-wide issues that require resolution); Implementation (the chosen actions to be tested by the community during the current week); Practising (the ongoing changes we are currently adopting); and, Mastery (agreements that have become the accepted norms).

When working with CMBs, it's important to consider the following:

- ➔ Limit your work in progress: Similar to personal workflows, a community can only handle a certain number of new solutions or practices simultaneously. Pay attention to what feels manageable in terms of implementing new agreements during each cycle, and be aware when having too many agreements in the practising section leads to a breakdown in collective attention towards them.
- ➔ Ensure visibility of “mastered” agreements for visitors and new members: Find a way to make sure that agreements which have been successfully integrated are easily visible. It is crucial to provide newcomers with the necessary information to effectively engage them within the community.

Example of Community Mastery Board

Desires/possible upgrades to discuss	What is the underlying <u>NEED/VALUE/DESIRE</u> of this practice?	What is the original <u>AWARENESS</u> that led to this practice?	<u>TRYING IT OUT</u> (testing this practice for a week)	<u>PRACTICING IT!</u> P1	<u>GETTING BETTER!</u> P2	<u>PRETTY GOOD AT THIS!</u> P3	<u>IT'S</u> JUST
	We desire an ALC that is free of pests (bugs, rodents) (bugs, rodents) and is sanitary.	Mice/Cockroaches are attracted to food crumbs they gather, messes are made!		Eat only in the cafe, kitchen & outside.			
	We desire an ALC that is inclusive of different types of people that can resolve their conflicts peacefully.	When large groups of people gather, conflicts may occur.				Please use our conflict resolution circles as needed.	
	We desire to have students take responsibility for being calm and for the culture within Submissions, because this is their school!	We lack culture holders for the CC forms that are being submitted.		We will implement 2. Culture Creation: Coaches to help students for managing culture forms.			
	We desire to have a clean space in the school where students can study, communicate and do things.	The upstairs is loud when people group, dance, there.		Proposed: Computer Room, Study Hall, Art Room, Music Room, etc. (to be decided by the community).			
<b>Announcements</b>							
Reminders to use CC form to make new submissions for ALC!	India+Tyann	Parent-Turn Janna					
Teen Program 11.10x2							
	Desire to not waste any materials and to keep our space clean!	A lot of people use the Art room but not everyone knows how to clean it and for some way.			Art Room Training		
<b>Challenges/concerns to discuss</b>	We desire to empower students to make their own decisions about	Items sit on Kids finance board for a long			Co-Owners for Kids Finance: need only 10% for kids finance		

## 3.2.6 Documentation

At present, student and facilitator blogs are the most commonly used form of documentation in ALCs. However, the suitability of blogging for documentation depends on the age of the students. Younger students may find a daybook, where they can draw pictures or write reflections about their day, to be sufficient. Blogging aligns with the agile learning cycle by creating valuable content that can be shared and serves as an upgraded version of a report card. It becomes a digital portfolio of student-generated work, showcasing their interests and achievements. This portfolio acts as a feedback loop, enabling students to identify recurring themes and patterns in their own learning.

Blogs also provide parents with a sense of reassurance and security, as colleges and employers often review online portfolios. The portfolio offers an innovative way for our students to demonstrate their unique qualities and interests.

It is important to remember that as an ALF (Adult Learning Facilitator), when choosing to document, you are sharing your perspective. If you notice children engaging in activities that do not make it onto their blogs or Kanban boards, it is alright to feel a sense of disappointment. While reflecting on such patterns can be helpful, it is crucial to resist the urge to document on their behalf and instead create a space for them to authentically reflect on their own learning.

Other tools for documenting student activities can be valuable for quicker and lighter record-keeping. One effective approach we have found is using a digital Kanban to digitize each student's personal Kanban board. This allows for easy inclusion of pictures and supportive links on the go. These records can be accessed and referred to when composing a blog post at the end of a week. Additionally, they can be exported to a .csv file if a student or family requires a shareable record of their portfolio or curriculum.

[Blog Rubik School – Romania](#)



[Blog Origami for change – Senbazuru Agile Learning Center, Spain](#)





### 3.2.7 Hand Signals

To ensure productive and efficient discussions, members of ALCs utilize hand signals as a form of visual communication. While non-verbal cues work well in one-on-one conversations, they may not effectively translate in a group setting. Hand signals offer immediate feedback to the group without interrupting the speaker. These signals make non-verbal communication explicit and purposeful by replacing subtle cues with clear and defined gestures.

Here are a few examples of commonly used hand signals and their meanings:

#### Twinkle fingers

#### “This friend speaks my mind”

This signal is performed by wiggling fingers and signifies a strong resonance with what is being said. It indicates that the speaker’s point resonates with the person making the signal.



