

The image features a large, stylized graphic of the letters 'A' and 'D'. The 'A' is composed of a yellow diagonal stroke on the left and a red shape on the right. The 'D' is a solid blue shape. The text 'Pennsylvania College of Art & Design' is overlaid on the red part of the 'A' and the white space between the 'A' and 'D'.

Pennsylvania College of Art & Design

Making Room for Good Enough in Teaching and Learning

Dr. Adam Smith

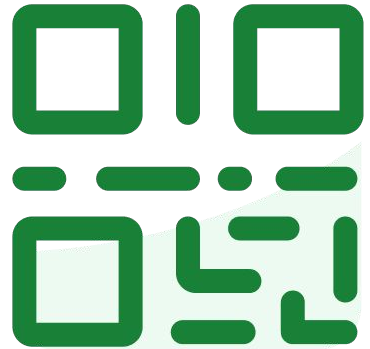
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What does good enough mean to you?

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GOOD ENOUGH FOR GOVERNMENT WORK

THE PUBLIC REPUTATION CRISIS IN AMERICA
(AND WHAT WE CAN DO TO FIX IT)

AMY E. LERMAN

Good enough for
government work.



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The Good-Enough Life

The desire for greatness can be an obstacle to our own potential.

Feb. 20, 2019



<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/20/opinion/the-good-enough-life-philosophy.html>

If you want more

Explores 'good enough' in the contexts of relationships, careers, and societies

THE GOOD-ENOUGH LIFE

Avram Alpert

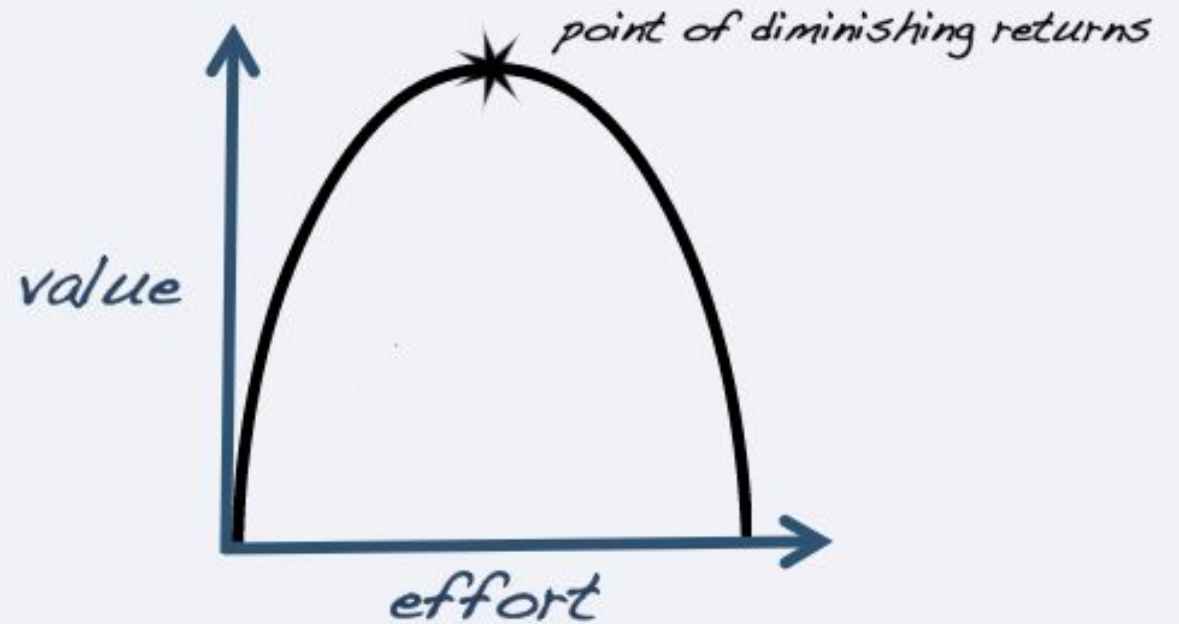


How might we define ‘good enough’?

This teacher is good enough not in the sense that they’re adequate or average, but that they manage a difficult task: initiating the student into a course/subject in which they will feel both supported and ready to deal with challenges.

Adapted from D.W. Winnicott

“GOOD ENOUGH”



Examples

When might 'good enough' make sense in teaching and learning?

When the evidence doesn't keep pace...

