



1. What are the powers of learning?

The idea of Learning Power has been a feature of education for more than 20 years and there are many ways of deconstructing it. Learning Power began its journey in research undertaken at the University of Bristol led by Professor Patricia Broadfoot and Professor Guy Claxton. This research into learning sought to capture the essence and meaning of Learning Power and identified **7 critical dimensions** of Learning Power. These dimensions should be viewed more like attitudes or **dispositions** than capabilities or skills.

ELLI's 7 learning dimensions



The seven dimensions of Learning Power

The ELLI research sought to capture the essence and meaning of Learning Power and identified 7 critical dimensions of Learning Power. These dimensions can be viewed more like attitudes or dispositions than capabilities or skills.

The 7 dimensions are:

- **Changing and Learning** – our disposition to grow as a learner
- **Critical Curiosity** – our disposition to ask questions to ‘get to the bottom of it’
- **Meaning Making** – our disposition to make connections between past information / experience and new knowledge
- **Creativity** – our disposition to think ‘outside the box’
- **Learning Relationships** – our disposition to learn with and from others
- **Strategic Awareness** – our disposition to be aware of and in control of our learning
- **Resilience** – our disposition to be robust when the going gets tough

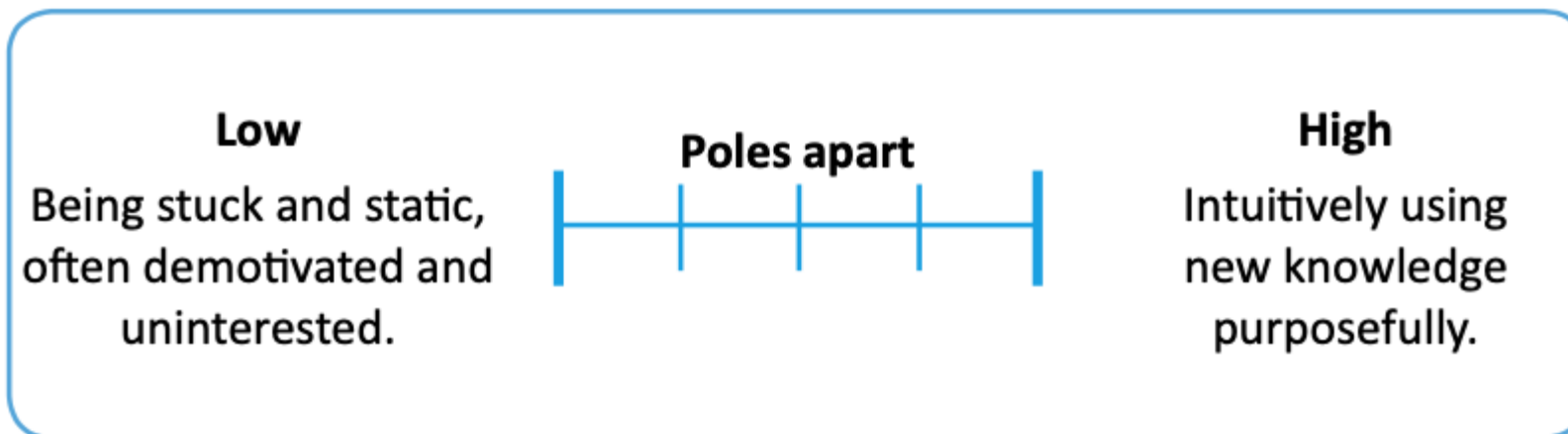


1. Changing and Learning

changing and learning

personal journey | life story | self-development | transformation | growth | evolution | sense of continuity | becoming | direction | optimism | future-orientation | ambition | motivation

Characterised by a sense of oneself as someone who uses what they learn to change the way they go about their daily life over time; understanding that learning is itself learned. The opposite is being 'stuck in a rut', static, with no apparent recognition of new knowledge; tending to believe that Learning Power is fixed and that any difficulties that confront them only serve to reveal their limitations. Changing and Learning is about self-awareness. It is about understanding that we are changing and adapting all of the time, and that everything we do is a lesson learnt. It means that we can make sense of our learning by viewing it in a wider context, as part of our life story, or 'learning journey'.



2. Critical Curiosity

critical curiosity

asking questions | challenging ideas |
inquisitive thinking | open discussion |
wondering | investigative enquiry |
experimentation | analysis | new
inventions | looking beneath the surface |
why | what | who | where

Characterised by wanting to get to the cause or truth of the matter, digging below the surface and being less accepting of received wisdom until it is evidenced; the opposite is being passively accepting, believing received wisdom is 'the truth'. Critical Curiosity is about asking questions. It is to wonder who, why, what, when, where, if and how. It is the refusal simply to accept information at face value, and the determination to look beneath the surface. It knows that asking questions might ultimately be more valuable than having all the answers.

Low

Passive and detached,
finds questioning
uncomfortable.

Poles apart



High

A natural enquirer,
orientated towards
questioning received
wisdom.

