

AE Café # 10  
Preview

**Thursday Night • 6:30 PM –  
November 4th - \$4**

**Chip Romer, Credo Charter High School (open  
2011)**

**Beth Weisburn & George Hershkowitz,  
Summerfield Waldorf School & Farm**

**Mark Rice, SunRidge Charter School**

**Alysson Baker, Sebastopol Independent Charter  
School**

**TED Talk – Sir Ken  
Robinson  
‘Bring On The Learning  
Revolution!’**

**Followed By Conversation With Local  
Educators!**

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## **TED talk Sir Ken Robinson NOV. 4<sup>th</sup>**

An Education Café starting with a TED video of Sir Ken Robinson on the learning revolution. A Panel Discussion with local educators will follow. Sir Ken Robinson is humorous, prescient and profound as he talks about the education system in America. As a former professor he knows where of he speaks and he does so by using humor and logic to motivate a nation he has recently adopted. The 20-minute video will be followed by conversation spurred on by invited guests that are local educators that share a passion for working with youth.

Please join us in the conversation at the French Garden Restaurant as we learn to re-imagine our school system. Between imagination and will is the heart of the human being.

“The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise – with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew, and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country.”

Abraham Lincoln message to Congress

## Review

### **LAST Week French Garden AE Café # 10 Sir Ken Robinson TED w/ Beth, George, Chip & Gene – NOV. 4<sup>th</sup>**

After the review, also find the Guest Review and Comments from Clint and Ted below:

#### Review

A short Sir Ken Robinson TED video and introductory remarks from Beth Weisburn, Chip Romer and George Hershkowitz sparked a lively and penetrating conversation about the current state of our elementary and secondary education system. Gene Gallock from Sunridge Charter School contributed to the dialogue with his decades of experience, deep insights and questions. He is a retired Science teacher and teacher trainer who provides ongoing mentoring and support to new teachers. Revealing and instructive personal stories about their own children’s experience with both government and private schools enhanced the whole discussion. Thank you Dan Smith and Stuart Dole! How did indigenous peoples manage their

education? Can both class room age segregation and age differentiation be a part of the structure of the day? When does self-education begin and the need for a 'teacher' end? Do students need to be all gathered in one place for education to happen? How can the whole community and its needs become both the curricula and the classroom? These days, it is not just our immediate community, but also all of humanity, that needs to be taken into account.

Chip Romer deftly described the nature and purpose of the new charter Waldorf high school (Credo) that plans to open fall of 2011. Beth and George (Summerfield Waldorf High School) addressed the polarity of thinking and willing, self-development and creativity' in contrast to 'will and work for others' in the world. George pointed to the apparent assault on the will and creativity of our children (worldwide) by the very culture we live in. How can today's youth learn to think critically and discern the 'meaning' behind the facts – facts that are available to even a three year old who can 'google' something? How are youth prepared to take initiative in the world? Where do student learn the financial and economic 'rules of the road' so they can steer their life and sustain and maintain what they start? George thought that one important task for the teacher is to help guide the students to 'think for themselves' and still maintain confidence in humanity, in themselves and the future!

*“While technically, the economic function of education, cultural activity, and creativity is to “use-up” economic value, so to speak; its economic effect is to create new economic value once applied.”  
(See Prelude in Economics [www.cfae.biz](http://www.cfae.biz))*

*“Future economic sustainability will depend on our ability to make engaging educational opportunities in science, mathematics, art, economics and ecology available to all children of all ages. The most thriving economies of this new century will be driven by ingenuity, innovation and initiative. All three come from creativity. Creativity begins in childhood play. Therefore, the highest and most effective economic decision any community can make is to*

*provide ample investment for cultivating the capacities and talents in every child, no matter the cost.” (LILIPOH Magazine 2008 Daniel Osmer, Associative Entrepreneur).*

**Look for more ‘EDUCATION Cafés’ in the future! Suggestions welcome.**

AE Café # 10 Guest Comment #1 by participant Clint Summer

I enjoyed seeing the Sir Ken Robinson video - and not only for his great sense of humor. His critique of modern education - that it tends to kill creativity - seems limited but accurate to me. I came with my own philosophy and vision of education developed years ago, and it was a wonderful opportunity to have my awareness expanded by listening to those who are deeply involved in alternative education today. They seem to be the ones who are struggling to realize a higher ideal for education in a culture that still clings to the old, dysfunctional ways and values. Now I see schools as an artifact of a fragmented social order. If we are able to find our way to once again living a connected, holistic way of life in communities of mutual support, my guess is that we will see education as simply supporting each person's natural learning process, and as an integral aspect of our everyday productive and creative life.

By Clint Summer

AE Café # 10 Guest Comment #2 by participant Ted Rollheiser

I instruct part-time for a surveyor's apprenticeship program, a collaborative effort to provide training and education for individuals who seek entry to the construction surveying industry but are not necessarily college bound. In this effort I encounter folks who have, for whatever reason, not acquired the necessary math skills to handle the trigonometry, analytic geometry, and statistics, which should be part of a surveyor's skill set. In fact, many struggle with simple arithmetic. It seems clear that if students aren't hooked on math at an early age, in elementary school, they will have a hard time getting going with it in high school.

The introduction of Cartesian coordinates in the first half of the seventeenth century was a catalyst for a revolution in the fields of math and physics, the blending of geometry and algebra making it possible to visualize the way numbers relate functionally as never before. The advances that followed, produced by the likes of Newton, Leibniz, Gauss, and others, led to the era of technological advances that continues today. I have a notion that macro processes, like the evolution of mathematics, can be scaled to processes in a local domain such as mathematics education for the individual (not unlike ontogeny recapitulating phylogeny) with the intended outcome being the advancement of the individual's math skills. To that end I've been working on a program I call Grids for Kids. It is a one hour presentation for elementary school classes in which the students learn about how surveyors use Cartesian coordinates, measurements, proportional scales, and polar to rectangular coordinate conversion to do their work. With an electronic theodolite and distance meter they make the measurements necessary to map their classroom and plot the coordinates and line work on grid paper.

In spite of being told this is too advanced for young students, I've seen that the third through sixth graders I've presented to, both in affluent suburban schools, and poor urban settings have been almost 100% successful in producing the result, an annotated map, to scale, of their classroom. They are encouraged to try this at home and I know from following up that many do. The reward of using their knowledge of math to produce a tangible result anchors the learning in a way that doing calculation exercises and taking tests never will. Education should be about students learning how to produce a result, be it food, clothing, or shelter as required in indigenous societies, or alternative energy or robotic devices in our modern world, or in my world, a map.

Any adult that uses math, science or any other ability to produce anything can and should be taking some time to go into the elementary grades and showing the kids what they (the students) can do. Quit complaining about the educational system and go do something about it.

Ted Rollheiser  
Professional Land Surveyor