#### Delta

#### “Change-up”

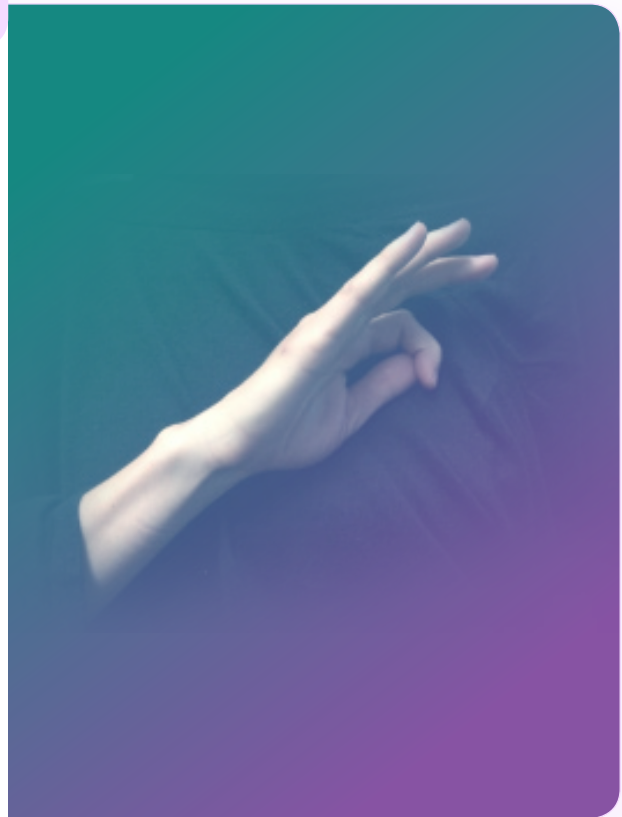
This signal alerts the group that the current group process may need to be GameShifted or that the agreed-upon process is not being followed. It provides an opportunity for others to conclude their thoughts before addressing the need for a change-up.



Sometimes, simply making this signal is enough to redirect the group’s attention and behaviour back on track.

**Got ya****“You have been heard”**

This signal is made by placing the hand over the heart and indicates that the listener has understood the speaker’s point. It gently encourages the speaker to move on and release the topic to the group. It can be particularly useful when the speaker is repeating a point using different words. If the speaker knows they have been understood, they can proceed confidently. For instance, this explanation might have warranted a “got ya” signal a few sentences ago. Continuing the explanation ensures the point is fully understood, but if someone had used the “got ya” sign earlier, it would have saved time for everyone.



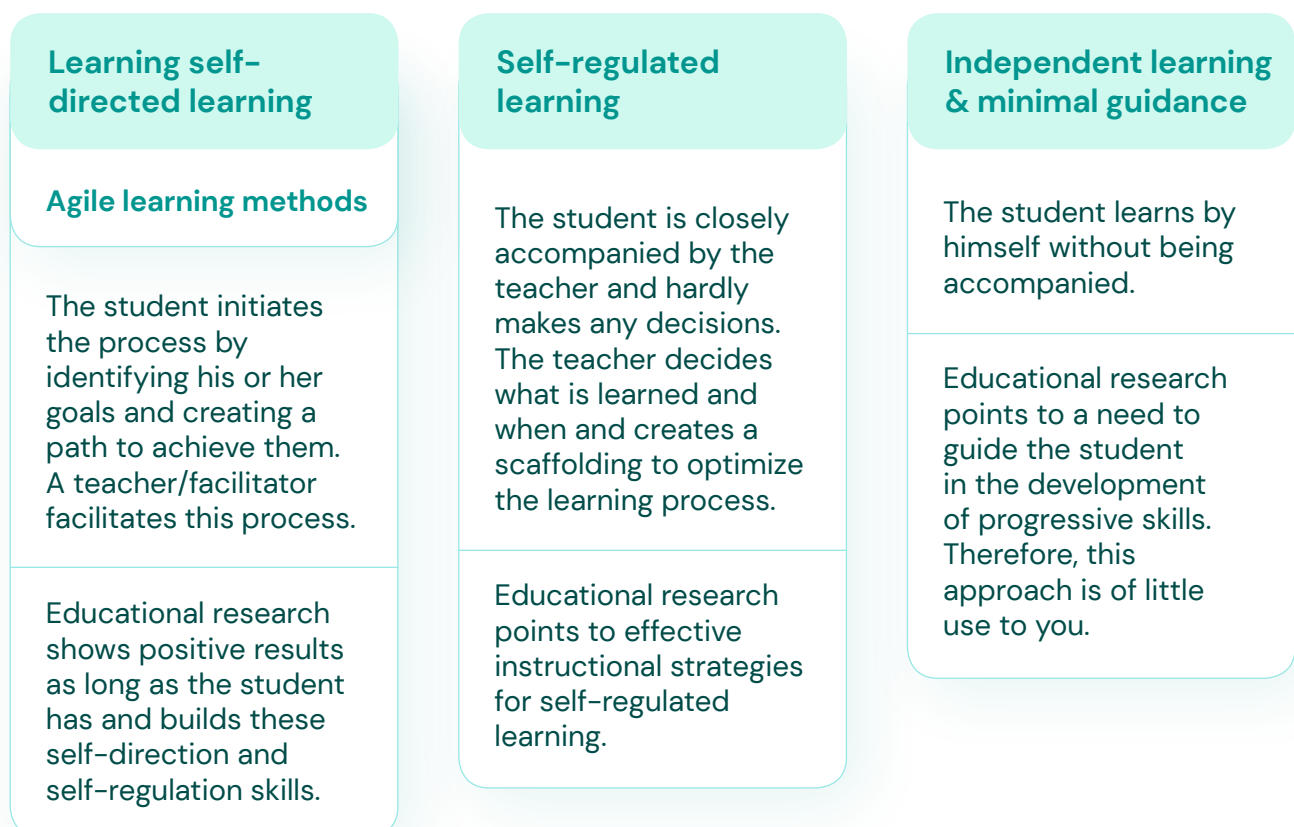
There are several other hand signals that can be created to address different needs, such as Stay on Focus, Trust the Group, Clarification Question, Slow-Down, Direct Response, and more. Feel free to develop new signals as necessary in your community. Display them on your Gameshifting board or any visible location for working groups to reference.