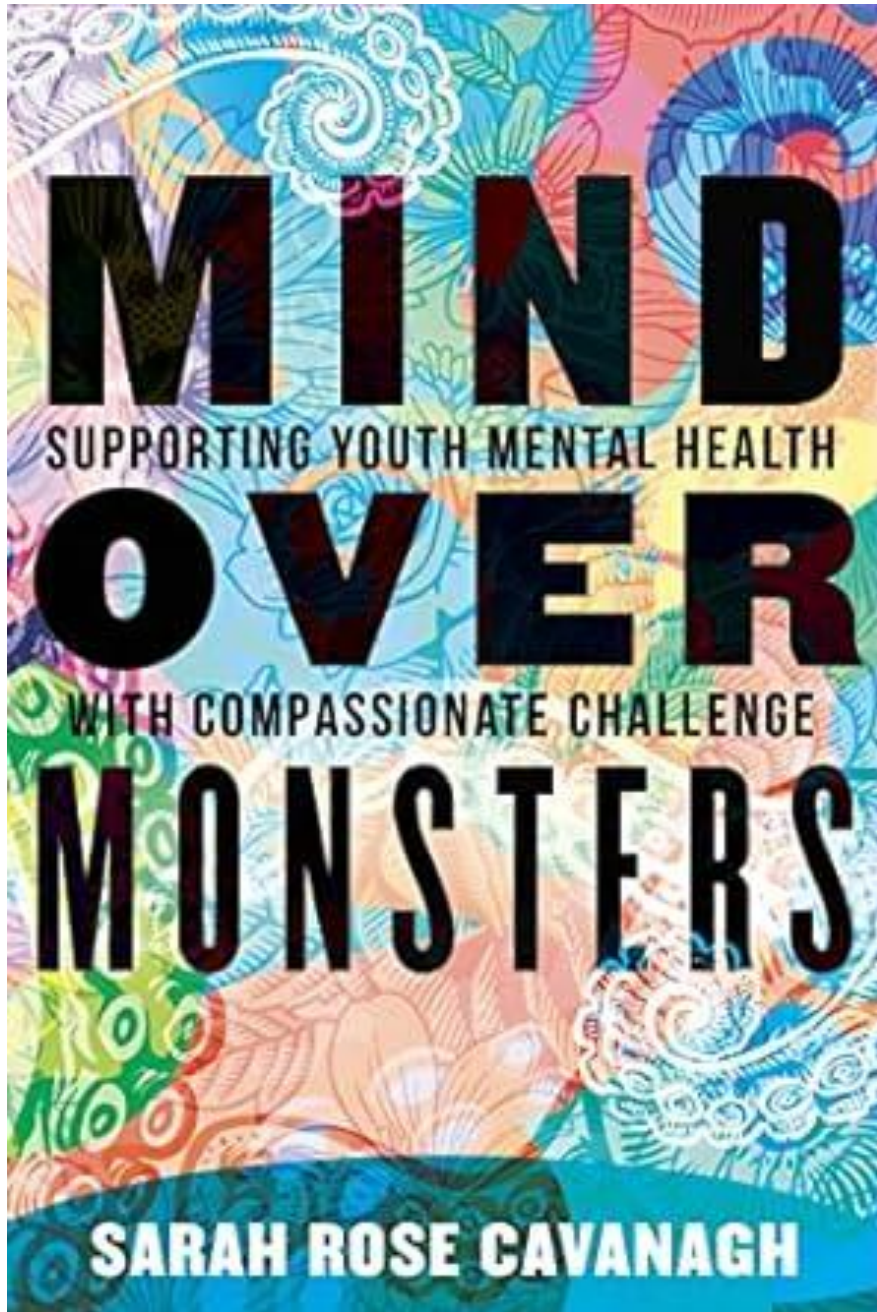
“... our needs around supporting engagement are outpacing the research right now ... the main thing we need to keep in mind is that if we are doing what the existing research shows — then what we are doing is *good enough*.”

Lindsay Masland, *Chronicle of Higher Education*

<https://www.chronicle.com/newsletter/teaching/2023-07-13>

When we have more than one value...

“Our thought leaders battling about whether students need more challenge or more care have it wrong - our young people need both. This work will not be easy, and it will certainly not be accomplished by scolding students about how much they’ve been coddled or expecting them to be able to face their fears on their own, without support. Rather, one needs to set up the conditions that allow students to feel safe enough to rise to challenges, and then one needs to create opportunities for them to do so.” (Cavanagh, 2023, xv)



Essential Tensions

Sarah Rose Cavanagh uses a framework of ‘compassionate challenge’ as an essential tension: What seems like an ‘either/or’ is really a ‘both/and,’ with ‘good enough’ being a framework for how we continually strike a balance.

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What are examples competing values you encounter in your teaching?

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When we remember that we're human...

“We’re not superheroes here — If we still want to be in this career years after we figure all of this out, we have to make reasonable, self-informed choices right now that set us up for sustainability and not burnout.”

