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Reviews, Reflections, Interviews
University of HUDDERSFIELD
University of Huddersfield Press

‘Don't educate them out of educating themselves’: A conversation between Al Wunder and Anton Krueger

(via Zoom, on 28 July 2020).

Al Wunder's biography, in his own words: I had four lucky breaks that precipitated my becoming a teacher of improvised movement theatre. Between the ages of eight and fourteen I broke my right leg four different times. In 1962, I began modern dance classes with Alwin Nikolais as a physical therapy. His choreography and improvisation sections of class inspired me to teach and perform professionally. I spent eight years studying, teaching, choreographing, and performing with Nikolais. 1970 saw me move to the San Francisco Bay area where I opened a dance studio teaching Nikolais dance technique and improvisation. In 1971, I joined forces with Terry Sendgraff and Ruth Zaporah creating The Berkeley Dance Theater & Gymnasium. My focus was to create a way to teach dance technique through improvisation. I met my Australian wife, Lynden Nicholls, in 1981 when she came to study Motivity at Terry’s studio in Berkeley. In 1982, I moved to Melbourne, Australia where Lynden and I set up a dance studio. My focus changed from teaching dance technique improvisationally to teaching improvised movement theatre performance.

Over the next thirty years I developed a pedagogy that inspired professional and non-professional performers to create improvised movement theatre pieces. In 2006, I self-published a book, *The Wonder of Improvisation.* In 2017, a documentary was made by Michelle Dunn, *The Wonder of Improvisation.* In 2021, a book was written by Hilary Elliott and published by Routledge, *The Motional Improvisation of Al Wunder.*

ANTON KRUEGER

I thought I’d start by asking about your understanding of the term ‘Mindfulness’, and what it means to you?

AL WUNDER

Many years ago, I started using the term, ‘clear sighted vision’ in my classes. I just kept repeating that during a class: ‘Make sure you're seeing what you're looking at’. I realized that if I wasn't seeing clearly, I wasn't in the present. ‘Clear sighted vision’ gives a sense of what Mindfulness is, to me.

Seeing what you're looking at is not that easy. It’s a bit easier when you're

performing. When doing exercises, the vision gets a bit ‘locked in’ - staring, not really seeing what you're looking at. I started using clear sighted vision as a preparation, either for a warm up, or just play. I'd sit and look around the room and make sure I'm seeing what I'm looking at. I wasn’t aware of the word ‘Mindfulness’ when I started playing with that idea. For me, Mindfulness is just paying attention to anything and everything.

ANTON
Rob Nairn (who brought Mindfulness to South Africa), defined it as ‘knowing what's happening, while it's happening, no matter what it is.’ So, it’s without preference, not wanting it to be something else. I think this resonates with what you're saying – to see what’s arising, whether it's something good or bad, interesting or boring – to notice what appears, whatever it is.

AL WUNDER
Right, being aware of – in this case – the vision. Of course, there are other senses that you become aware of: sound, smell, and especially in terms of contact improv, there's the tactile, kinaesthetic sense of being physically in contact with somebody.
ANTON
I was curious about the name of your company: ‘Theatre of the Ordinary’. To me, this has Buddhist connotations, such as the idea of ‘Ordinary Mind’ that comes up in Zen and ‘Natural Mind’ one hears of in Vajrayana.

AL WUNDER
Here in Australia, ‘ordinary’ means bad. If you’re ordinary in your work, you're doing work very poorly. Especially in sports, if your team played ‘ordinarily’ that wouldn’t be any good. The name Theatre of the Ordinary came up when I was still in the United States. I was at the time in a partnership with Terry Sendgraff, one of my original students in San Francisco. She was a gymnast and a modern dancer. Eventually, she evolved this wonderful dance form with low trapezes, which she called *Motivity*. Unfortunately, she died last year in September. She was 86 at the time. (You should look up her website: http://www.terrysendgraff.com/.) Anyway, we were partners and we started playing around with theatricalizing ordinary events.

The first thing we did was a performance event which we call ‘The Simple Art of Eating’. We created an event where we invited people to join us in eating. We did it for 3 people, then for 12 people, and eventually with 50 people. We created and served a three-course meal as

part of the event. We did a few small performing things: Terry performed a water ceremony dance, and I did a talking improv, creating chess pieces of cheese, and olives, strawberries and bananas. As I created each chess piece, I improvised verbally on the various meanings and emotions I felt for the different pieces.