# 4 | Research Perspectives

When someone first hears the term 'self-directed learning' (SDL), they usually think of a learner learning independently.

However, the concept of SDL is not related to such a way of learning, as discussed in previous chapters, since the learner is supported by guides or facilitators and a specific educational approach. In this chapter, from the field of educational research, we expose the different terms and approaches to learning, and their effects on learning and skills, which consider a high degree of self-directedness on the side of the learner. We caution, however, that terminological and conceptual confusion is considerable in the literature (17). With this in mind, we have attempted to simply differentiate the terms and the research associated with them, beginning with the following summary of educational approaches as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Educational approaches (18)



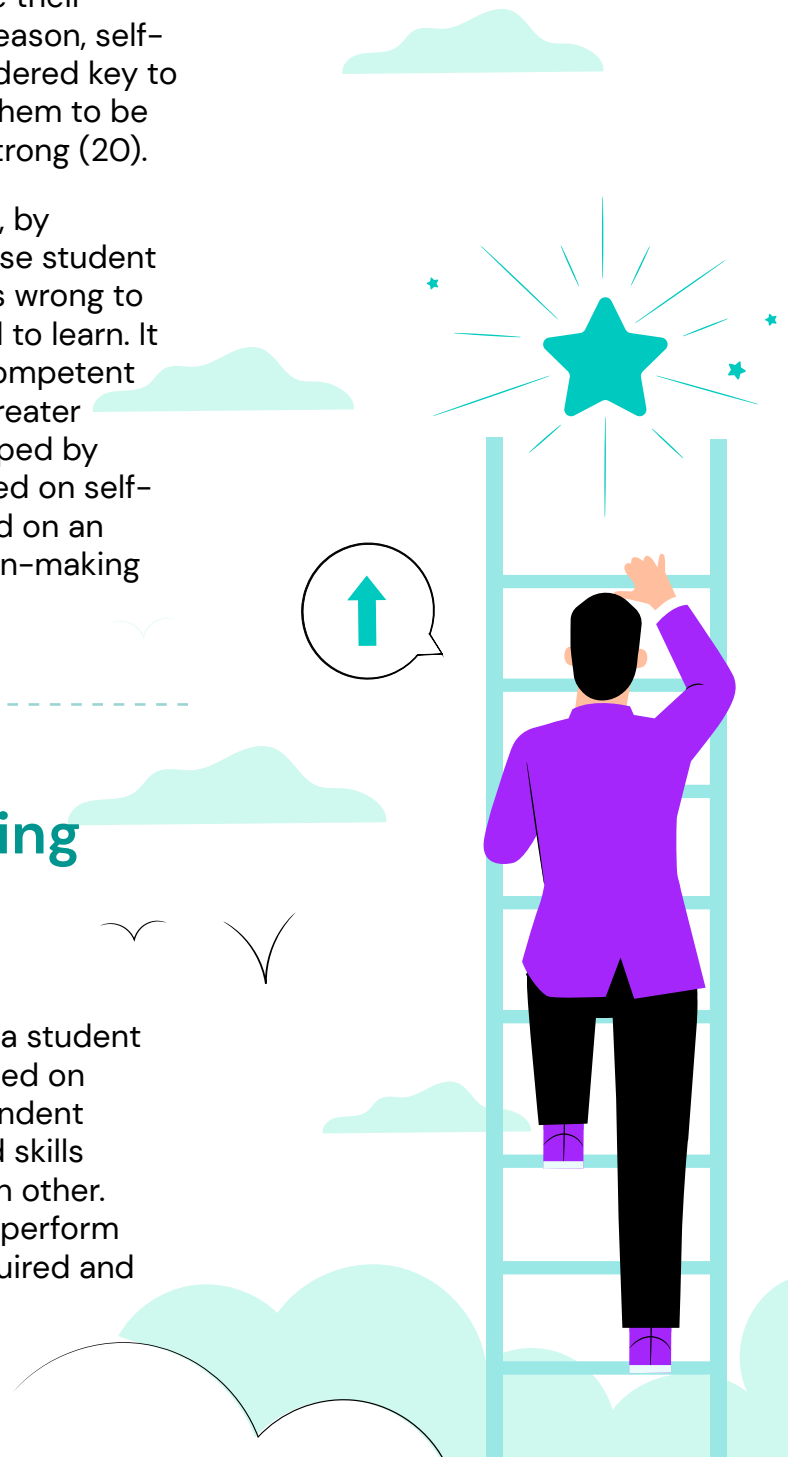
## 4.1 Life-long learning

Today, learners – people more generally – are expected to be able to organize their lives and make decisions responsibly, even to a higher degree today than previous generations (19). Along the same lines, in terms of the professional sphere, workers need to update their knowledge and skills continuously. For this reason, self-regulation and self-direction skills are considered key to success and lifelong learning. The need for them to be taught this in school is both apparent and strong (20).

Promoting self-regulation and self-direction, by enhancing learning, would also aim to increase student motivation. Contrary to common beliefs, it is wrong to assume that the student must be motivated to learn. It is rather the student who learns and feels competent who becomes the one that, in turn, shows greater motivation (21). Motivation might also be helped by the fact that the pedagogical approach based on self-regulated and self-directed learning is based on an active role of the learner that entails decision-making and taking responsibility (22).

