

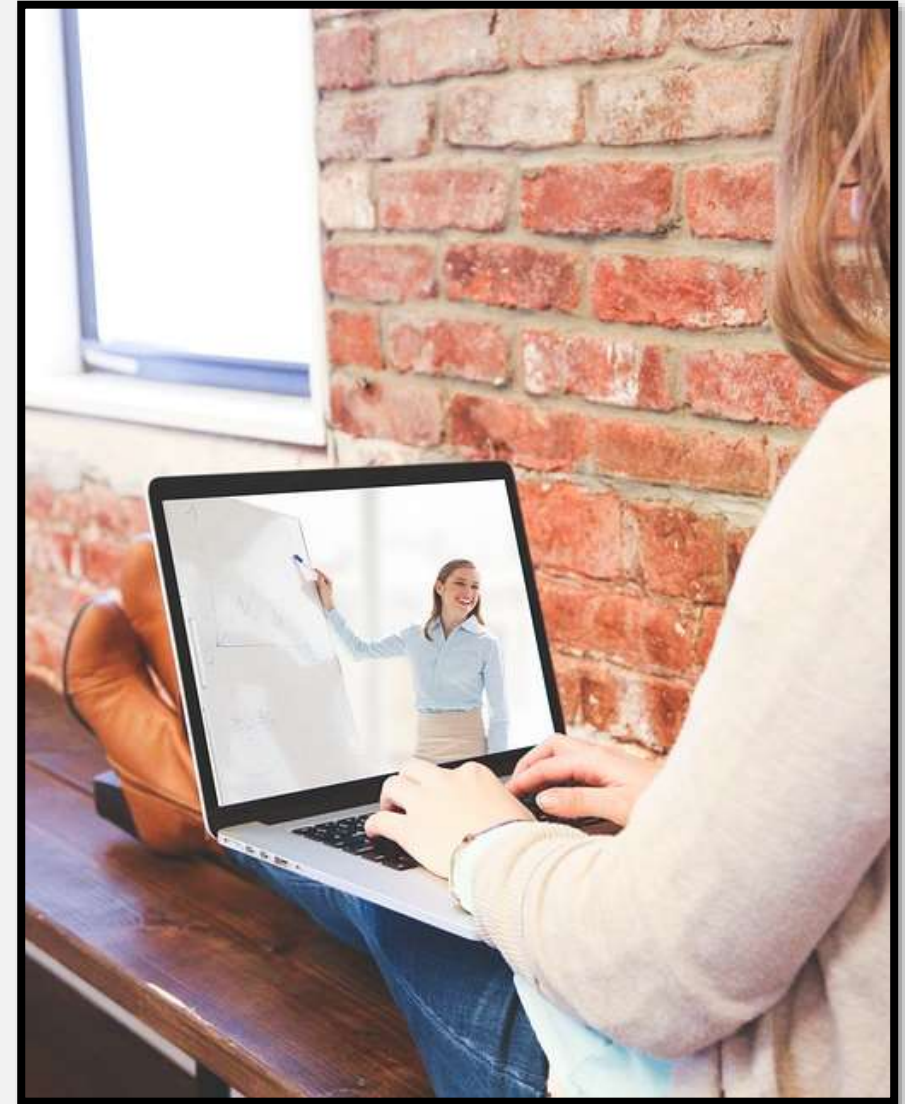
# Think Better, Act Better: An Approach to Global Citizenship

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8th International English Online Conference

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# Plenary Objectives

## Think Better, Act Better: An Approach to Global Citizenship

1. Discuss the forces that shape our attitudes and behavior toward other people (e.g., news and social media).
2. Explain ways in which teachers can help learners analyze information that can lead to better and healthier attitudes and actions in our local and global communities.

# Special Guest Panel



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1. What examples of poor critical thinking come up in everyday life?
2. In what ways are the points mentioned in the plenary relevant to your own social and teaching context?
3. What instructional ideas and tips have you implemented in your classroom to teach critical thinking that could be applied in almost any learning environment?