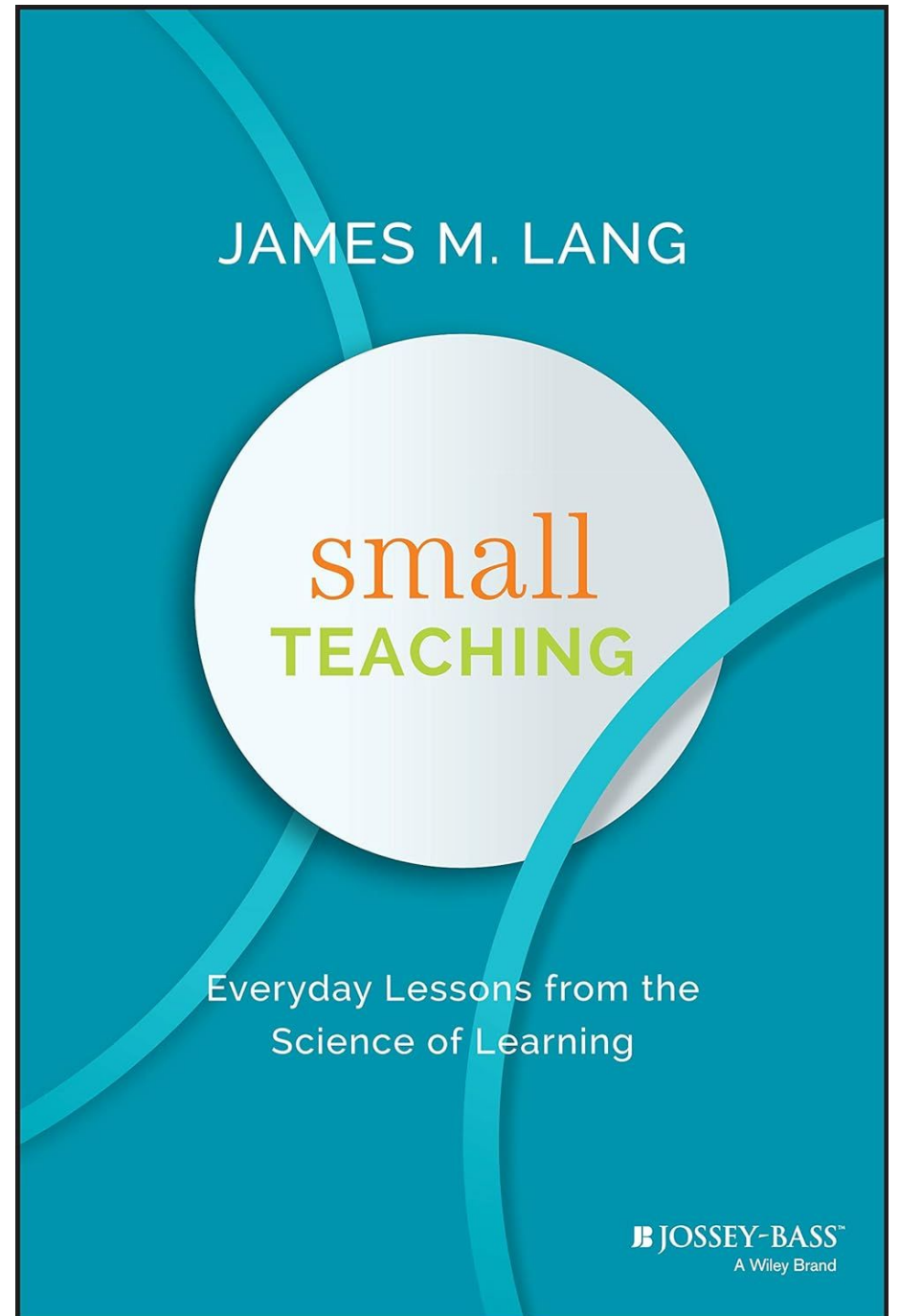
Lindsay Masland, *Chronicle of Higher Education*

<https://www.chronicle.com/newsletter/teaching/2023-07-13>

Where does ‘good enough’ exist already?

James Lang: “We owe it to our future students to dream big. We owe it to the students in our classrooms today to start wherever we can, even if that means taking only one small step forward tomorrow morning.”

<https://www.chronicle.com/article/small-changes-or-big-revolutions/>



Closing Thought

“I agree ... “teaching is not a normative science.”

It can be done effectively or ineffectively.

It can always be done better.

But the widely held presumption that it can be done *right* ...”

- Randy Bass

**Good enough
for now, safe
enough to try.**

**GOOD ENOUGH
ISN'T ABOUT
PERFECT—**

it depends on the
possibility of the
unknown while
operating with what
is currently known.



THE GOOD ENOUGH PROFESSOR

Manifesto

I am for an academia that nurtures process and becoming over perfection and competition.

I am for an academia that prizes wandering, wrong directions, dead ends, and failures as the basis of lifelong learning.

I am for an academia that embraces an ethics of kindness and empathy.

I am for an academia that invites us all to be good enough rather than requiring excellence at any cost.

I am for an academia that replenishes us with rest rather than demanding ever more labor.

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I am for an academia that...

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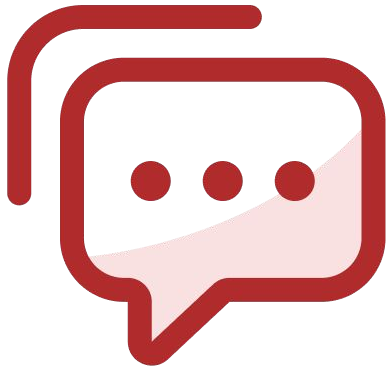
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Audience Q&A Session

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