

Softening the Edges

*Reflecting on Our
Assessment Practices*



Transforming Learning Summit

Safe Space





EQUITY



The Power of
Professional
Conversation

HUMANITY

Hard and Soft Edges: The Metaphor



Softening the Edges means...

Clarifying our inner voice as
connected to:

- Our emotions
- Our beliefs and values
- Our needs

Softening the Edges means...

Clarifying assessment

- Its purpose
- Its impact
- Its potential

Softening the Edges means...

Creating Alignment through:

- Curiosity
- Research and exploration
- Design



Clarifying our inner voice



Describe a time when you **felt terrible** during and after a personal assessment experience (hard edges).

Describe a time when you **felt great** during and after a personal assessment experience (soft edges).

Hard and Soft Edges

Hard edges

- System of ranking and sorting
- My value as a human = the grade I get
- Family expectations
- Celebrations – single criterion

Soft edges

- Aware of success criteria
- Time to practice
- Frequent feedback from a caring person
- Time to correct errors
- Summative matched formative
- Relevance

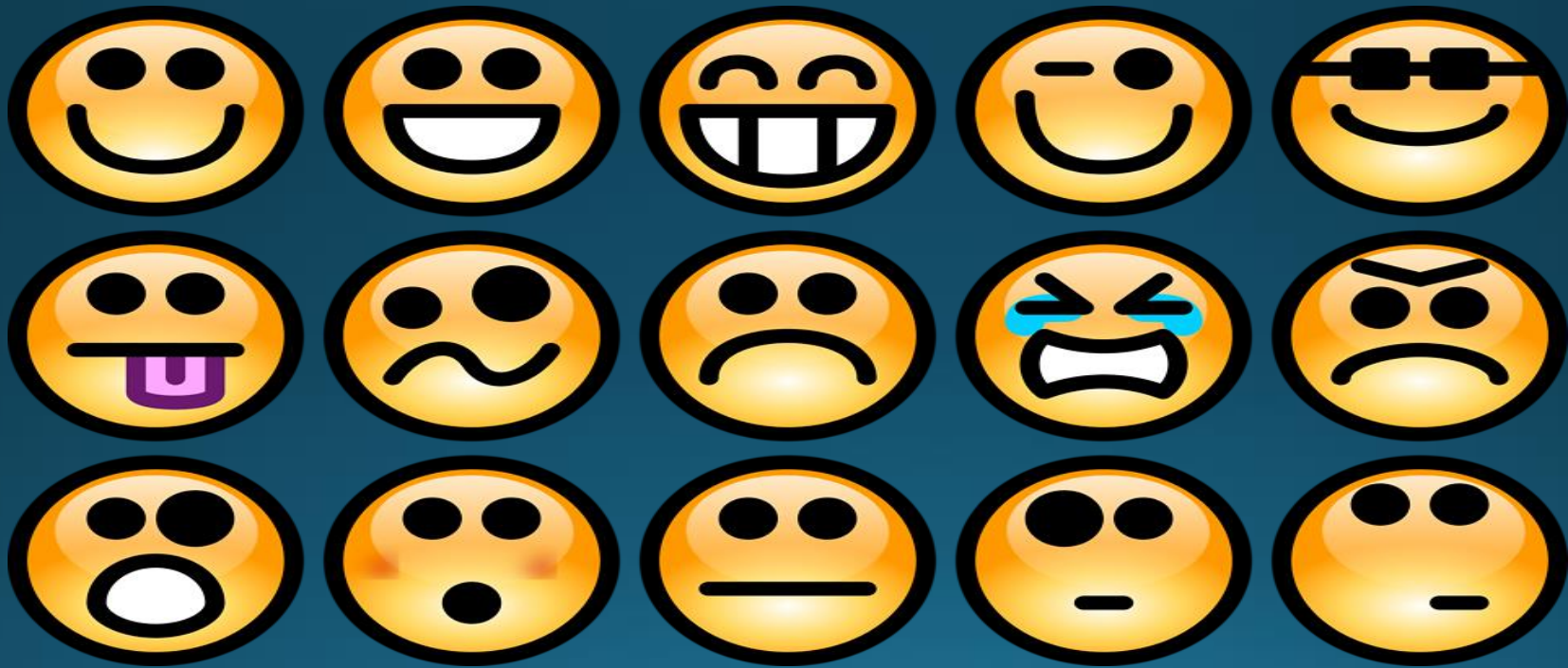


Hard and soft
edges are
products of their
environment



Emotion

indicates hard and soft edges



Emotion is connected to:

- Needs
- Beliefs
- Values



Beliefs and Values

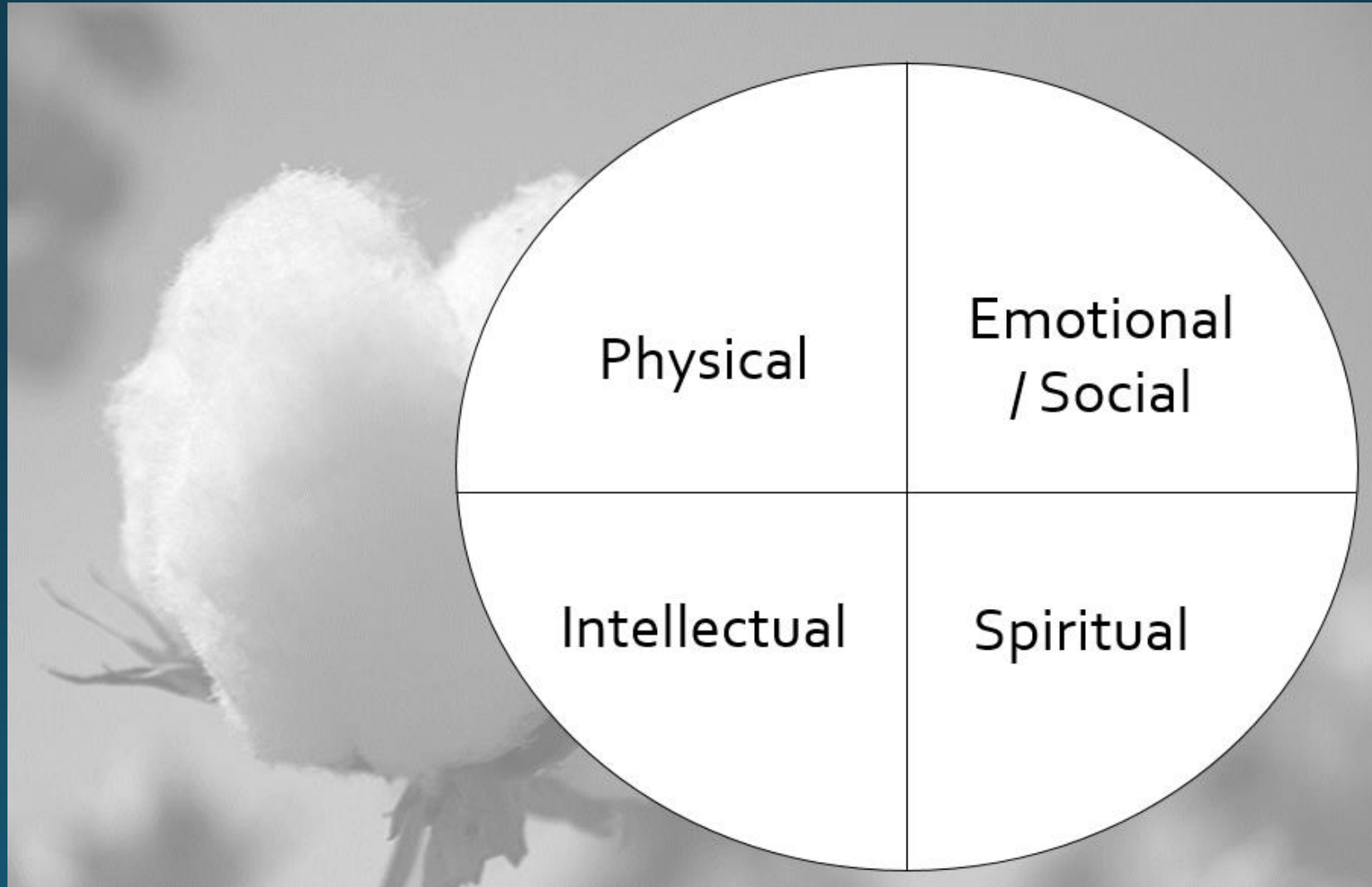
For example:

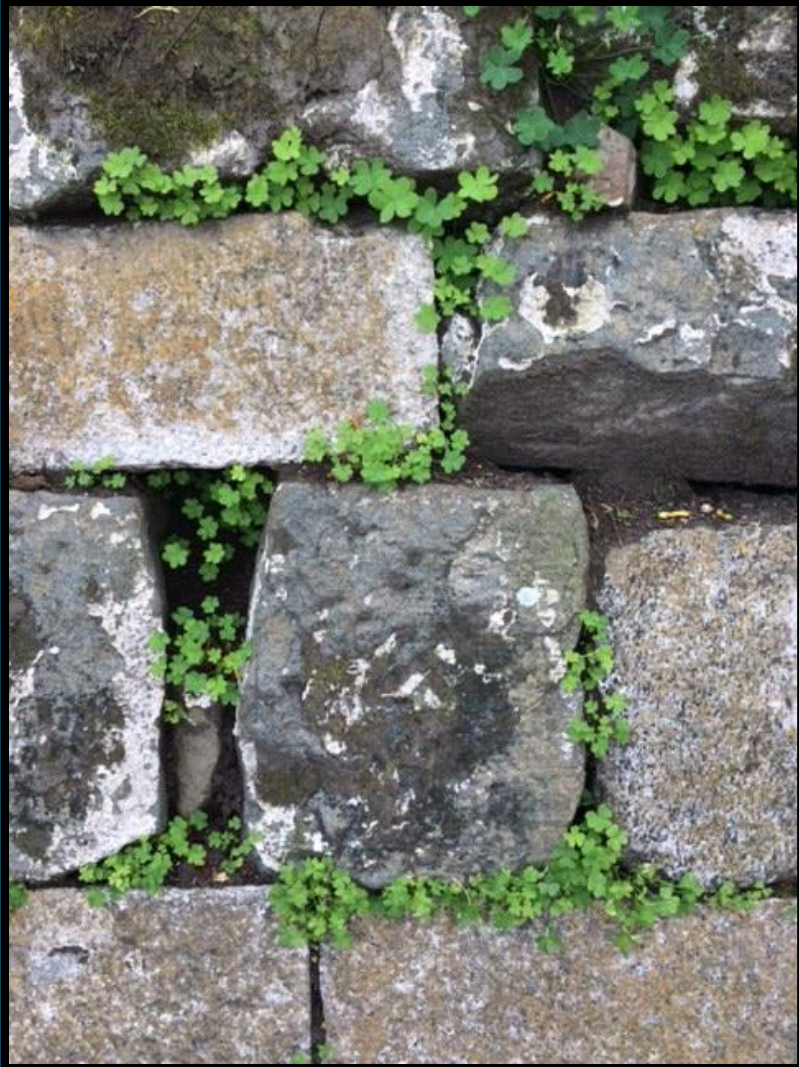
I believe teachers are developing students who will become increasingly independent.

I value safe and healthy risk-taking as part of a rich learning process.

***What are the implications
for assessment decisions?***

Holistic perspectives





We have to recognize hard edges in our assessment practices before we can start to soften them.

Clarification

Hope is not a naïve, sunny view of life. It is the capacity not to panic in tight situations, to find ways and resources to address difficult problems.

Fullan, 1997

Reflection...



What do you **believe** about the role of teachers and students in education?

What **values** guide your work in education?