3. Meaning Making

meaning-making

making links | joined-up thinking |
connecting ideas | remembering |
contextualising knowledge | patterns |
comprehension | metaphor |
coherence | recognition

Involves making connections between past information and/or experience and new knowledge; the opposite is merely to accumulate data or information without regard to its application. Meaning Making is about how we make sense of things. It is about connecting one thing to another, and seeing relationships between ideas, information and experience. It allows us to see the narrative in a set of events, rather than processing fragments of information in a disconnected and piecemeal fashion.

Low

Randomly collects
new information,
fragmented and
lacking cohesion.

Poles apart



High

Combines previous
and new knowledge
to make new
connections, actively
looks for relationships.

4. Creativity

creativity

imagination | free-thinking | exploration |
innovation | playfulness | investigative
enquiry | experimentation | new
perspectives | intuition | problem-solving |
genius | originality | doing things differently

Characterised by risk-taking, playfulness, thinking outside the box, regularly using imagination and intuition; being receptive to hunches and inklings that bubble randomly into their minds; the opposite is being bound by the rules. Creativity is about the freedom to discover. It is about trying things out for oneself, in one's own way, rather than learning by rote or repeating the status quo. In creating something new, we are taking a risk; challenging what already exists. We are also bringing something original and authentic from our own experience.

Low

Rule-bound; routines
and rules enable them
to feel more secure.

Poles apart



High

Naturally thinking
and acting 'outside
the box', a risk taker,
playful, imaginative,
intuitive.

5. Learning Relationships

learning relationships

community | exchanging ideas | sharing
knowledge | role models | leading |
teamwork | emotional support |
collaboration | synergy | autonomy |
reciprocity | co-operation

Enjoying learning not only with and from others but also alone, balancing interactive and solitary learning, and maintaining their independent judgement; the opposite is being either 'isolated' or 'over-dependent'. Learning Relationships is about how we work with others. It is about knowing how to balance our interactions for the best possible outcome; at times sharing knowledge and experience, at times asking for help or guidance, and at times being able to work alone, drawing on our own resources.

Low

Isolated and solitary,
or over-dependent
on reassurance and
guidance from others.

Poles apart



High

Able to work alone
when necessary
but just as
comfortable working
collaboratively.

6. Strategic Awareness

strategic awareness

planning | organisation | self-discipline |
time-management | goals | direction | self-
awareness | intent | sense of purpose | aims |
objectives | seven-dimensional thinking

Being aware of one's thoughts, feelings and actions as a learner and being able to use that awareness to plan and manage the process of learning as well as create personal direction; the opposite is being 'robotic' and entrenched. This dimension may sometimes be referred to as metacognition. Strategic Awareness is about intentionality and sense of purpose. It governs the way we set about planning and becoming conscious of our aims and objectives. It is about our conscious use of time and resources – and how we use our learning journey thus far – to project our future.

Low

Thinks of learning as a chore. No sense of learning as a process that they control.

Poles apart



High

Aware of and able to manage one's thoughts, feelings and actions as a learner.

7. Resilience

resilience

confidence | resourcefulness |
perseverance | determination | learning from
failure | coping with criticism | self-driven |
independence | facing challenges |
security | firm grounding

Having an orientation towards perseverance in the development of one's own Learning Power. Relish challenge, as well as being robust when the going gets tough; the opposite is fragility and dependence. Resilience is about feeling secure and unafraid. When we are afraid we find it hard to make mistakes, since we fear being judged; either by peers, teachers, parents, or by our own internalised self-critic. When we are Resilient we can work through fear and can learn from our mistakes, being self-aware instead of self-conscious.

Low

Fragile and overt
dependence.
Unable to use skills
and knowledge to
overcome difficulty.

Poles apart



High

Perseveres through
difficult problems and
relishes the challenge.

From Learning Power to **Building** Learning Power

Learning Power's premise is that learning can be learned; it is a learnable craft. However, the seven dimensions that emerged from the original research and pillars of ELLI's assessment practice, were re-grouped and translated into the language of schools by Professor Guy Claxton.

Firstly, the seven dimensions were unpicked to reveal 17 Learning Power behaviours, sometimes known as 'learning muscles'. These named behaviours —such as Listening, Reasoning, or Planning — were derived from the many aspects of principal characteristics of the seven dimensions. **These behaviours are specific in nature and so they can be individually cultivated, and exercised in classrooms.**