We then started serving food. The first course we played around with some salad, and we were instructing people to just look at this carrot: ‘Place the carrot on your tongue, don't eat it, just smell it, lick it, taste the flavour without eating. Take your first bite, chew really slowly…’. We did things like that throughout the serving and eating of the food. People became very mindful of their eating.

That was our first performed ordinary event. We started to think of other ordinary things we could theatricalize. Terry started to do yearly birthday performances. She called the first one, ‘On the Eve of my 42nd Birthday’. We were going to also do ‘The Simple Art of Seeing’. We just started toying around with different ways people can look at a performance, but we never finished it.

That's where the initial thought of the name ‘Theatre of the Ordinary’ came about. It wasn't until I moved to Australia that I found a class format that really worked for me. It was about getting ‘ordinary’ people to perform, not with the sense that they were going to become professional performers.

The format of my classes was to do warm ups, followed by partnering exercises; and then in the second half of the class we did solos and duets. Just get up, don't prepare anything – create a five-minute piece of theatre. There were some people who took off and developed themselves professionally, but I would say 85-90% of the people who came to my classes and enjoyed them were just ordinary people. And that's what I like, I always consider myself an ordinary person. I never became what I'd call a ‘good performer’. I was an okay performer. But my style of teaching, and my ethos of teaching, and my pedagogy were geared to give regular people the confidence to get up and perform solos in front of other people.

ANTON

It’s interesting that your work started with an exercise in eating. Did you know that the very first teaching of the Buddha was also about eating? When he left the Bodhi tree, he saw a kid eating an orange, and gave the instruction of paying attention when eating – smelling, touching, tasting,

and so on. All the things you've descried. That was the very first Buddhist teaching: how to eat an orange.

AL WUNDER
Initially, the idea for 'The Simple Art of Eating' came from a documentary, I forget by whom, but it must have been done in the 30s or 40s. The film makers went to France, Japan, India, and England. It was just about how parents, primarily mothers, introduced their children to food. How they got them to eat. It's very interesting, how children are first introduced to eating.

ANTON
There's also Andy Warhol's film about the guy eating a mushroom for half an hour.

AL WUNDER
Right, yes, yes.

ANTON
To get to one of your main pedagogical themes – I really like your idea about positive feedback, and only giving positive encouragement. I tried it out a few days ago in a writing workshop, and it was really interesting to hold back on giving any kind of negative feedback and only looking for the good, and getting students to find what they enjoyed and what they loved. I found it a very powerful process.

AL WUNDER
John Britton was telling me that he tried it with Shakespearean actors. Instead of saying 'I think this is right', he started saying, 'Okay, what did you enjoy about your performance?' And that started the actors taking responsibility for developing their characters in terms of what's working for them at that moment.

My initial starting point for positive feedback was to get rid of the negative judge that we all have in our lives. Especially for performers, the negative judge is much more potent. So, my initial thought was, 'Well, how do we get rid of it?' And the most obvious thing was that we don't talk about what we don't like. We don't talk about 'How do I correct what I'm doing?' We don't talk about 'What do I have to do to make myself better?'. Instead, they start talking about those moments within the performance that they enjoyed or that they felt good about.

They're only allowed to talk about one or two things. They aren't supposed to run down a list. The whole thing about positive feedback, ultimately, is to be able to describe what you are doing physically, and what you are saying verbally. What are the sounds that you might have liked

within the word you're saying? It's picking out little moments, small elements of theatre that you find enjoyable as a doer. You put that out to the audience, and then the audience gives outside feedback about what they liked seeing. Your most favourite moment, the most enjoyable moment as a watcher. It could be a fact like: 'When you smiled. I really liked that moment'. I don't care if that was the only moment that a person liked, they have to talk about it. What about that smile? Where was the smile directed? Why did you as an audience enjoy seeing a smile?

The positive feedback of the performer for me is to develop your 'inner teacher'. Or maybe a better term for me is 'self-teacher'. What makes a good teacher? Their ability to know and to talk about why they liked doing a particular thing. As a watcher, what do you like seeing? As an improviser, you have to teach yourself, at least from my point of view, because I don't teach a style. I got people to evolve their own particular style.

ANTON

In Mindfulness, there's a lot about the 'inner critic'; so, the 'inner teacher' is quite a nice contrast.

AL WUNDER

Actually, I had my terms mixed up there. I talk about the 'self-teacher' and the 'inner director'.

ANTON

What's the 'inner director'?

