



Connecting Career Development and Mental Health for Youth in Schools

# Module 2 (Fundamentals) Section 2.4

## Four Career Challenges Facing Youth

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# Review

- 1. Old School myths about careers put young people at risk by reducing their ability to adapt.**
- 2. Most traditional approaches to career planning made assumptions that are not valid for today, and sought answers to the wrong questions.**
- 3. In the course of their regular activities, teachers engage in common practices that support career development.**
- 4. By making those practices both intentional and explicit, teachers can have a significant impact on the career thinking of young people.**

# Asking Better Questions: Four Fundamental Challenges Facing Youth

Magnusson and Redekopp's Coherent Career Practice

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**How do I acquire and then make sense of all of the information available to me so I can make choices that will benefit me in the future?**



# Career Literacy

# Career Literacy Defined

**A progressively acquired set of skills, knowledge and attitudes that are related to the acquisition, understanding and application of information needed to manage one's own career development**

# Poor Career Literacy

- **Information Problems:**
  - May be the result of lack of information;
  - May be the result of misinformation;
- **Skill Problems:**
  - May be the result of lack of practice;
  - May be the result of lack of feedback on practice;
- **Attitude Problems:**
  - May be the result of lack of will;
  - May be the result of self-perceptions of skill or mistaken beliefs (Mistaken SOG's or WVG's, to paraphrase Kumboltz)

# Levels of Career Literacy

- Increasingly complex decision contexts require higher levels of career literacy
- The more complex the world gets, the greater the need for career literacy

# Career Gumption

How do I find hope?  
Once found, how do I  
build and sustain the  
enthusiasm, energy and  
just plain will to be  
continuously adaptive?



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# Career Gumption Defined

- The energy, momentum, motivation or desire to engage in career development.
- Being proactive, taking initiative and making change.
- Rooted in optimism (the future will be better), hope (even if the future isn't better, I'll be fine) and self-assurance (I can handle whatever comes up)

# Poor Career Gumption

- Usually **rooted in fear**
  - Fear of the unknown (**and little known**);
  - Fear of **failure**
  - Fear of **success**
  - Fear of being **unique**
  - Fear of being **different**
- Usually felt as **“irrelevancy”**
  - Norm Amundson’s “mattering”

# Career Context

**Where do I fit in this world? What is available to me? How do I achieve a balance between my needs and all of the forces and influences around me?**



# Career Context Defined

- The relationships between:
  - How one perceives the larger world (the world as I see it),
  - How one perceives one's immediate role (“my world” – how I see myself fitting into the world), and
- How one may be affected by the immediate and larger world, even without realizing it

# Good Career Context

- Is creative – perceptions aren't rigid (e.g., not tied to existing occupational titles)
- Comprehensive and comprehensible – (there's some combination of seeing lots of possibilities with an ability to not be overwhelmed by the options)
- Realistic in the short-term (my world) and imaginative in the long-term (the world)

# Career Integrity



**How do I make all of these decisions, and take all of these actions, in a way that allows me to maintain a sense of who I am? How do I take pride in what I do?**

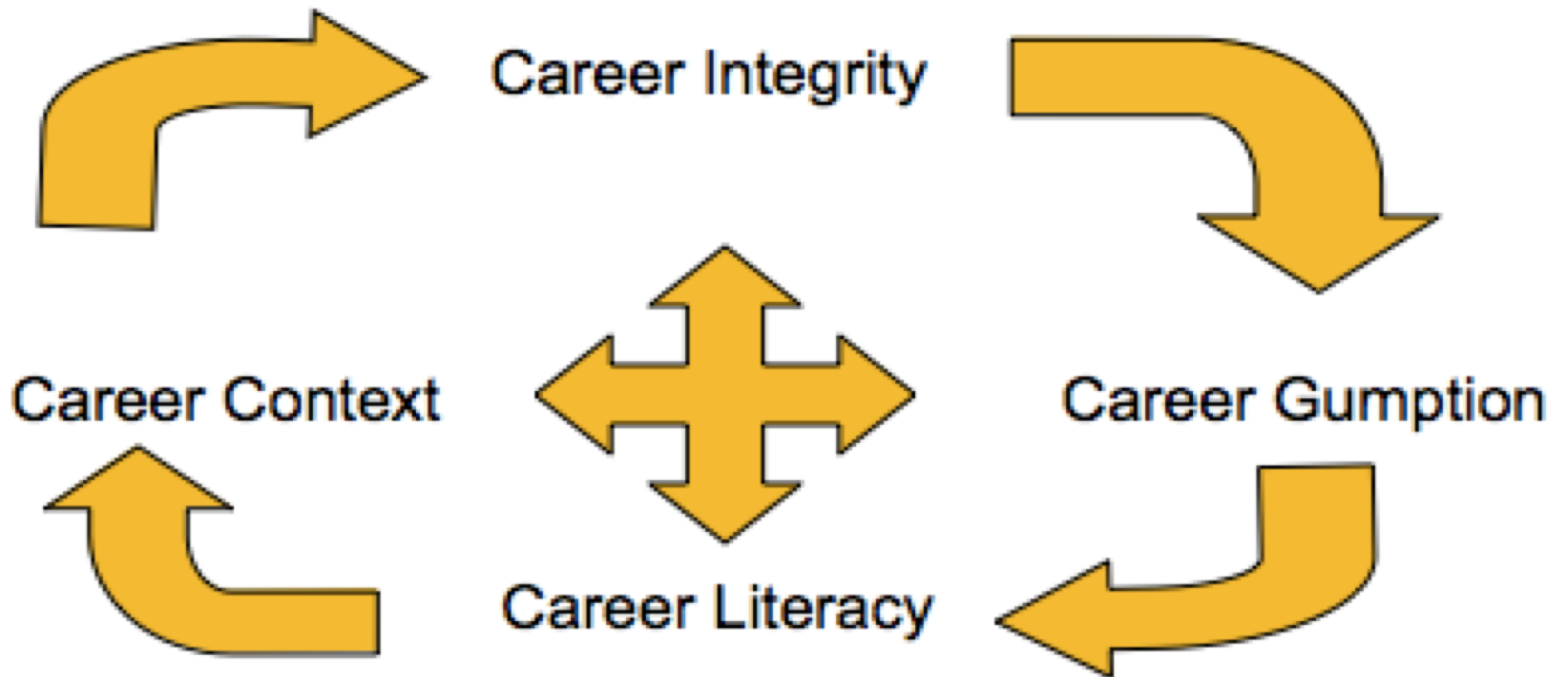
# Career Integrity Defined

- A meaningful balance between personal, social, economic and community factors.
- Congruence between one's identity, the roles one plays, and how one plays those roles.
- A balance between career identity and career context
- Involves making choices

# Poor Career Integrity

- When choices are made for superficial reasons (e.g., money) rather than identity reasons
- When one is choosing between competing but desirable values
- When choices are not available
  - Through lack of opportunity
  - Through coercion, force or pressure
- When integrity is achieved only accidentally (because it is less likely to be sustainable)





Coherent Career Practice

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# Summary

- Teachers can be powerful – and intentional – career influencers by thinking about how their classroom activities can help students answer (or explore) the 4 big questions that youth are facing
  - How do I access and make sense of information?
  - How do I find hope and sustain energy/momentum?
  - Where do I fit in this world and in my world?
  - How do I develop and maintain a sense of identity and pride?

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**This concludes Section 2.4.**

**When you have completed the discussion exercise, you can move to Module 3!**

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