



*Creating Learning Environments that are both*  
**“Brain-considerate” and “Enriched”**

*(Adapted from Marian Diamond’s “Magic Trees of the Mind”)*

- Learners should be encouraged to **ask questions and explore** (not just “allowed” to ask questions and explore.)
- Provide a steady source of **positive emotional support** and stimulation. “Catch” students being good. (“I saw what you just did, Juan, *and I like it!*”)
- **Stimulate all of the senses**. Elaborate neural connections develop as a direct response to one’s life experiences.
- Keep the learning environment **free from undue pressure** and stress. Pleasurable “eustress” is encouraged rather than “distress.”
- Offer an abundance of novel, fun, interesting, **comprehensible** (develop-mentally appropriate) **challenges**.
- Give learners numerous opportunities to **select the kinds of learning efforts** they will pursue and encourage them to modify their choices after they have been made to promote flexibility in thinking.
- Provide a **nutritious diet** with proteins, vitamins, water, and calories.
- Cultivate a broad range of emerging talents and interests (physical, mental, linguistic, mathematical, aesthetic, social, emotional, etc.)
- Allow the learner to be an **active** participant, a leader and a “doer” rather than regularly taking on the role of a passive observer.
- A wide variety of **social interactions** is essential during a significant percentage of the time while engaged in learning activities.
- **Physical movement** plays a vitally important role in the formation of neural circuitry, which can promote learning.
- Students learn more easily when we begin a learning experience with simple **whole-body** integrative movements. Movement continues to activate the neural wiring throughout the brain, making **the entire body a catalyst in the learning process**.
- Movement increases blood flow to the cerebral cortex and profoundly improves cognitive development. It aids in creativity, helps stress management and growth, along with mental and physical health.
- Promote an atmosphere where the whole **learning experience itself is always fun!** (The joy of youthful discovery is forever encouraged).