# The Invisible Gorilla

- “Learning how everyday illusions work . . . will help you notice and avoid being victimized by them in the future (attention, perception, reasoning, memory, cause, knowledge, and confidence).”
- “You’ll be wary of thinking you know more about a topic than you really do.”
- “You can make better decisions, and maybe even live a better life, if you do your best to look for the invisible gorillas in the world around you . . . “

# Investigating How People Determine the Credibility of Online Information

- Wineburg, S., & McGrew, S. (2016). Evaluating Information: The Cornerstone of Civic Online Reasoning.
- "Many assume that because young people are fluent in social media they are equally savvy about what they find there. Our work shows the opposite."
- "Young people often can't distinguish the difference between well-established groups and fringe sources."
- "Overall, young people's ability to reason about the information on the Internet can be summed up in one word: bleak."

# Investigating How People Determine the Credibility of Online Information

Wineburg, S., & McGrew, S. (2017). Lateral reading: Reading less and learning more when evaluating digital information.

## Taking bearings and lateral reading.

“Only two of the ten historians adroitly evaluated digital information. Their colleagues were often indistinguishable from college students in their meandering searches and general befuddlement. Both groups often fell prey to the same digital ruses. Considering our participants’ intellectual caliber, we are left to ask: What is it about the Internet that bedevils intelligent people? Why are they often no wiser after reviewing a website than before? What did fact checkers do that allowed them to quickly and accurately discern the trustworthiness of information? How is it that they often spent less time on a website but ended up learning more?”

# NEWS



**“9 out of 10 Americans don't fact-check information they read on social media - American adults spread fake news because they place a lot of trust in their social media friends and acquaintances.”**

# Dangers of Faulty, Incomplete, and Distorted Information

- It can engender biases and faulty reasoning based on questionable evidence.
- These beliefs can then lead toward negative attitudes and actions toward others in our families, local communities, and our global neighbors.





# Main Points for Educating Students

1. Recognize your role of empowering students to greater critical thinking and excellence.
2. Become aware of how unaware we are about the world around us.
3. Understand the nature of logical fallacies, heuristics, and thinking errors that can lead to distorted attitudes and positions.
4. Apply careful scrutiny to any online source.
5. Develop the skills to analyze and fact-check online information.
6. Have the courage alter your current opinions and follow your convictions.
7. Show learners the importance of soft skills in engaging with others.

# 1. Recognize Your Role as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Educator

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- Move away from information-based learning where students are simply fed information.

# LEARNING

“True wisdom is knowing that you know nothing.”

– *Socrates, Greek Philosopher*



“The best teachers are those who show you where to look but don’t tell you what to see.”



A good teacher is one who makes himself (herself) progressively unnecessary. –Thomas Carruthers

## 2. Understand the Illusion of Knowledge and Confidence

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Realize that I could be wrong about so many things and not even know it.

