



INTRODUCTION

Edith Ackermann, a psychologist and educator, came up with the idea of the 4 forces of development after working with **Jean Piaget**.

Her theory is a big part of holistic education, which aims to develop people in a well-rounded way.

Holistic education is all about growing as a whole person, covering our emotions, thinking, bodies, and how we connect with others. It's not just about learning facts and figures; it's about being creative, thinking critically, and developing strong emotional skills.

THE 4 FORCES OF DEVELOPMENT

A THEORY BY ACKERMANN

1 BEING ME

Being Me refers to the process of developing one's identity and self-expression. It's the force that drives us to discover who we truly are, understanding our abilities, emotions, and our place in the world. This force is intrinsically linked to self-awareness and self-confidence.

To develop this strength, activities are promoted that encourage self-reflection, cultivating a positive self-esteem, and recognizing one's own abilities. Through these actions, each individual can build a strong and authentic identity.

2 US

Us refers to the development of interpersonal relationships and the understanding that we are part of a collective. This force drives collaboration, empathy, and effective communication, essential for teamwork and building communities.

Valuing "Us" means focusing on group dynamics, collaborative projects, and practices that encourage teamwork and the construction of collective knowledge.

3 THE WORLD

The World refers to our interaction with the environment around us and the understanding of natural and social systems. It's the force that connects us to the external world, allowing us to learn about nature, society, and our role within it.

This dimension is explored through activities that connect students with the real world, such as environmental projects and discussions about social and global issues.

4 HUMAN CREATIONS

Human Creations refers to our ability to create and innovate. It's the force that drives invention, art, technology, and everything we build to shape our world and culture.

This force is developed by encouraging creative expression, innovative thinking, and the ability of students to design and build new ideas and solutions.

By exploring the four forces of development we are invited to reflect on how these dimensions can be integrated into our daily classroom practice.

These forces provide opportunities for students to gain knowledge and develop the skills needed to thrive in the world.

In what ways do your teaching practices encourage the development of students' identity, interpersonal relationships, understanding of the world, and creativity?

How can you adapt your strategies to ensure that every student has the opportunity to explore all dimensions of development?

Adapted from: THE WHOLE CHILD: Ackermann's 4 Natural Forces of Development. YouTube, 30 Oct. 2020. Available at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uHBQbEP23kY>. Accessed: 20 Aug. 2024.