AL WUNDER

As an improviser, you want to evolve and develop those things that you like doing, those things that you like seeing. The job of a director is to instil into the performers a sense of trust. Number one: the trust in your aesthetic as a director. To gain that trust you have to be able to articulate why you want them to do certain things; why you want them to develop a certain scene this way or that way. If the performers really trust and have faith in the director, they'll do a much better job. So as an improviser, you're being impulsive; but you're also, at the same time, directing yourself as you're out there, you're being constructive.

When it worked, it worked a treat. The people who went on and evolved their own professional performance styles are all quite different from each other, but they're all quite powerful. Even those who didn't go on professionally evolved a confidence in what they were doing as performers of improvisation. Whatever

stylistic thing emerged was because they were following in the path of joy. Andrew Morrish used to turn to joy a lot, bringing joy to his performance, and emphasising finding the joy in what you're doing.

ANTON

I was just hearing a talk yesterday about Krishnamurti, you know, the anti-guru? He said ‘Truth is a pathless land’ – if you want to find your path, you also have to become the path yourself. It sounds to me like you’re saying that you don’t impose a style on your students. They haven't got the ‘Al Wunder stamp,’ and instead they've created a path from their own lives.

I want to ask a question about the balance between being too loose and too tight. I'm not sure how to phrase it, maybe it has something to do with freedom and control. Sometimes people are too tight, and sometimes they can also be too ‘loose’. How would you work with an improviser who might be too random or not have enough direction, as compared to one who’s too rigid or constrained?

AL WUNDER

A lot of the stuff I'm talking about is in my book *The Wonder of Improvisation* (2006), so you can pick up on some of these explanations there.

But yes, I know what you're saying. When I do a private session with a person, I try to help people find and develop the language of the self-teacher and inner director. The first thing I want people to do is get rid of that negative judge, just to be totally impulsive. Don't worry about creating a performance. Just get out there and perform. And then we talk about what moment or moments they enjoyed, being as articulate as possible about what was the physicality or vocality or verbality of the moment they enjoyed. I'm having them look for a personal power source. The first thing I want them to do in their development is to start finding personal power sources.

I state in my book that we all have several personal power sources and there's no limitation on what a personal power source might be. There was a young man who had this crazy little impish sideways movement I really enjoyed. Another woman – she would have been in her 60s when she started dancing with me – she would attract attention to herself by using her eyebrows. It was part of her characterization. Andrew Morrish’s personal power source is talking. Have you seen Andrew perform?

ANTON

Yes.

AL WUNDER

When I was in Berkeley, I tried to do an improvised Broadway type musical. When I came to Australia, I did the same thing. There were eight people, and Andrew Morrish was one of them. I had people choose a song in 30 seconds, and then I would work with them privately with this song. Andrew chose a song and told me about the song and why he'd chosen this song and just listening to him talk, I said, 'Well, this is what the guy does'. He came in this black suit and tie, with a satchel, talking about the song and he was absolutely fabulous. Andrew came up with a statement, he said: 'You mean I can dance with my mouth?' He evolved talking in his own way. Also, one of his great personal power sources is his charm – that's the power source that he evolved and developed, his ability to charm the audience.

So, the students work on finding their personal power sources. And you decide what your personal power sources are using positive feedback. Over the course of half a year you'll be doing 20-30 performances, and there'll be things that keep popping up time and time again, that you'll enjoy. Those are personal power sources.

I tell them, 'When you choose your first power source, don't try and develop it because you're going to get locked into it. Keep impulsing, keep playing around.' When you get three or four then you can start saying, 'Okay, these are my power sources, I'll start developing these, and having them guide the way I evolve my performance style'.

And then I start talking about the merit of impulse and form. The form is the skill level that can evolve within your physical movement, within your use of verbal or literary material; within your use of voice – whether it's talking or sounding or singing. It's that structure of form that's necessary to consistently do good performances. But to start to trust the impulse as a performance, that's the most important tool in your toolbox as an improviser. Your confidence to be impulsive. You should never lose that and let the form get in the way of impulsing.

ANTON

What skill or ability or quality in a person shows they have the potential to be a good improviser?

AL WUNDER

Their competence to be impulsive, to play,

to discover. You also need persistence.

ANTON

Have you had students who are so enamoured of you that they tried to imitate or copy your style?

