

My personal philosophy of educational technology is constantly evolving as I read, experiment, play, discuss, create, connect, teach, practice, network, and learn with and about technology. I have recently realized that technology is integrated deeply into our daily lives individually as well as collectively. It influences our culture, our society, our politics, our economics, and our ecology while affecting us psychologically and spirituality. We have become cyborgs: part human and part machine. The human makes adjustments for the machine as the machine evolves to meet the needs of the human. Our relationship with technology is simultaneously symbiotic and incompatible. For example, computers can help us write a paper, spell check and correct grammar, but it can also help us easily plagiarize, overlook misspelled words and incorrectly correct our grammar. It seems logical that technology be an integral part of education since it is an integral part of our lives. It is also imperative that as educators, as we integrate technology into the learning process, we deliver a balanced view as to its usefulness, the good and the bad.

Educational technology is an activity, a process and a tool. It involves developing a culture of learning by fostering a community of learners, educators and community stakeholders who assist each other in constructing knowledge. Technology connects people with an ease and magnitude that has never been possible before; creating a discourse in which knowledge can be constructed and emotions can be expressed. Unfortunately it still has its limitations. It can serve to disconnect people by excluding those who cannot participate due to technical limitations, financial restraints, language barriers or lack of technical knowledge. The new and emerging educational technologies often promise opportunities to work more effectively and efficiently to save time and money but sometimes fail to deliver.

My role as an educator of educators is to find ways of using technologies (new and old) effectively, to accommodate and connect the different learning and teaching styles of my educational community. The advent of our information highway, the Internet, has given us access to an inordinate amount of information/knowledge. Mastering facts and data is now not as important as knowing how to find and use the available information to recognize, discuss, and

solve ‘real-life’ problems. Life is always changing. Technology is always changing. Knowledge is always changing. Why master something that will change? The key is to learn how to network with experts, discuss, find, and use the current information to get the task done. Equally important is the need to bring into the classroom emotional development as well as cognitive development. As an educator, I need to build an inclusive learning environment where networking can occur to facilitate the construction of knowledge as well as build emotional intelligence. The key is to construct a learning environment that builds relationships between the users as opposed to just connecting them.