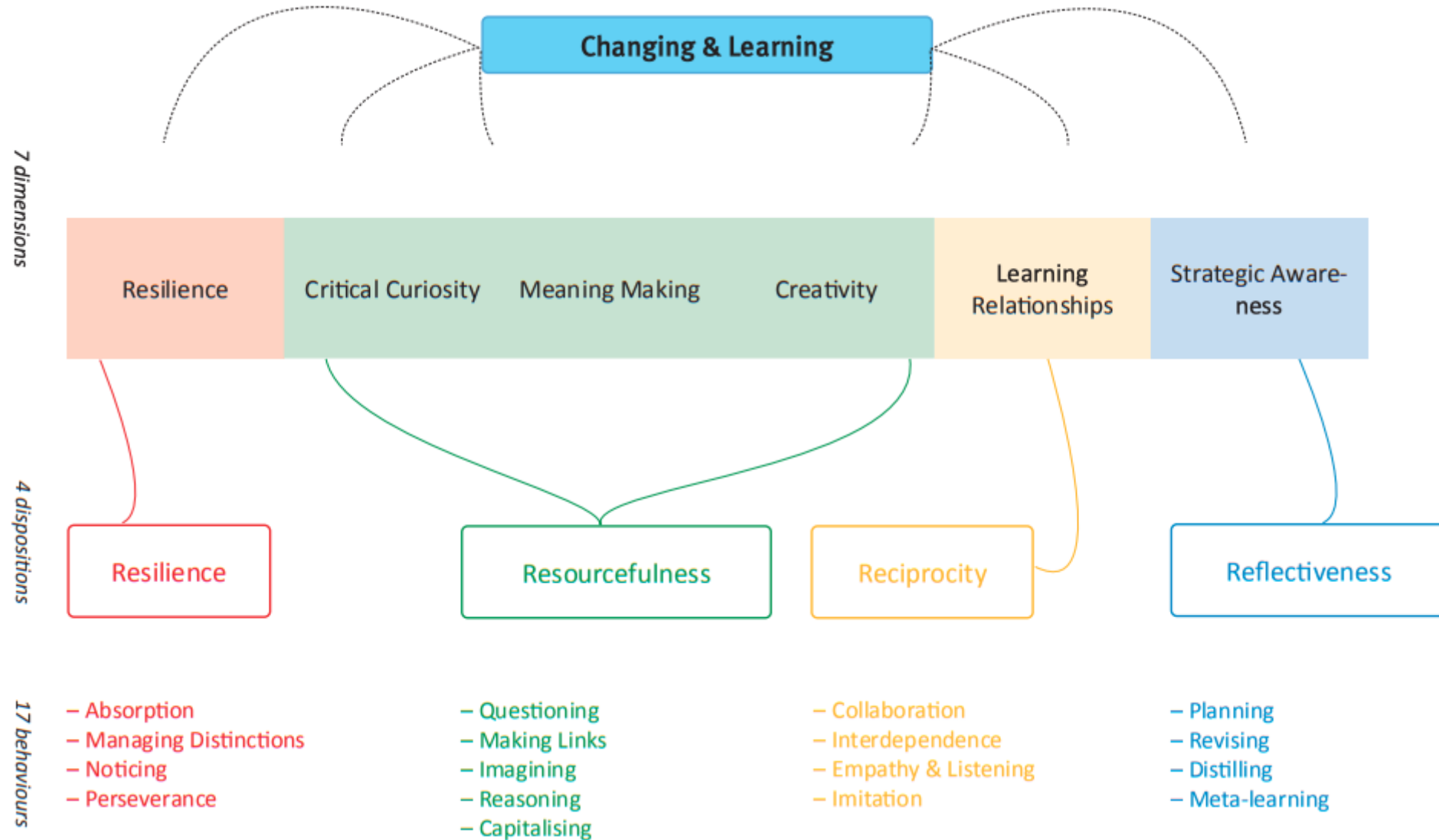
Secondly, the rich list of behaviours was divided into four aspects of learning theory (cognitive, emotional, social, meta-learning) This link to learning theory helped teachers get to grips with the ideas although the R words (Resilience, Resourcefulness, Reciprocity, Reflectiveness) often muddled the issue. This unpicking and re-arranging of the original ideas served to broaden and strengthen the language of learning, with particular reference to school settings. Using and extending the language has added breadth and depth to how teachers and learners talk about, understand, and improve learning.

The picked out Learning Power framework is known as the **Supple Learning Mind**

- **The Emotional domain of learning** (previously described as Resilience) absorption, managing distraction, noticing, perseverance.
- **The Cognitive domain of learning** (previously described as Resourcefulness) questioning, making links, imagining, reasoning, capitalising.
- **The Social domain of learning** (previously described as Reciprocity) interdependence, collaboration, listening and empathy, imitation.
- **The Strategic domain of learning** (previously described as Reflectiveness) planning, revising, distilling, meta-learning.

This Supple Learning Mind framework makes it obvious that learning isn't just about having a good memory; it includes how we **feel**, how we **think**, how we **learn with others** and how we **manage the process** of learning; showing learning is a complex process. Furthermore it provides a language that helps teachers to think about how they might cultivate each of the learning behaviours and helps students to gain a personalised understanding of how they learn content.

How the 7 dimensions of Learning Power become the 17 learning behaviours of Building Learning Power



For more information visit:

<https://elli.global/elli-explained-video-series/>

<https://elli.global/>

<https://www.buildinglearningpower.com/>

The Learning Power Equation



Learning friendly classroom cultures

Create classroom cultures that cultivate the habits and attitudes of curious, confident and independent learners.

Culture shift.

A language for learning

Talk the language that captures the richness of learning. Make the *how* of learning explicit. Grow high value learning characteristics.

Learning fit.

A powerful learning character

All young people equipped with the learning habits AND the qualifications to thrive in 21st Century.

Learners for Life.