

## June Member to Member

### **Beyond the Checkmark: Motivating, Inspiring and Preparing to Work with LD Students**

On Wednesday, June 7<sup>th</sup> at the Eagles Club in North Vancouver, Michelle MacIntosh and Jenn Clark delivered a heartfelt and insightful presentation (Beyond the Checkmark) on motivating, inspiring and preparing to work with students with learning disabilities. This was a very enjoyable, hands on and participatory evening that provided us materials and ideas on how to promote a growth mindset with our students.

After a warm introduction, a calming Aduri mindful exercise was demonstrated which led into a discussion sharing ideas on how to connect with, motivate and inspire our students. As educators working with children with learning disabilities, it is vital we continually think of ways to motivate and inspire our students. Michelle and Jenn talked about how motivators may change over the course of a student's learning from extrinsic ones such as stickers and prizes to intrinsic ones. Ideally, over time students become a more integral part of identifying and directing their learning.

The three domains of learning: cognitive (thinking), affective (emotion/feeling) and psychomotor (physical/kinesthetic) were discussed. As our heart plays a key role in our learning, our emotional wellbeing and motivation are key to effective learning. Whole brain learning - integrating the different parts of your brain to work together; and, tools for integrating our right brain and left brain and our downstairs and upstairs brain were touched upon.

Jenn talked about the learning process and how promoting hard work and effort cultivates a growth mindset. Students must not be afraid to make mistakes as mistakes are integral to learning. When students have a growth mindset they take on new challenges and learn from them. Research has shown that if you believe your brain can grow, you behave differently. This growth mindset leads to motivation and achievement.

A terrific brain stretching visual that Michelle shared with us to encourage her student to work hard and take risks was the brain stretching jar. The number of gems her student could add to the jar after each session, coincided with the student's effort that day - a great tool to reinforce and praise effort over proficiency.

I thoroughly enjoyed this evening and believe that all attendees left with a growth mindset of their own, full of new ideas and tools to share with their students. Thank you to Michelle and Jenn for such an inspiring and enjoyable Member to Member event!

Written by Janet Brock