

# GENERATING STUDENT MOTIVATION

BY

FULVIA SEALES

28<sup>TH</sup> Annual TESOL France Colloquium  
November 6 & 7, 2009

A green road sign with the word "Motivation" written in white, set against a blue sky with white clouds. The sign is mounted on a wooden post and has a white border. The word "Motivation" is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. A faint "iStockphoto" watermark is visible on the sign.

**Motivation**

# What is MOTIVATION?

“**Motivation** is, without question, the most complex and challenging issue facing teachers today.”

Scheidecker and Freeman (1999:116)

“**Motivation** is, actually a cluster of factors that “**energize**” behaviour and give it “**direction**”.

Hilgards, Atkinson, and Atkinson, (1979:281)

**W**hatever form or shape it takes, the motivating process is usually a,

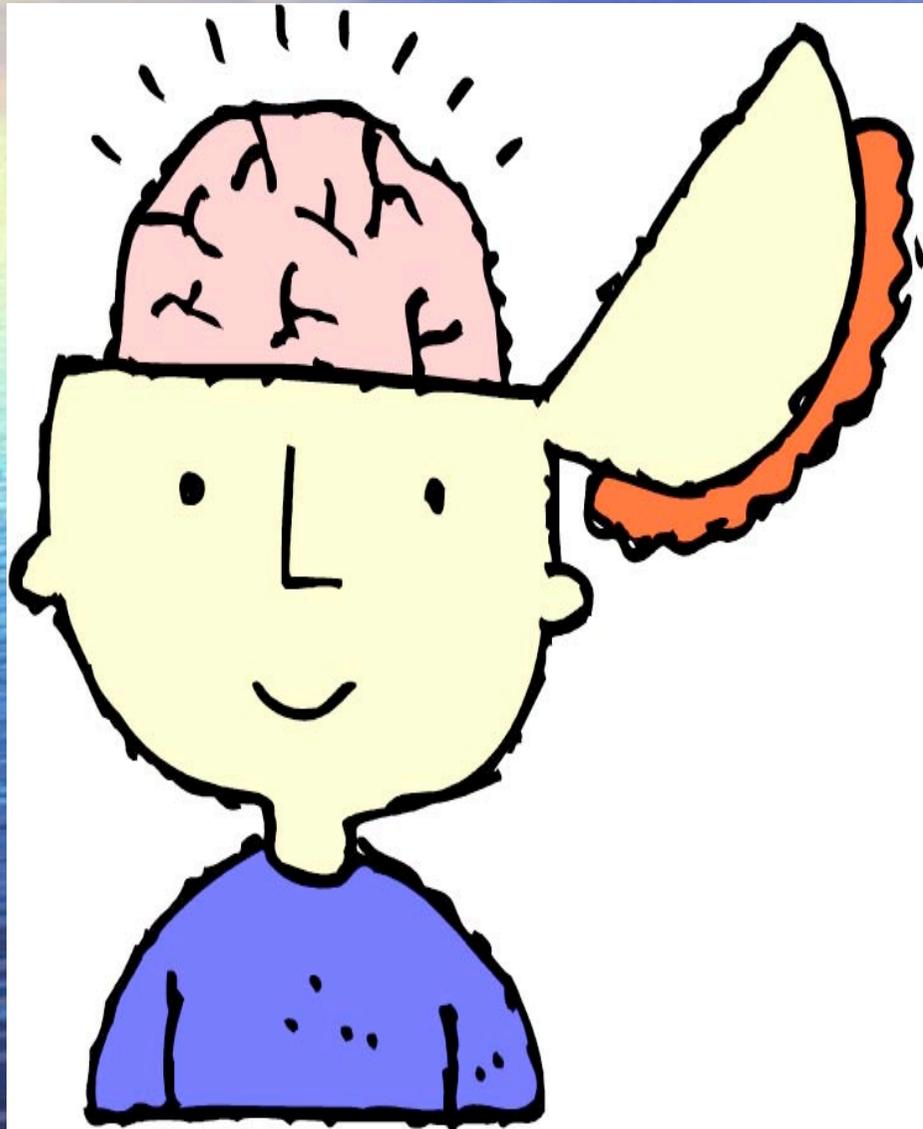
- ✓ LONG TERM PROCESS.
- ✓ IS A CLUSTER OF FACTORS.
- ✓ NEEDS DIRECTION.
- ✓ DESIRE TO LEARN.
- ✓ PERSISTENCE



“Motivation is related to one of the most basic aspects of the human mind, and most teachers and researchers would agree that it has a very important role in determining success or failure in any learning situation.”

