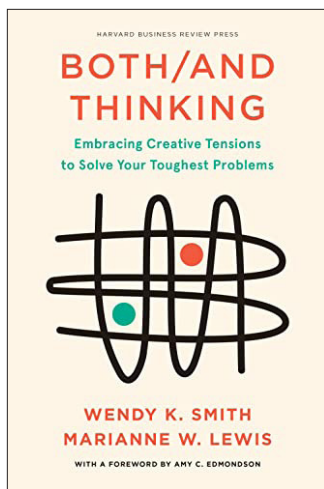


DR. KAREN GARZA'S READING LIST FOR EDUCATION LEADERS



Karen K. Garza, PhD

President & CEO | Battelle for Kids



Both/And Thinking: Embracing Creative Tensions to Solve Your Toughest Problems

Wendy K. Smith and Marianne W. Lewis

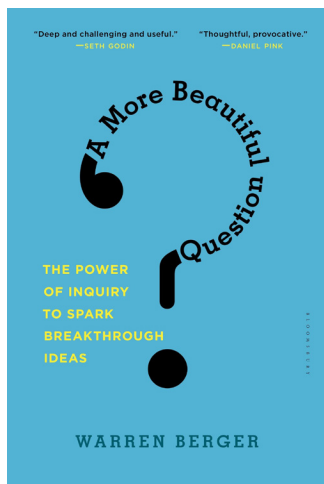
Excerpts:

Our own research suggests that people experience increased tensions in settings with (1) faster change, (2) greater plurality, or (3) more scarcity. The faster the pace of change, the more we experience tensions between what is and what will be. In terms of plurality, the more voices and perspectives from different people and stakeholders, the more we experience tensions between varied goals, roles, and values. And finally, the more that people experience a scarcity of resources, the more competition there will be over how the resources should be shared.

Leaders must shift their own assumptions, adopting mindsets and underlying beliefs that enable us to cognitively hold two opposing forces at the same time.

Karen's note:

Leaders swim in paradox, yet it is a leader's responsibility to guide the system in navigating these polarities. Both/And Thinking is insightful and includes many examples and tools education leaders can use.



A More Beautiful Question: The Power of Inquiry to Spark Breakthrough Ideas

Warren Berger

Excerpt:

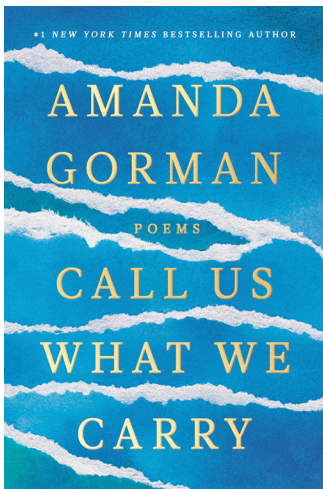
Research shows that a child asks about forty thousand questions between the ages of two and five. By age four, the lion's share of the questions are seeking explanations, not just facts. When we start teaching too much, too soon, we're inadvertently cutting off paths of inquiry and exploration that kids might otherwise pursue on their own.

Having this sense of knowing can make us less curious and less open to new ideas and possibilities. To make matters worse, we don't "know" as much as we might think we do....What does it mean to be convinced?

For a questioner, it's important to spend time with challenging questions instead of trying to answer them right away. By "living with" a question, thinking about it and then stepping away from it, allowing it to marinate, you give your brain a chance to come up with the kinds of fresh insights and What If possibilities that can lead to breakthroughs.

Karen's note:

A More Beautiful Question was published in 2014 and remains one of my favorite books. I mention it frequently with education leaders because it is as relevant today as ever! It is a fascinating read with many implications for the design of education systems and education experiences.