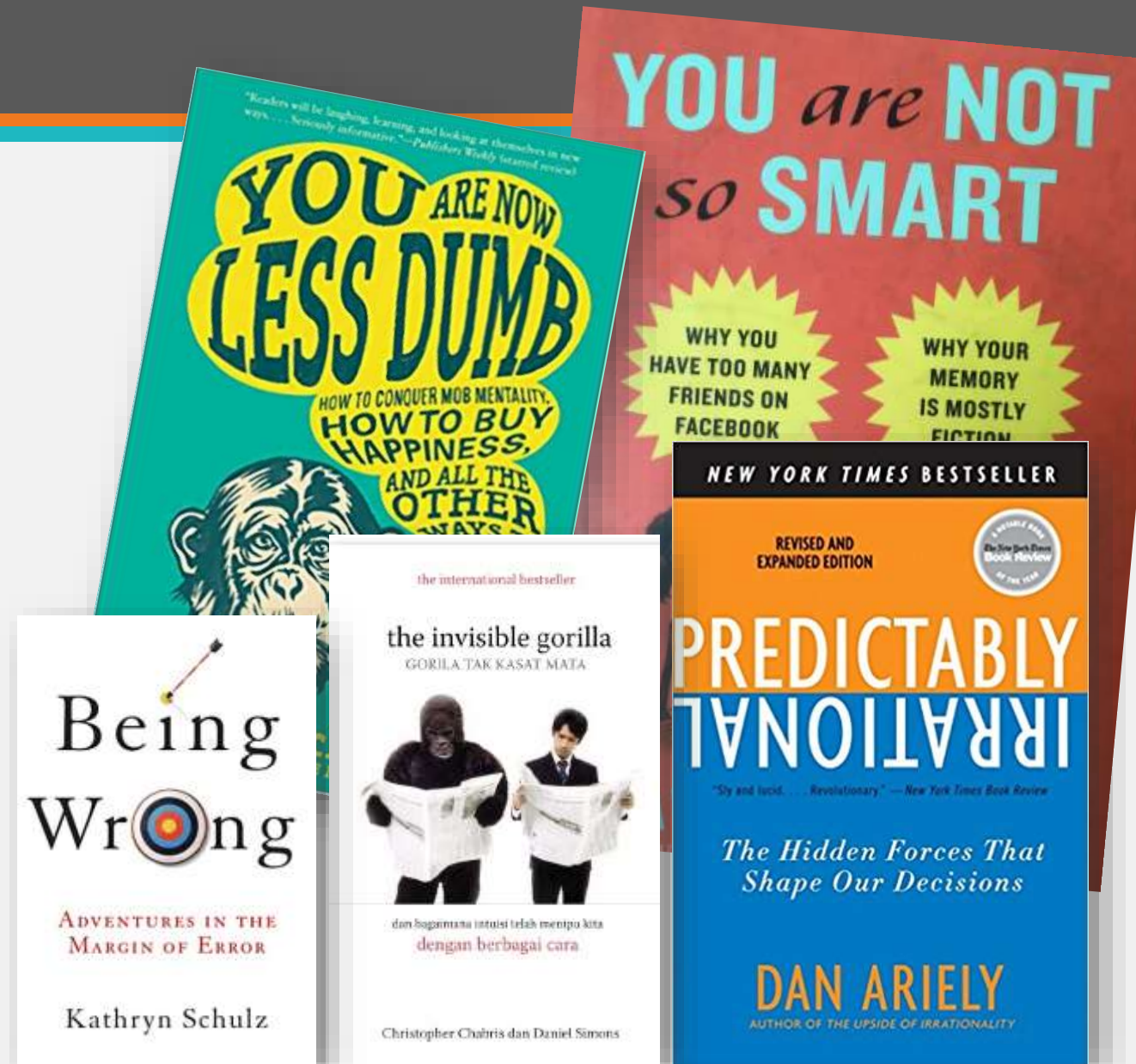
# 3. Understand and Dismantle Faulty Reasoning

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- We are so unaware of the faulty reasoning that influences our thoughts and actions.

# 3. Understand and Dismantle Faulty Reasoning

- “**The misconception:** You are a rational, logical being who sees the world as it really is.”
- “**The truth:** You are as deluded as the rest of us, but that’s OK because being deluded is part of being human.”



# Confirmation Bias

- **The Mistaken Belief:** Our conclusions are the result of a careful examination of the data.
- **The Reality:** We tend to seek out information that proves our existing beliefs and ignore any evidence to the contrary.





# Logical Fallacies and Heuristics

## The Common Belief Fallacy

Strawman

Availability Heuristic

Texas Sharpshooter

Stereotypes

Gaslighting

Groupthink

False Authority

Non Sequitur

Slippery Slope

"The eye sees only what the mind is prepared to comprehend."

- *Henri Bergson, French philosopher*

# Resources

[youarenotsmart.com](http://youarenotsmart.com)



# 4. Apply Careful Scrutiny of any Online Source

- Who is the author and what are his/her/their credentials and affiliation? (Be skeptical of any claim.)
- What is the author's goal or agenda? Is there any obvious bias? Who funded the research study?
- Are the claims the author makes measurable?
- Has the information been adjudicated by independent sources?

Wineburg, S., & McGrew, S. (2017). Lateral reading: Reading less and learning more when evaluating digital information.

# 5. Use Online Fact-Checking Services Judiciously

- Google Scholar
- PolitiFact.org
- Google Fact Check Tool - <https://toolbox.google.com/factcheck/>
- Factcheck.org
- Snopes.com

The greatest enemies against rational thinking are arrogance and pride.