AL WUNDER

I wouldn't allow it. Well, my movements are not very good, maybe that's why I became a teacher rather than a performer. I started dancing as physical therapy, because I'd broken my right leg four different times and was in a body cast for months at a time. So, I had this real limp. A friend of mine started doing modern dance with Paul Taylor and said I'd really like it. At that time, I was going out with a young woman (she was 17, I was 18) and she was doing classes with Murray Lewis who was Alwin Nikolais' protégé. In Nikolais' classes there was an improvisational section, and that changed my life.

The first improv I did, I found so much power in this nonverbal communication, using Nikolais' wonderful, wonderful 'time, shape, space, motion'. (What he saw as the four basic building blocks of choreography.) Anyway, that got me going.

I'm not really a disciplined person, that was another reason why improvisation appealed to me. I wasn't able to overcome the injuries I had, because I wouldn't do enough exercises on my own. I was lucky when I first started dancing. In my second year, I joined the professional corps of dancers. I'd only had at the most 50 hours of technique classes, but Nik must have seen something that I couldn't see in myself. I suppose there were also never enough men, so I was one of the six males in a company of 50 people. The other five men were really good dancers. This wasn't ballet, it was Nikolais' type of choreography. He'd say, 'Okay, go to the back part of the stage and do jagged movement until you hear this new sound come up and then you separate. Go right and left and come around…' and then he'd give some other quality of movement. It wasn't choreographed step by step; it was just basic movements. And within the theory classes, we developed a sense of spatial play and timing and evolving with each other. Suddenly, we're trying to talk physically with each other and create a semblance of good-looking movement as an ensemble. I didn't do any duets, because I couldn't. I couldn't hack it as a dancer, but I developed as a teacher and that became my thing.

I was teaching Nikolais' technique for a couple of years before something interesting came up. I was doing an

improvisational part of class and I presented this score that had nothing to do with anything I learned from Nik. I made up this new score. There were 20 people in class and we did four quintets. The score was: five of you find a slightly uncomfortable shape, five of you stay still and rest in the same shape. Hold it for as long as you can, and when you do feel like you have to move, make it a gigantic movement – do the biggest physical movement you can do. The whole group must be so tuned into each other that when the first person explodes out of stillness everybody follows at the same time. That was the score.

The four quintets each had this quite wonderful quality. Of course, they had been doing classes for a while, so they'd already built up an attuned awareness to time, shape, space, and motion. They had that basic vocabulary of dance that they could work with. But each one of them had a compositional element that was quite strong. They had wonderful peaking moments and dynamic ebbs and flows. It was quite well-formed improvisation just from that simple beginning.

And this is Mindfulness. Because they knew they had to move as a whole group, there was nobody designated to do the first movement. There was a strong awareness of each other. So that was when I went 'Ooh – I can create scores.' That became a real strength of mine, creating very different scores.

Theatre of the Ordinary was designed to get people to develop a physical language with each other, an awareness of movement in relation to each other. That's always been the power for me of improvisation, this language. I could move and feel the power and the joy of just moving through space and through time in a very specific and enjoyable way. I didn't have a style, movement was just very intriguing to me. This was in Berkeley, California. It's all in the book; I can send it to you.

ANTON

Thanks! Listening to you now, I get a sense that you've highlighted the experience of 'connection' as something important. How does this relate, do you think, to ideas of 'expressivity'? Is connection (with performers, or with an audience) more important than personal expression? How do they relate to each other?

AL WUNDER

When you're performing with other people,

the primary importance is the connection you have with each other. You're feeding off each other. You're evolving and developing a little piece of theatre with each other. I've always wanted the improvisations to look like they were choreographed. I wanted improvisation to give a sense of the whole piece of theatre that has a beginning, middle and ending. Not just an impulsive part. That's fine, to a certain extent, but for me it's about telling a story. So, it's this dialogue that you start off with…actually, no… no, you don't start off with a dialogue … I'm trying to remember the words I wrote in my book … you see now it's no longer improvising, now it's trying to remember something…That's the problem about repeating information….

When you're talking to people, we're basically looking for a theme that we want to develop with each other. We're putting out things to see how someone responds. I use this as a teaching device: the initiator and responder score. People take the role of initiator, while the other person is the responder. And you're exploring with each other, trying to find common ground. So, the initiator is putting something out, saying: 'Okay, I'm doing this. What's your response to that?' And then how I respond to your response becomes a yo-yo effect. There's no real difference between initiator and responder.