## 4.2 Independent learning and minimal guidance

Conclusions from several studies show why a student will not become an independent learner based on a learning context in which he/she is independent with minimal or no guidance. Knowledge and skills are acquired progressively and build on each other. Therefore, a complex task will be difficult to perform unless the necessary previous skills are acquired and there is an adequate training context.



## 4.3 Self-regulated learning

As a practice, self-regulation has personal, behavioral, and environmental dimensions (23). For students to become self-regulated learners, teachers can implement appropriate actions to produce an impact on performance such as providing clear instructions, explicit modeling, or breaking a large task into smaller, progressive tasks (24). In other words, by teaching skills sequentially, demonstrating what is required, and giving students plenty of practice chances, you may help students understand lessons better. These actions allow students to progress in their knowledge or skills knowing what they have to do, how to do it, and feeling that it is within their reach. This aspect, in terms of the perception of one's own competence, is a facet of self-regulation called self-efficacy (25). Numerous studies point out that a student who feels capable of performing a task will be more likely to perform it successfully (26). This is not a general ability, but depends on the context. For example, a student may be considered to have high self-efficacy for mathematics, but not for history (27).

## 4.4 Self-directed learning

In self-directed learning (SDL), "the learner initiates the process by setting learning objectives, identifying assessments that allow feedback, and identifying resources to help them reach their goals (28). In other words, the purpose is to empower the learner and this changes the role of the teacher, who traditionally assumes such functions, to being a facilitator of the learning situation. As we have explored in previous sections, SDL is not associated with total freedom of the learner, but rather the facilitator must help the learner to progressively develop self-direction competencies, assuming increasing control of his or her own processes while acquiring skills and knowledge (29). As a result, SDL research shows benefits such as increased learner



motivation, as do their sense of control, confidence, and belief in themselves (30). Conscientiousness, openness, optimism, and work drive have all been highlighted as potentially essential attributes that influence learner self-direction in various empirical research (29).

In formal educational contexts, such as primary, secondary, and tertiary (university) education, students are instructed and assessed on the same content and all at the same time. In these contexts, even though self-regulated learning can be promoted, self-directed learning can not because students do not have that freedom of choice and consequent responsibility.

## 4.5 Agile learning

Agile methods have been defined and explained in previous chapters. Task and role distribution facilitate students' shared self-regulation of goal setting, task planning, understanding and completion (33). Agreement among students contributes to sharing beliefs, backgrounds and interests and, thus, to building positive relationships (34). In the same vein, a tool that allows the visualization of the whole facilitates the learning process, organization, decision making, etc. (35). These dynamics are not simple, although they are acquired with time and good organization. Noguera et al (33) state that the role of the teacher or facilitator in the first contact of students with agile learning is crucial. Although with the passage of time there is higher shared self-regulation, these authors explain that even as the approach is based on self-directed learning, students still need greater guidance in the early stages. This is in line with previous research (discussed in previous sections) regarding novice and expert learners. Finally, in this educational approach, the process is as important as the outcomes. Thus, Nam et al (36) caution that teachers/facilitators should convey this philosophy to students (being, in fact, another learning objective in itself) in order for students to focus not only on the tasks, but on the process and group development of cohesion, satisfaction, trust, belonging, and mutual support.

Encouraging self-directed learning makes, in theory, a lot of sense in order to empower students so that they can really face an increasingly complex world in which these skills are required (31). Otherwise, and as we have been discussing, how are students going to respond to situations, especially new ones, in which they have to decide how to act, what they need to learn and how to achieve their goals? Therefore, even if strategies to develop students' self-direction are incorporated, a formal educational context has numerous elements that will produce limitations (e.g., the very tradition and conception of the teaching-learning process, the curriculum or grades).