(Zoltan Dornyei, 2001:2)

# What exactly do we mean by motivating someone?



## 1. **EFFORT:**

Motivational intensity. i.e. what the learner rationally thinks.

(cognitive functions)

## 2. **WANT:**

A desire to learn the L2.

(conative functions)

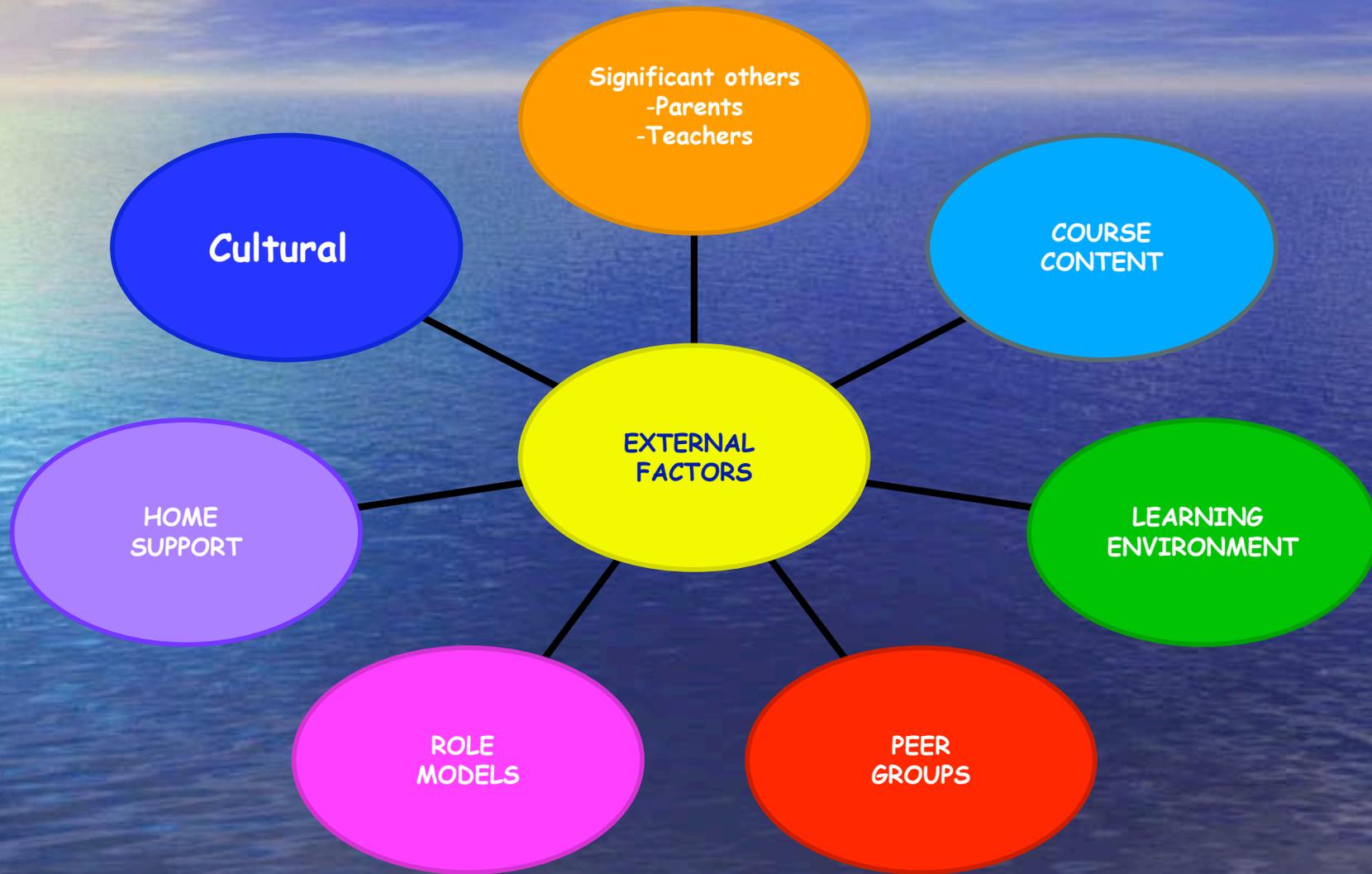
## 3. **AFFECT:**

Attitudes toward learning the L2.