I used it as a score – people stay in that role to develop strength as initiators and to develop strength as responders. Then you start getting this interchange of ideas, they start gelling: 'Ah - this is what we want to develop. This is where we're at.' In the group thing, you first start creating this interchange of ideas and this theme starts merging. Then it's the awareness of the audience. The audience will definitely feed what you do. And to me it is important that good performers have that awareness of the audience. They're aware of how they're affecting an audience. And then that helps to feed the moment.

Initially, improvisers are looking for the laugh. That helps you gain your confidence. When you get the laugh, you get positive feedback. You start working on that. As you become more and more experienced, you can become aware of – 'Ooh, I'm into some serious stuff now. I can sense the real quietness, the attentiveness of the audience.' You can see it out the corner of your eye, or you can hear the silence and feel the silence. Of course, that's an interpretation you're making.

If I know myself as a performer, and if I feel like my performance is going well, I can sense my inner director sitting in the

audience and looking at me and enjoying what he's seeing. You catch my drift with that? You're not just a performer out on stage. You're also in the audience, looking at yourself and seeing if you're feeling positive about what you're doing. This inner director is going: 'Yeah, yeah, yeah, keep going, keep going, that's good, do that, do that, do that.'

To me, that's important. It's most important for a person in the audience to reach you. That's what I keep telling my students. Who do you want to impress in the audience? Is there someone who likes modern dance more than ballet? You don't want to impress the ballet dancer; you want to impress the modern dancer. If your personal power source is one of strong athletic movement, you'd want to impress the people in the audience who enjoy athletic movement, as opposed to slow, gorgeous movement. Now, if you keep going down that pathway, then you find the person in the audience whom you want to impress the most is yourself. That's you sitting in the audience, that inner director... and that helps you evolve your own personal style.

ANTON

I like that. Peter Greenaway, the film director, said he started making films because he wanted to make something he'd enjoy watching, which sounds a bit similar.

When you were talking about the initiator and responder, it made me think that this interview situation is quite unnatural as a conversation, because I'm perpetually in the role of initiator. I'm trying to think of questions to feed you, and you're having to respond.

AL WUNDER

In any conversation, somebody's going to initiate what they're going to talk about. The ideal thing is to have people who are equally strong in initiating and responding. Then you can really get exciting and go different places. Even if it's just friends talking to each other. It's better if there's not one person who is only a strong initiator, and one person who's just a strong responder. It will always then become one person's ideas that are dealt with and they'll just be pontificating, while the other person agrees with them. It's not as charged as if you have strong initiators and responders.

ANTON

Maybe the initiator isn't always the one with the power, the responder might be passive, and pulling things where they

want to go.

AL WUNDER

Ideally, there should be no hierarchy. The initiator is not doing a solo, and not just directing the person they're working with. They're putting out an idea. So even if they stay in the role of the initiator, they have to be coloured by the responder. And the responder is not just a copycat. It's not a leader / follower score. I don't want the responder to be a follower. They have the choice to do anything - whether it's exactly the same, or very different.

We play with the exercises. Sometimes I say: 'Okay, 50% of the time you're doing something similar, and 50% of the time you're doing something different'. Eventually I developed a very emotionally charged way of describing it. As a responder, you can do a 'Yes, Yes' type response with it – 'Ooh, I really like what you're doing, I'll do the exact same thing'. You can do a 'Yes, And' type response – 'I really like what you're doing and how about adding this to the equation'. There's a 'Yes, But' type of relationship where – 'I like what you're doing, but instead of doing it standing up, I'll relate to you lying down.' And then there's the 'No Way' relationship - 'I'm not going to do anything like what you're doing, I'm going to do something totally different.' And if you can do that in a non-antagonistic type of way, some very interesting things happen.

ANTON

In Mindfulness terminology, they talk about 'responding' instead of 'reacting'. In this sense 'reacting' is an automatic or mechanical, habituated reflex that you don't have any control over. A certain pattern of behaviour, or an emotional reactivity kicks in. The training becomes responding authentically in the moment, without artificiality or deliberately setting it up in some way; while avoiding mechanical patterns and habits.

AL WUNDER

A 'Yes Yes' type of relationship can be quite beautiful and doesn't have to be mechanical. You can find yourself just doing the exact same thing and enjoying it. I like seeing moments where trios suddenly do the same sort of movement. It's that interchange of going toward and away from similarity that gives a dynamic tension. As a watcher of group improvisation, I like to see those moments of real cohesion happening. Students have to exercise all four ways of relating in class situations. When the actual performance

comes, you don't even think about whether you're doing ‘Yes-Yes’, ‘ Yes-But’, or ‘No way.’ You're just doing it.