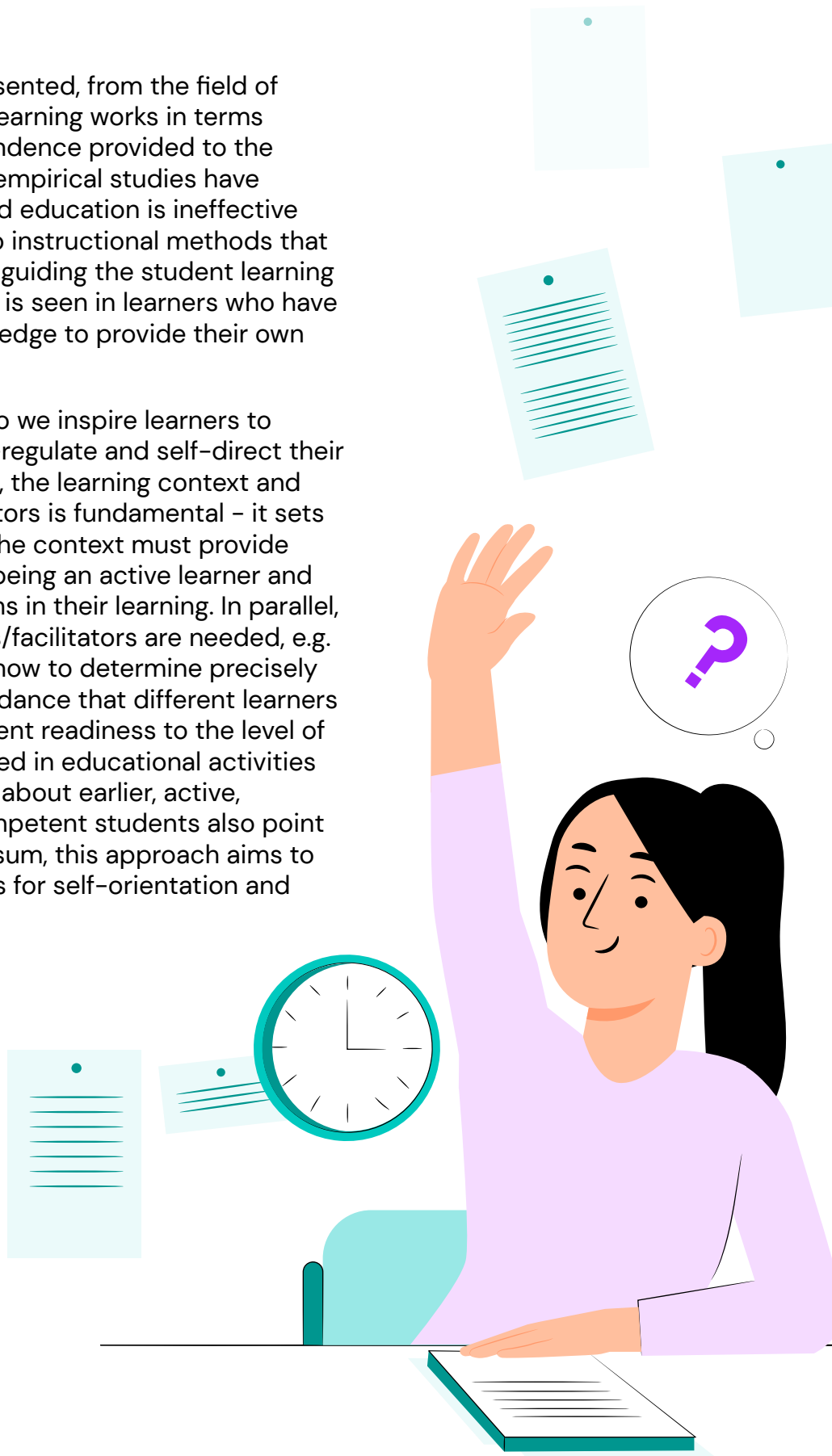
For this reason, schools have emerged that move away from these formal contexts. The aim is to implement a more student-centered approach by, for example, respecting the learning pace of each student or based on the 'ungrading' movement (32).



## 4.6 Conclusion

In this chapter we have presented, from the field of educational research, how learning works in terms of the freedom and independence provided to the learner. Numerous seminal empirical studies have shown that minimally guided education is ineffective and inefficient compared to instructional methods that place a heavy emphasis on guiding the student learning process. However, a benefit is seen in learners who have sufficiently high prior knowledge to provide their own guidance (37).

This idea is thus key: how do we inspire learners to acquire skills to orient, self-regulate and self-direct their own learning? To begin with, the learning context and the role of teachers/facilitators is fundamental – it sets the basis for all (28). Next, the context must provide students the possibility of being an active learner and being able to make decisions in their learning. In parallel, skilled and trained teachers/facilitators are needed, e.g. in agile learning, who know how to determine precisely the amount and type of guidance that different learners require (38), matching student readiness to the level of self-directed learning needed in educational activities (22). And, as we have talked about earlier, active, responsible, skilled and competent students also point to higher motivation (21). In sum, this approach aims to instil students with the skills for self-orientation and lifelong learning.





## 5

Cultures of  
Collaboration

While agile and self-directed learning is designed to address the individual needs of each learner, the process also involves cooperation and collaboration – literally, working together. It emphasizes what we have in common or how to build each other's strength and skills.



*...my freedom  
begins where  
their freedom  
begins...*

Cornelius  
Castoriadis (39)

In our experience, educators sometimes assume – or simply hope – that groups will somehow self-organize and then take it from there. Agile methods put into practice more abstract ideas of freedom and self-determination. We are convinced that this is best done when we think of this self as a connected self – first, connected to the full range of one's own dreams and desires; and second, connected simultaneously to others and the world around us. This is not merely a nice-to-have, feel-good element, the icing on the cake of individual achievement. It is what makes such success possible in the first place. Because agile is not simply another skill-set but a way of relating to ourselves – as people interested in what it means to be free, who look at education as a way to explore this freedom as a space of shared action and responsibility (40).

---

## Agile means: we are in this together

What we have learned from agile methods is that self-organization does not just happen by itself but needs methodological support. The good news is that we can make it happen – by creating what we call “cultures of collaboration”, a term adopted from co-creative organizational design processes that show and make tangible why working together is not only a good idea (41) but one that can help us be who we want to be as learners – and as people ready to act in a world of change.

## Together means: aware of what's around us

Contexts affect what we do, how we think about ourselves, whether or not we find the trust to open up and relate to others. So if the self is a connected self, working with others means that we get a sense of each other's connectedness. When we come together to learn and work, we bring these contexts with us – our experiences, memories, the histories of relations that make us who we are. It makes little sense to ignore these contexts. Instead, we can create awareness of how they affect what we do (42). This doesn't come easily. We are not used to bringing our fully connected selves into whatever we do – we are often asked to focus on “tasks at hand” and “things that matter”. Agile is meant to help us focus, be effective in defining and pursuing goals, be able to critically assess how we got there and reflect on whether or not we got to where we wanted to be. But our connected selves are there throughout the process – we know and feel that this is the case. Instead of ignoring this, we can create room to bring the worlds tugging at us into whatever we do, designing a conversation that allows us to combine the focus on what's in front of us with a sense that we are part of something larger than ourselves.