Feelings and emotions.  
(affective functions).

# FACTORS THAT AFFECT MOTIVATION

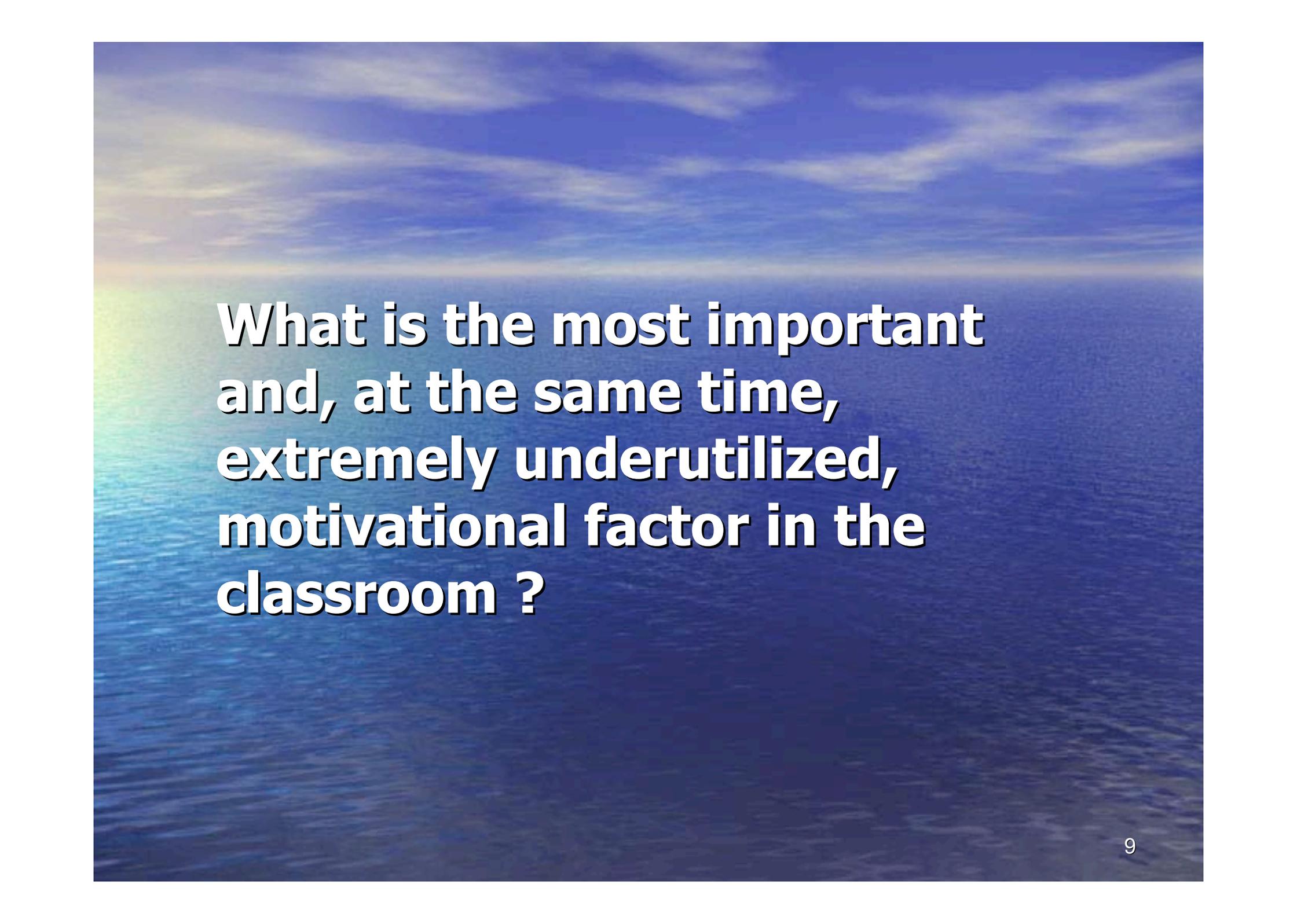
## EXTERNAL FACTORS



# FACTORS THAT AFFECT MOTIVATION

## INTERNAL FACTORS





**What is the most important  
and, at the same time,  
extremely underutilized,  
motivational factor in the  
classroom ?**



**“Teacher’s  
behaviour is  
the most  
powerful  
motivation  
tool.”**

Dornyei and Csizer (1998)

# THE IDEAL TEACHER

Good teachers are known for showing:

- ✓ Good relationship with the students.
- ✓ Good relationship with the students' parents.
- ✓ Appropriate teacher behaviours.
- ✓ Creating a pleasant and supportive classroom atmosphere.
- ✓ A great sense of humor, positive attitude and patience.
- ✓ Making learning stimulating and enjoyable
- ✓ Increase learners self-confidence and self-esteem
- ✓ Encourage and support students at all times, but especially when they are struggling or lacking confidence.
- ✓ Promote self-motivating strategies.
- ✓ Create realistic learner beliefs.
- ✓ Presenting activities and task in an engaging and meaningful way.
- ✓ Create relevant teaching material for the learners.
- ✓ Maintaining and protecting motivation.

# Teacher's Self-Reflection Questionnaire

- Do I share myself with my students?
- Am I frank and sensitive?
- Do I find out from my students what they are interested in ?
- Do I encourage and teach my students to personalize the content of the lesson?
- Do I let my students suggests lesson topics/ homework/ etc.?
- Do I listen to my students attentively?
- Is there a constant eye-contact between me and the speaker?
- Do I teach across the curriculum to get through to those who have a flair for math, biology, literature?
- Do I avoid writing on the board/fixing the equipment/etc. When a student is speaking?
- Don't I manifest impatience?
- If there is a need to interrupt do I do it tactfully?
- Do I encourage exchange of ideas, experience, strategies?
- Do I deal with territorialism in my class?
- Am I a good parent?

## A set of self-motivating strategies for teachers

- Reflect immediately after a lesson on how it went and make mental notes on what to do differently next time.
- Imagine being named teacher of the year and how satisfied that would make you.
- Observe other teachers as a learning tool.
- Marshal inner resources and remember you've been through more than this and made it.
- Analyze why you feel so anxious about aspects of your work and think through ways to overcome these feelings.
- Embellish your teaching – keep changing what you do – so it's more interesting for you to teach it again.
- Rearrange the classroom layout for maximal attention from students.
- Call teacher study groups to resolve problems cooperatively.

Based on Como and Kanfer (1993:312-13)

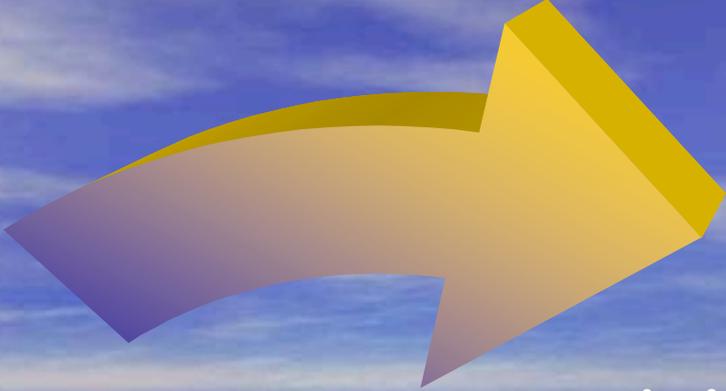
# BUILDING SELF-ESTEEM

- Work on the cohesion of the group.
- Get them to know each other well.
- Focus on learners learning styles and multiple intelligences.
- Discover their weakness and strengths.
- Promote self-motivating strategies.
- Promote cooperation not competition.
- Create realistic learners beliefs.
- Create a pleasant and supportive atmosphere in the classroom.
- Provide learners with individual motivational feedback.
- Appropriate teacher behaviours.



**“Self-esteem” grows from the beliefs of others. When teachers believe in students, students believe in themselves.**

**James Raffini  
(1993:147)**



**Belonging**

**Children's sense of  
security**

According to Reasoner (1982) these are the three  
major  
components of self-esteem



**Identity**



# “Ten Commandments for Motivating Language Learners

-  Set a personal example with your own behavior.
-  Create a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere in the classroom.
-  Present the task properly.
-  Develop a good relationship with the learners.
-  Increase learner's linguistic self-confidence.
-  Make the language classes interesting.
-  Promote learner autonomy.
-  Personalize the learning process.
-  Increase the learners' goal orientedness.
-  Familiarize learners with the target language culture.