Call Us What We Carry: Poems

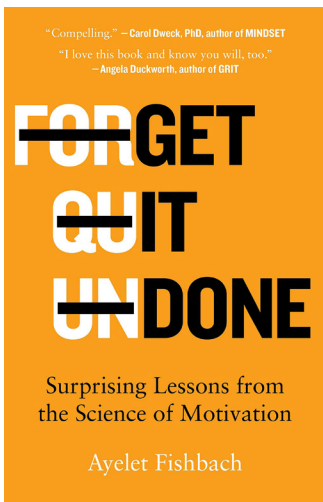
Amanda Gorman

Excerpt:

*Life is not what is promised,
But what is sought.
These bones, not what is found,
But what we've fought.
Our truth, not what we said,
But what we thought.
Our lesson, all we have taken
& all we have brought.*

Karen's note:

I am a big fan of Amanda Gorman. Her prose is so haunting yet hopeful. Call Us What We Carry is her thought-provoking poem series that captures the grief, angst, and tenacity evidenced during the pandemic. As we enter a new year, I also think it's relevant to share Amanda Gorman's poem that kicked off 2022: A New Day's Lyric.



Get It Done: Surprising Lessons from the Science of Motivation

Ayelet Fishbach

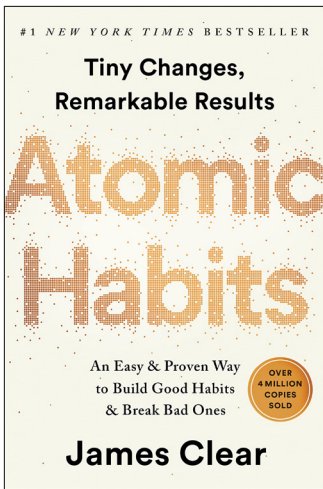
Excerpt:

Paying attention to progress you've made makes you value your current position more; you might be more satisfied with where you are and less likely to desire change than if you considered what might be ahead. By looking back, you increase your commitment to where you are and feel less motivation to change. Paying attention to what you haven't yet accomplished, in contrast will more likely encourage you to seek change and move forward.

We often assume that if a person can wait, they will. Those who do not wait are thought to have poor willpower – but there are reasons why people may not desire to wait, even if they are able to. People might think the larger-later outcome isn't worth it, or they're uncertain that waiting will pay off. Patience requires that you both can and want to wait, and understanding your barrier to being patient informs the remedy. . . . One strategy that makes it more desirable to wait involves reminding yourself how much you value what you're waiting for.

Karen's note:

Get It Done is an enthralling book from the field of motivation science. It extends much of what we have learned from Carol Dweck and others. Ayelet Fishbach made me think differently about human behavior, goals, and motivation. In this book, she describes the middle problem: how beginnings and endings are special; middles are ordinary and where we often lose motivation and begin to cut corners. Leaders must understand how to motivate themselves and others towards these meaningful, daunting, and worthwhile goals—like education transformation!



Atomic Habits

James Clear

Excerpts:

Can one tiny change transform your life? It's unlikely you would say so. But what if you made another? And another? An another? At some point, you will have to admit that your life was transformed by one small change. The holy grail of habit change is not a single 1 percent improvement, but a thousand of them. It's a bunch of atomic habits stacking up, each one a fundamental unit of the overall system.

All big things come from small beginnings. Goals are about the results you want to achieve. Systems are about the processes that lead to those results.

Achieving a goal only changes your life for the moment. That's the counterintuitive thing about improvement. We think we need to change our results, but the results are not the problem. What we really need to change are the systems that cause those results. When you solve problems at the results level, you only solve them temporarily. In order to improve for good, you need to solve problems at the systems level.

Change can take years – before it happens all at once.

Karen's note:

James Clear's inspiring Atomic Habits has been on numerous best-seller lists for years and is one of my favorites! Leaders who have already read this book should consider re-reading it from an organizational perspective. How do we create a new identity for our organizations? How do we cultivate new habits, systems, and structures that perpetuate the new identity we want to create for our organizations?

At Battelle for Kids, our work centers on helping education leaders engage their communities to re-envision and transform their school systems. We partner with educators as they design and implement 21st century, deeper learning experiences for every student.

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