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## What's around us are worlds of change

We are reminded everyday that we are affected by changes across the world. Young people are even more aware of this – they see how what we have done in the past changes – and limits – what they might be able to do in the future. As a result, more and more of the learners in our schools wish to play a role in whatever needs to happen to re-open these futures (43). In fact, this is an area where younger learners can often inspire older educators who may have believed in change but no longer do. What agile can contribute is support in designing a broader conversation that links the exercise of our individual freedoms to the world around us. To strengthen our sense that we can have agency in contexts that are larger than our individual lives. And to better understand the different contexts of action – and how they are connected, from the “mini” of our immediate life situation to the “meta” of planetary perspectives.

## Each of these worlds offers us opportunities to act on our convictions

As we identify these different contexts of action, we can understand the different types of action possible. From immediate individual action focusing on the short term to larger collective action aimed at changed how we organize our societies (44) – the ways in which we communicate, feed ourselves, move around, organize work. Almost every school curriculum we know of covers these different areas – geography, information science, politics all help us understand what these fields of knowledge have to offer us. What agile can do is link them as fields of action.



### Six drivers of short-termism

- 1 Tyranny of the Clock**  
The acceleration of time since the Middle Ages
- 2 Digital Distraction**  
The hijacking of attention by technology
- 3 Political Presentism**  
Myopic focus on the next election
- 4 Speculative Capitalism**  
Volatile boom-bust financial markets
- 5 Networked Uncertainty**  
The rise of global risk and contagion
- 6 Perpetual Progress**  
The pursuit of endless economic growth

### Six ways to think long

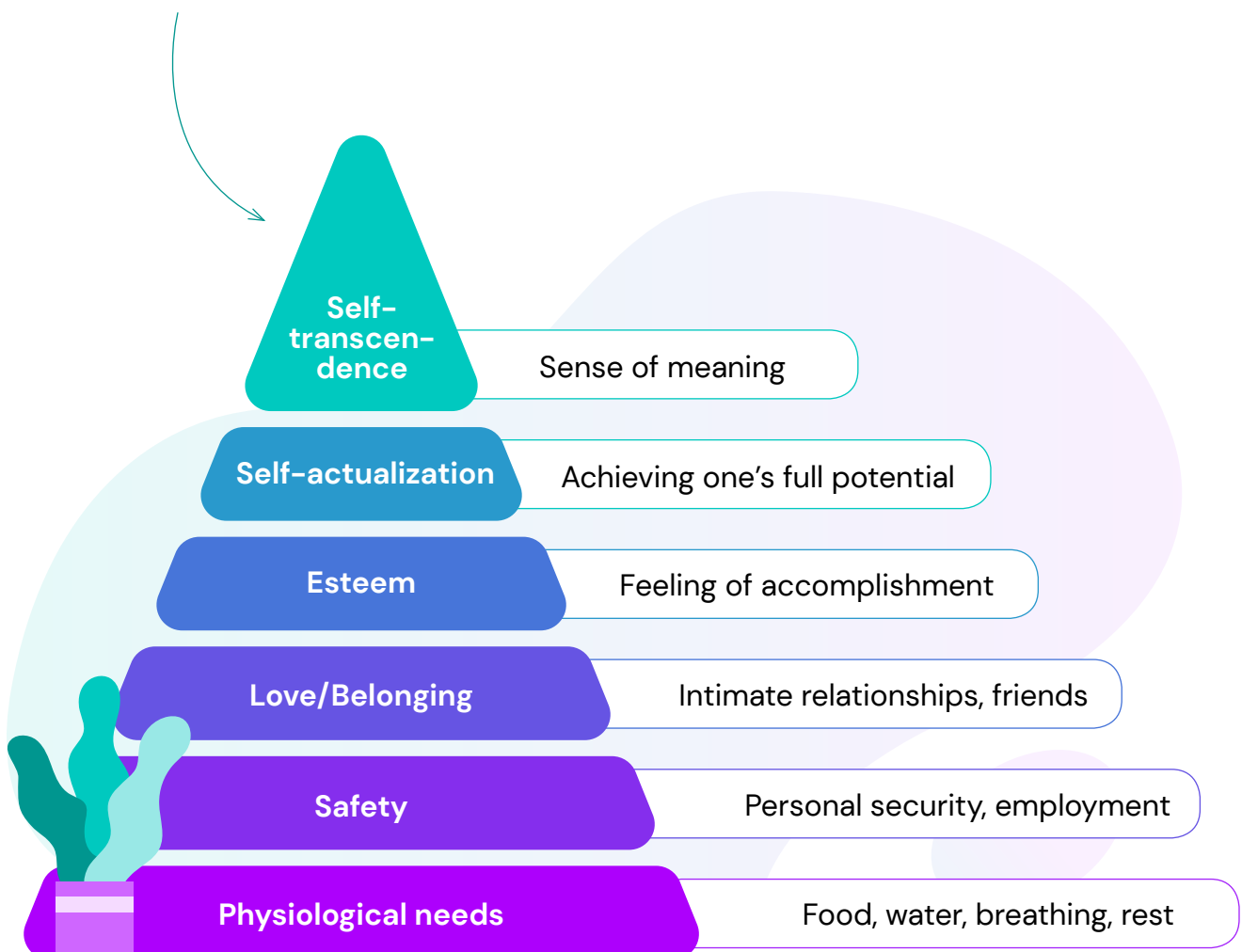
- 1 Deep-Time Humility**  
Grasp we are an eyeblink in cosmic time
- 2 Legacy Mindset**  
Be remembered well by posterity
- 3 Intergenerational Justice**  
Consider the seventh generation ahead
- 4 Cathedral Thinking**  
Plan projects beyond a human lifetime
- 5 Holistic Forecasting**  
Envision multiple pathways for civilisation
- 6 Transcendent Goal**  
Strive for one-planet thriving