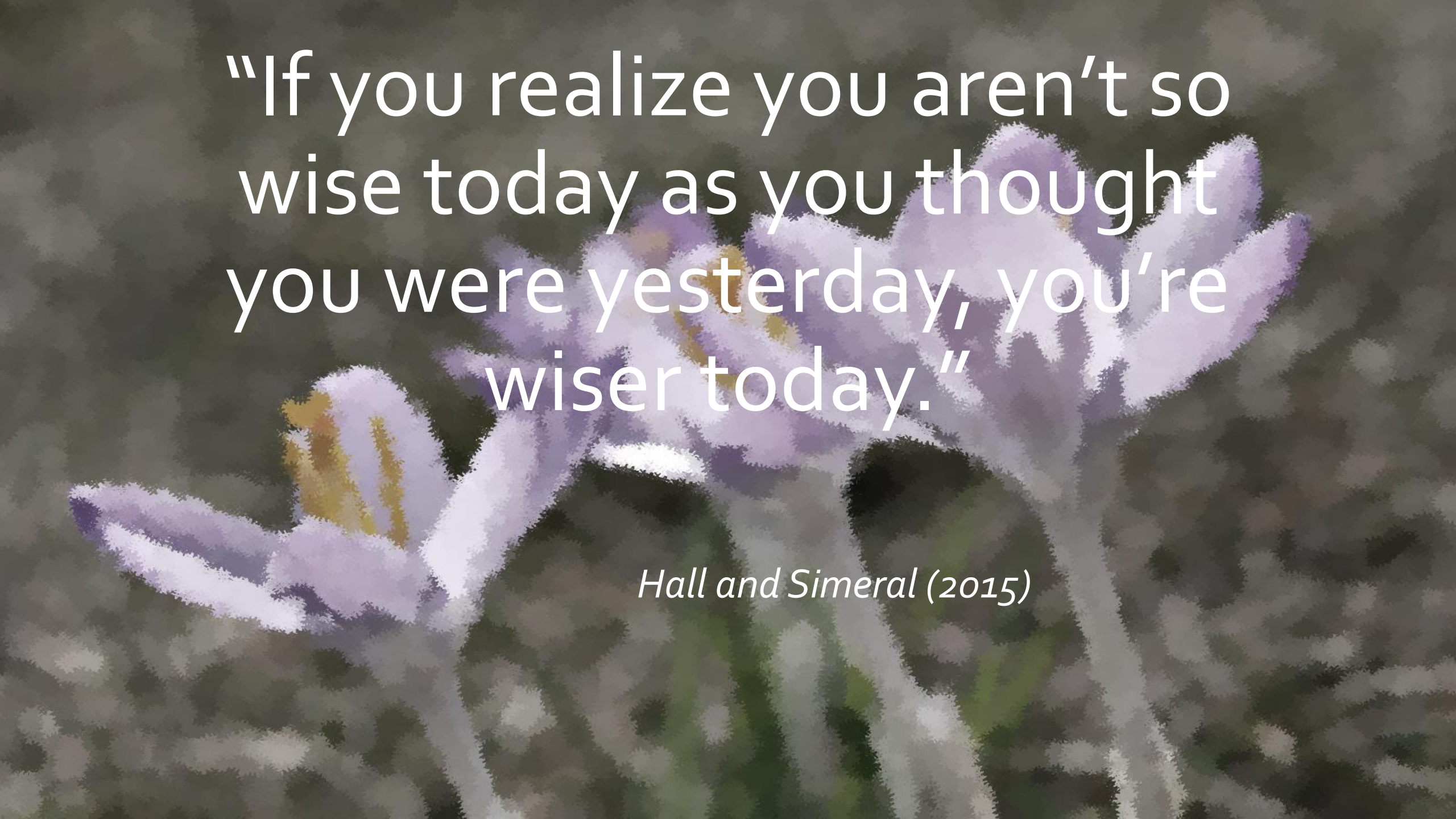
What are your **needs** as a human being who teaches?

What do your students **need**?

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“If you realize you aren’t so wise today as you thought you were yesterday, you’re wiser today.”

Hall and Simeral (2015)

SOFTENING the *edges*

Assessment Practices
That Honor K-12
Teachers and Learners



KATIE
WHITE

FOREWORD BY
CASSANDRA ERKENS



UNLOCKED

Assessment as the Key to Everyday
Creativity in the Classroom

KATIE WHITE

Thank you!

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#atAssess (Tues. 8CT)