Dornyei (1998:131)

# A LIST OF SUGGESTION FOR MOTIVATING LANGUAGE LEARNERS

1. Recognise the complexity of motivation.
2. Be aware of both initiating and sustaining motivation.
3. Discuss with learners why they are carrying out activities.
4. Involve learners in making decisions related to learning the language.
5. Involve learners in setting language-learning goals.
6. Recognise people as individuals.
7. Build up individuals' belief in themselves.
8. Develop internal beliefs.
9. Enhance intrinsic motivation.
10. Build up a supportive learning environment.
11. Give feedback that is informational

Source: Williams and Burden (1997:141-2)

# Exploring the learner's territory, the classroom

*"If your class has a generally warm and supportive climate  
( a must in basic motivation), you are already halfway  
there."*

Dornyei (1999:15)

# 10 Factors that promotes cohesiveness in the classroom

1. Cooperation
2. Time spent together
3. Learn about each other
4. Proximity (i.e. physical distance such as sitting next to each other)
5. The rewarding nature of group experience
6. Successful completion of group tasks
7. Intergroup activities
8. Common treat
9. Group legend
10. Investing in the group.



According to Brophy (1985) there are eight concrete ways by which negative expectancy-driven teacher behaviour can reduce student motivation.



1. Giving up easily on low expectation students (e.g. not waiting long enough for their answers).
2. Criticizing them more often for failure.
3. Praising them less often following success.
4. Praising inappropriately (e.g. after routine responses).
5. Neglecting to give them any feedback following their responses.
6. Seating them in the back of the room.
7. Generally paying less attention to them or interacting with them less frequently.
8. Expressing less warmth towards them or less interest in them as individuals.



**“Second language acquisition SLA is emotionally driven and emotions underlies most, if not all cognition.”**

**Schumann (1998)**

**“On students’ demotivation teachers have a considerable responsibility in this respect”**

Dornyei (2005:155)



- Avoid social comparison.
- Public pronouncement of grades.
- Display of selected papers and achievements.
- Promote cooperation instead of competition.
- Help learners accept mistake as part of the learning process.
- Make test and assessment completely “transparent.”
- Involve learners in the negotiation of the final mark.

Source: Motivational Strategies in the language classroom. Dornyei (2001)



“LANGUAGE ANXIETY  
HAS BEEN FOUND TO  
BE A POWERFUL  
FACTOR HINDERING L2  
LEARNING.”

MacIntyre and Young

Solution.....

P. A. S. A. C. !

PLEASANT AND  
SUPPORTIVE  
ATMOSPHERE IN THE  
CLASSROOM

## HOW TO CREATE A PLEASANT AND SUPPORTIVE ATMOSPHERE IN THE CLASSROOM

- ✓ Establish a norm of tolerance.
- ✓ Encourage risk-taking and have mistakes accepted as a natural part of learning.
- ✓ Bring in and encourage humour.
- ✓ Encourage learners to personalize the classroom environment to their taste.
- ✓ Promote the development of group cohesiveness

John is better than me!

I'm not clever!

I'm not good enough!

No ones likes me

I can't do this!

*She makes me angry*

They don't listen to me

They hate me

I'm uncomfortable

# USE OF LANGUAGE

NO  
NEVER  
I' CAN'T  
I'M NOT GOOD ENOUGH  
NO ONE LIKES ME  
I GOT A LOW SCORE  
I'M UNCOMFORTABLE  
THEY DON'T LISTEN TO ME  
THEY HATE ME  
SHE MAKES ME ANGRY  
SHE'S ALWAYS TELLING ME OFF.

- = Not yet
- = When I'm ready
- = I can, though I can't yet
- = I'm really getting better
- = Javier is my friend
- = I'll do better next time
- = About what? About whom?
- = Who specifically doesn't listen?
- = Who specifically hates you?
- = How exactly does she do that?
- = Have you ever told off someone you liked? What if her telling you off means she likes you?

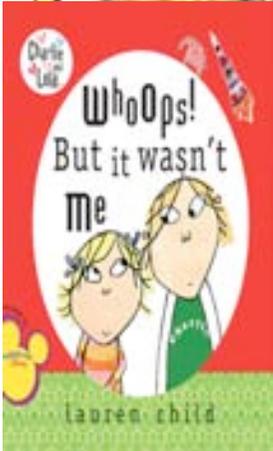
Source: Becoming Emotionally Intelligent  
By Catherine Corrie (2003)

# Increase the attractiveness of the course content

Teachers can help students improve motivation by generating interesting activities:

1. Showing that L2 learning can be fun.
2. An exciting mental challenge.
3. A vehicle to cultural awareness.
4. An opportunity to built friendship.