Based on the graphic from "The Good Ancestor: How to Think Long Term in a Short-Time World" by Roman Krznaric

## Working together is a way of making sense

People have needs. As far as we know, these needs are not as different as we often tend to think. One of the most popular versions of this is the “pyramid of needs” developed by the psychologist Abraham Maslow, usually understood as a hierarchy that ranks needs from the existential to the immaterial. Toward the end of his life, Maslow concluded that this list of needs doesn’t end with “self-actualization” (as most versions you will find of this list will tell you). He decided to add another layer: our need to make sense, to create meaning, to have an impact not only on our own lives but on the lives of others (45).

### Maslow’s new hierarchy of needs



## Coming full circle

So if agile is about the freedom to learn, exploring and exercising this freedom does not separate us from others. On the contrary – it is a way of bringing us closer to ourselves, others, and the worlds from which we come and that exist around us. This is also why “agile” has a special relationship not only to space – the worlds that make us who we are and become – but to time. It is a way of approaching learning that is based on the conviction that change is a normal state of affairs, not the exception to the rule. There are few, if any examples in history where we have been better off by ignoring that this is the case (we can’t think of any). So instead, let’s find ways to live with this. Because we have to. Change ranges from incremental change (where we often only become aware of in retrospect) to disruptive change that overwhelms our sense of agency. The better we understand this, the more likely it is we can play an active, self-determined role in our own lives.

If you want to get deeper



[Anthony Cabraal, Susan Basterfield: Better work together – How the power of community can transform your business](#)



[Roman Krznaric: The good ancestor](#)



[Maja Göpel: The Great Mindshift, How a New Economic Paradigm and Sustainability Transformations go Hand in Hand, 2016](#)



# 6 | Conclusion

**Self-Directed-Education**  
Agile learning is a methodology which puts the learner at the center of the learning process. Since we do not know the world young people in school today will live in as adults, agile learning gives them the tools to live, interact and make decisions in the world they will be a part of in the future instead of simply explaining to them the world as it exists today.

As you have seen, Agile Learning is a broad methodology with similarity with other informal and non-formal learning methods and can be implemented in its entirety in an Agile Learning Center that is integrated in specific contexts of formal education, too. This handbook has provided an overview about what Agile learning is, in which context it is used and can be used and which importance the thematic of collaboration has in an agile learning context.

Within our project Agile4Collaboration, we will develop in addition to this handbook several tools that will help teachers, educators and facilitators to practice agile learning methods and to deepen their competences:

## ➔ Agile Learning Toolbox

We will collect practical resources, methods and materials under the form of a toolkit and complete them with practical guidelines on how to use these resources and to adapt them to the needs of learners. This resource will enable teachers and pedagogs to practice agile learning methods in their pedagogical context.

## ➔ Agile Learning Digital Tool

Since peer-to-peer interactions within the learning community has an important role within the agile learning methodology, we will develop a digital tool focussing on communication within the learning group to facilitate agile peer-to-peer learning (offerings and requests) and community agreements (community mastery board). This resource will enable teachers to set up an agile learning structure for their learning community (class, school, Agile Learning Center,...)



### Agile Learning Open Educational Course

For teachers and pedagogues, the Open Educational Course will offer inputs and methodologies focussed on the application of the agile methodology in the class, giving specific advice, materials and tools for teachers. The content will always focus on real class situations to facilitate the execution in practice. The @course will be composed of multimedia resources which teachers and pedagogs can consult in an autonomous and flexible way in their own tempo and thereby experience their own self-directed learning.



### Agile Learning Community

For teachers, pedagogues and facilitators who want to engage in 2-monthly webinars where ALC practices and tools will be explored and questions will be answered. We will also release a toolkit with tips on how to setup your own SDE community.

All those contents will be produced by the project Agile4Collaboration until the end of 2024 and will be available on the website of the project:

[www.agileforcollaboration.eu](http://www.agileforcollaboration.eu)



The contents will focus on the European context and will be available in several European languages (English, Dutch, German, French, Romanian, and Spanish). All readers are invited to follow the production of new materials through Agile4Collaboration and to continue the journey in the wide world of Self-Directed-Education Agile Learning.