Practice click restraint.

# 6. Have the Courage to Alter your Opinions and Follow Your Convictions

- The fear of losing human connection, respect, and dignity among family, colleagues, and friends pushes people into silence on issues that matter.



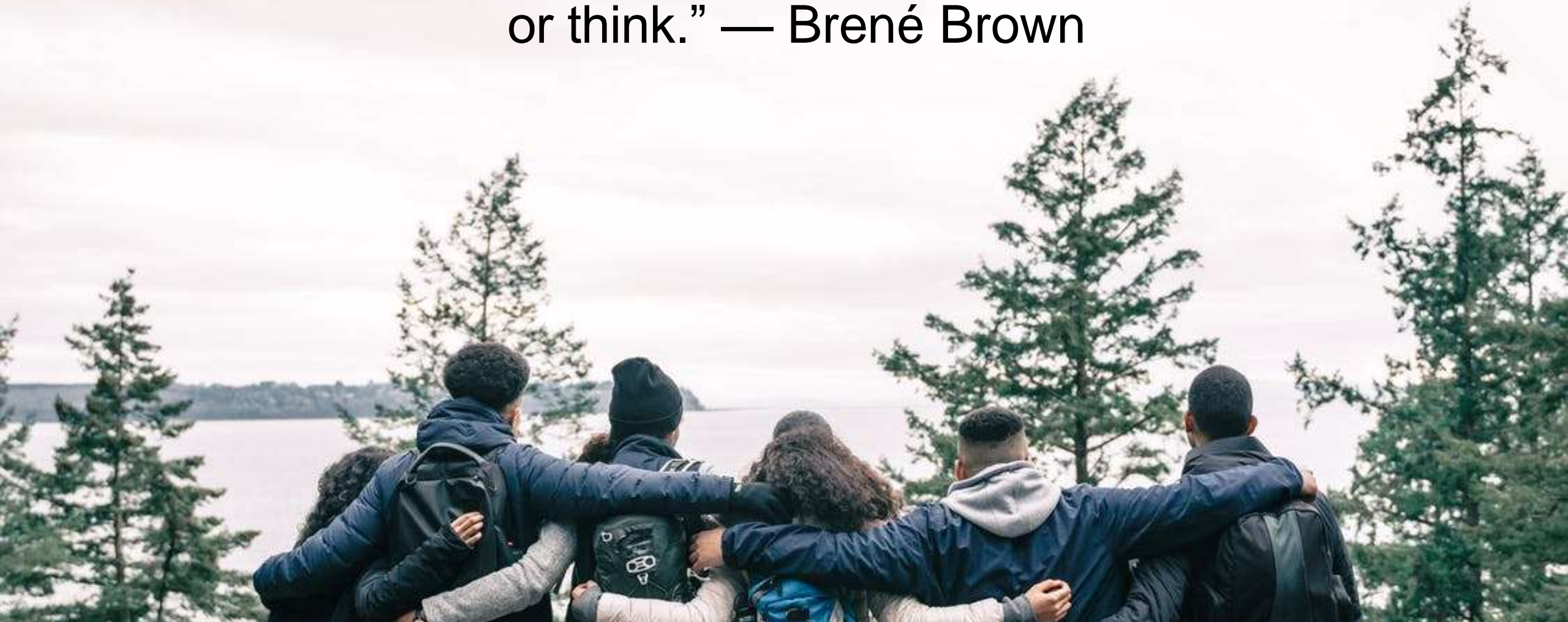
“A comfort zone is the most dangerous area anyone can stay in. It is a place of no growth and no challenges.”

– *Brian Cagneey*, Author



# FITTING IN VERSES BELONGING

“Vulnerability is about showing up and being seen. It’s tough to do that when we’re terrified about what people might see or think.” — Brené Brown



# 7. Show Learners the Importance of Soft Skills in Engaging with Others.

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1. Listen to understand, not to reply.
2. Validate the concerns of others.
3. Be the change that you want to see in others.



# GROWTH

“A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions.”

— *Oliver Wendell Holmes*



# Main Points

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