ANTON

In improvisation there needs to be a lot of trust in what's emerging. Do you believe that people are innately good, that we can trust what comes out? I mean, there are some belief systems which see people as no good, that they need to be harnessed and disciplined and changed in some way, as compared to other views that there’s a natural humaneness which is basically a good thing which one can trust.

AL WUNDER

I don't think there's an ultimate anything. If the people who came to my classes enjoyed them, they stayed, and quite a few of them stayed for several years. If they didn't like them, they didn't stay. Some of them didn't like the freedom, so they didn't stay. I believe that people are happy when they find joy; and people get angry and sad and go into negative emotional states when they're not having joy. What's the opposite of joy? Pain, frustration. As Andrew used to say: ‘Finding joy’, more than saying what you like. When you find that sense of joy with someone, then you learn to trust.

At any one moment – an improv or any one moment in your life – you can find a positive in that moment or a negative in that moment. What emotion are you generally feeling at any one time in your life? It does change. I mean, sometimes I feel much more of the negative side of myself than I feel the positive side of myself.

Ultimately, we want joy more than we want pain. Hopefully, the learning part of my training is to help you find that joy, that sense of trust in yourself, that sense of trust in your physical performative elements. I think that does lead to finding that joy in your everyday life. And you go for it more and more. Any art form has a very strong therapeutic element about it, without being therapy. Especially improvisation, and certainly with the positive feedback that I teach. That's what a lot of people said they took from my classes with Theatre of the Ordinary. It permeated into their everyday life and their relationships improved. There've been so many people who found their partners by doing classes together with me. I don't think it's just the way I teach, but I think it's a normal thing when one gets single men and women coming together to do art classes. It could be a drawing class. Anyway, it’s great fun: seeing people who

met in my classes getting married, having babies.

ANTON
So, you're ‘The Father of Australian Improv’ in more ways than one?

AL WUNDER
(Laughs).

ANTON
Is there a short improvisation exercise you could suggest to readers of this interview, which might be a good daily practice?

AL WUNDER
Take a 15 second look around the room and make sure you're clearly seeing what you're looking at... *(laughs)* …Watching you doing that right now, I would want to look at you… I talk about the ‘pedestrian performer’… And right now, you're being pedestrian, but when I saw you looking clearly at something, there was a sense of character for me as a watcher. Something happened. We're seeing you in a different light.

I think you'll enjoy my book. In the last part there are about 30 scores for the exercises that evolved in my classes.

ANTON
I'm looking forward to it.

AL WUNDER
Do you know Action Theater? Ruth Zaporah?

ANTON
I've read an essay by her, but I don't know much about her system yet.

AL WUNDER
Ruth Zaporah was one of my very early students. As soon as she started doing something, I thought, 'God, this woman is totally amazing'. She’s a brilliant performer and the pedagogy she evolved is exquisite. It's very stylistic, but it's quite open. She teaches in a very different way from me. You've got to do things right. She still frees you up, but she'll stop an improv and have you repeat something to make sure that you get the exercise going the way she wants it to go.

When David Wells did an opening of my book launch, he said, ‘Well, what Al Wunder does is he puts you behind the wheel of a car without any instruction and just says – “Okay, drive. See what happens.”’ I do that. Ruth Zaporah does the opposite. She gives you strong guide lines. She's a brilliant, brilliant performer and a brilliant teacher.

ANTON

I heard of this experiment where they dropped off a bunch of computers in a village in the Congo without any instructions. And within a few months the kids had figured out how to use them. It's how we learn, isn't it? You play around and you try things out, especially if you're eager to learn. You teach yourself. You figure it out.

AL WUNDER

Yeah, they do, young kids especially. There was a Frenchman who worked with 6, 7, 8-year-old kids and computers. He put them into groups, and he said, 'Okay, find out what you can about atomic energy'. They just went at it on their own. It's because they weren't learning anything by rote. They were learning things by their own communication with each other: 'Oh, I have an idea. Why don't we try this?' And they do it and, you know, it's an amazing way to learn. I think it's brilliant. Rather than the teacher going: 'I know what things are all about. I'll teach you. You gotta learn from me.'

ANTON

I've got a 12-year-old niece, and we're writing a collaborative story at the moment. It's incredible, her perspective. It's such a different kind of intelligence and knowledge and understanding, very different from my own. It keeps amazing and surprising me, full of creativity and energy and life force.

AL WUNDER

If we don't educate them out of educating themselves, they do a very good job.

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