# Glossary

Term	Definition
<b>Agile Learning</b>	Adaptation of the agile methodology to the learning context: The methodology assumes that learning happens all the time, that learners learn more from their culture and environment than from the content they are taught and that learners learn best when they choose what they want to learn. In an agile Learning context, the learner decides what he wants to learn and to do in one day/week/semester or year. (See Chapter 2)
<b>Agile Learning Center (ALC)</b>	An ALC is an agile, self-organizing learning community operating in accordance with the ALC philosophical roots and principles and maintaining active membership to the Agile Learning Centers Network (ALC Network), a global network of ALC communities. (See Chapter 2)
<b>Agile Learning Centers Network (ALC Network)</b>	A global network of ALC communities. <a href="https://agilelearningcenters.org/">https://agilelearningcenters.org/</a> (See Chapter 2)
<b>Agile Learning Cycle</b>	Composed of four steps : Intentions, Creation, Reflection and Sharing. The learner goes through the cycle in an iterative process to achieve his/her learning goals. (See Chapter 3 + 4)
<b>Education</b>	Sum of everything a person learns that supports them towards living a satisfying and meaningful life. (See Chapter 1)
<b>Agile methodology</b>	Methodology used since 2001 in software development whose principles include welcoming change, working together, emergence, iteration, and this gem: "Build projects around motivated individuals." (See Chapter 2)
<b>Agile Tree</b>	The Agile Learning Centers network illustrates its model through the metaphor of a tree. They use a tree because, as learners and learning communities, it is a living system that transforms throughout it's life. It has roots (the fundamental principles), branches (the operating principles) and leaves (the tools and practices to carry out and embody these principles). (See Chapter 2)

Term	Definition
<b>Community Mastery Board</b>	A tool to facilitate the creation of community agreements in Change-Up from which the microculture of your ALC emerges. It is divided into 4 columns: Awareness (community-wide problems that need resolution), Implementation (the decided-upon action for each awareness that your community will test this week), Practicing (the changes we are currently practicing), and Mastery (an agreement which has become the new established norm). (See Chapter 4)
<b>Compulsory school attendance:</b>	When school attendance is compulsory by law (See Chapter 3)
<b>Digital Kanban</b>	A digital version of a Kanban. There are several existing tools, for example Trello ( <a href="https://trello.com/">https://trello.com/</a> ), Asana ( <a href="http://www.asana.com">www.asana.com</a> ), Jira ( <a href="https://www.atlassian.com/de/software/jira">https://www.atlassian.com/de/software/jira</a> ), Meistertask ( <a href="http://www.meistertask.com">www.meistertask.com</a> )... (See Chapter 4)
<b>Explicit modeling</b>	By teaching skills sequentially, demonstrating what is required, and giving students plenty of practice chances, you may help students understand lessons better (See chapter 5)
<b>Formal education</b>	Education happening at a formal school (See Chapter 3)
<b>Gameshifting Board</b>	A tool that makes the implicit social rules of a meeting explicit to better facilitate and play with them.(See Chapter 4)
<b>Homeschooling</b>	Education of children outside the formal settings of public or private schools, usually undertaken directly at home by parents or tutors or in a place other than a school. (See Chapter 3)
<b>Informal education</b>	Is a lifelong learning process and does not involve rigid and structured rules. It includes all learning created through the interaction between the learner and his environment. (See Chapter 3)
<b>Intentional culture</b>	Culture driven by the purpose and intentions of learners rather than the demands of culture at large (See Chapter 3)
<b>Learning duty</b>	When learning is compulsory by law but it is not necessary to attend school. In this case homeschooling and unschooling are possible. (See Chapter 3)
<b>Liberated learning centers</b>	Centers which help learners to use homeschooling as a mechanism to stop attending school. They usually offer tutoring, individual mentoring/advising and classes. (See Chapter 3)
<b>Non-formal education</b>	Education that occurs outside of a formal learning classroom setting but still in a structured and planned educational program. Non-formal education can be delivered in places like sports clubs, holiday programs for children, seminars,... (See Chapter 3)

Term	Definition
<b>Neurodiversity</b>	“Neurodiversity describes the idea that people experience and interact with the world around them in many different ways; there is no one “right” way of thinking, learning, and behaving, and differences are not viewed as deficits. The word neurodiversity refers to the diversity of all people, but it is often used in the context of autism spectrum disorder (ASD), as well as other neurological or developmental conditions such as ADHD or learning disabilities.”(46) ( <a href="#">See Chapter 2</a> )
<b>Offerings Board</b>	Lists available offerings, opportunities, and resources on either a daily or weekly basis. It can be similar to the Set-the-Week Board. ( <a href="#">See Chapter 4</a> )
<b>Personal Kanban</b>	A tool for tracking intentions, ideas, work in progress (WIP) and accomplishments. It is divided in columns, often “Backlog”, “Ready”, “Doing”, and “Done”). It utilizes sticky notes to populate board and move through the stages of doing. ( <a href="#">See Chapter 4</a> )
<b>Self-directed education (SDE)</b>	Education that derives from the self-chosen activities and life experiences of the learner, whether or not those activities were chosen deliberately for the purpose of education. ( <a href="#">See Chapter 1 + 4</a> )
<b>Self-regulated learning</b>	Teachers structure their teaching in order to help students progress in their knowledge or skills knowing what they have to do, how to do it, and feeling that it is within their reach. ( <a href="#">See Chapter 4</a> )
<b>Set-the-Week Board</b>	Lists available offerings, opportunities, and resources on a weekly basis. ( <a href="#">See Chapter 4</a> )
<b>Sudbury school</b>	School where students have complete responsibility for their own education: the school is run by a direct democracy in which students and staff are equal citizens. ( <a href="#">See Chapter 3</a> )
<b>Unschooling</b>	Informal learning that advocates learner-chosen activities as a primary means for learning. Unschoolers learn through their natural life experiences including play, household responsibilities, personal interests and curiosity, social interaction,... ( <a href="#">See Chapter 3</a> )
<b>Worldschooling</b>	Form of unschooling in which families travel around the world and learn through experiencing other places, people, cultures,... ( <a href="#">See Chapter 3</a> )

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