# MOTIVATION



more fun and games



stories



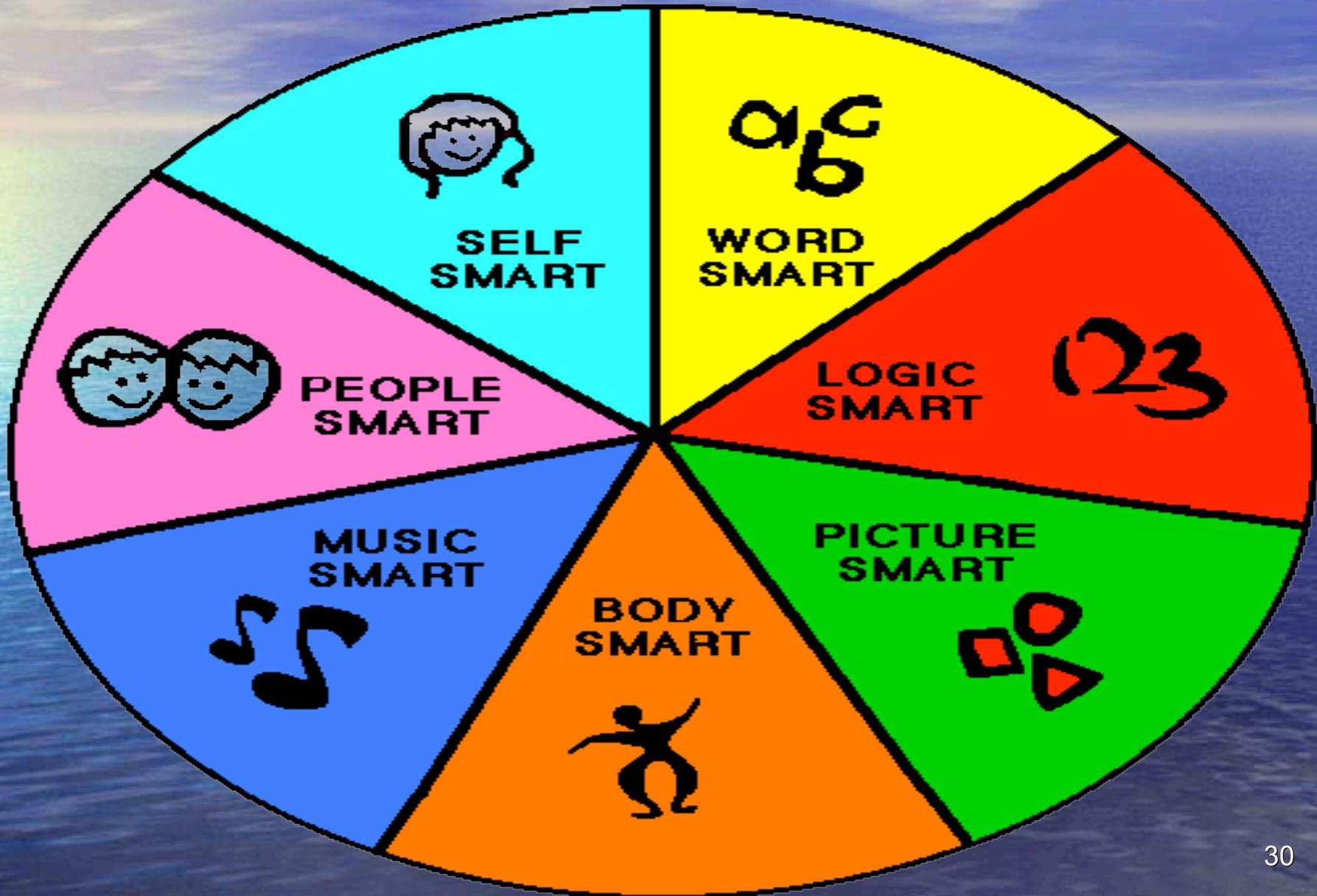
colour and makes



fun and games

What makes us happy?

# MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE



# MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCE

- **Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence** (“word smart”)
- **Logical-Mathematical Intelligence** (“number/reasoning smart”)
- **Visual/Spatial Intelligence** (“picture smart”)
- **Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence** (“body smart”)
- **Musical Intelligence** (“music smart”)
- **Interpersonal Intelligence** (“people smart”)
- **Intrapersonal Intelligence** (“self smart”)
- **Environmental/Naturalist Intelligence** (“nature smart”)

**Fill the Heart, not just the Money Bag!**



**THE END**