Welcome to **ATTACK!** a two-page occasional publication. Most of **ATTACK!** will be concerned with the holistic curriculum which, if acted on, is a fundamental way to undermine the present undemocratic education system. Don't be discouraged if opportunities to teach holistically are limited, do your best, be a guardian, and act as a witness to this culturally significant and inspiring way of teaching and learning. **ATTACK!** is a partner to
https://networkonnet.wordpress.com

Attack! 98 I went to a wonderful course on future-focused schools

The brochure promised us a 'quick romp into the world of exponential technologies and the global changing landscape', also a 'mix of deep dives and interaction with peers'. A serious course on education beckoned.

And there was to be a lot of wisdom: Passion must be real, the brochure said, 'it can't be faked, focus isn't myopic, drive is related to focus, and is connected with passion.' This sounds like advice with wide application.

All with a cautionary note: it was acknowledged that some days of being a principal will be darker than others and that resiliency was needed. Thus was provided a movingly expressed contrast of joy and hurt, even ecstasy and agony.

She bounded on to the stage glittering with posters and technology. What a vibrant person.

And she began.

Socratic insight expressed in down-to-earth English:

A growth mind-frame, she said, means, having a positive and proactive stance towards your personal growth and working relentlessly to achieve and to grow.

That put a lot of things in perspective for me.

An inquiring mind-frame, she said, is one that is continually curious, reflective and aware of the impact on others. Those concerned should listen with empathy and be prepared to change based on feedback.

She's going to be heartened by mine.

And then a reference to an 'outwards' mind-frame – something I hadn't considered before – up to then I had always considered a mind-frame an 'inwards' component but my understanding of human behaviour was about to be significantly expanded.

Worth the many dollars attendance fee in itself.

She said the outwards mind-frame has the most profound effect on an individual's capacity to collaborate. (Mmmmm, I pondered – that might explain some things happening back at school. Memo to self: outwards mind-frame.)

Outwards mind-frame was explained as global in nature, moving away from silos.

Her next set of ideas was about making work and learning personalised:

People entering the workforce, she said, have more experience in a 'customised life'. The *Internet of Me* takes the pervasiveness of technology and crafts it to meet *my* needs. Sensors monitor behaviour in real time and *bots* alter experiences.

Immediate response is expected, she said, 'we want it and we want it now!' We need to embrace design thinking with rapid cycles of prototyping and feedback that is ongoing. (Memo to self: I must stop using that uncool word 'continuing'.)

(This immediate response idea might take a bit of explaining to the board, perhaps I should wait for the next rise in milk powder, but I'm sure the two teachers will be on to it in a flash.)

And you can't say she wasn't practical – here she was on the curriculum:

Update curriculum in real time in order to keep up with the pace of change. This means constantly creating and interpreting curriculum based on feedback loops from students, scanning the environment and spotting signals early. Exponential change starts off looking incremental but as it doubles … woosh.

That 'woosh' has energised me – I'm in.

Perhaps, she is referring to something like reading recovery.

Feedback loops are clearly more vital and enhancing than just plain old feedback. (I wonder if the review office is up with the play on this one.)

My twitter feed, she said, has been alive with people who are disrupting education, who are not (and will not be irrelevant). I am sensing a sea change in education in New Zealand and particularly in Christchurch.

Christchurch! Wow! … we are rigid with attention …

She then did something of a feedback loop herself to define certain key trends that would deconstruct the prevailing industrial model of education.

I am calling it the wisdom of 'she':

Adaptive: In a complex, non-linear, and dynamical world many of the issues facing us have no solution and sometimes the problem itself is unknown, let alone the solution. (This is deep and will have them spinning back on the farm but I'm nearly there.)

Agentic: The power is with the people. (Ha-Ha – this will be news for the review office.)

Collaborative: Requires an outwards mind-set and sense of curiosity. (There's that outwards mind-set again. Can't wait to get back to school to try it out.)

Open: Teacher practice is being deprivatised. (All is clear now, teaching and learning in full view, with learning results immediately online, will act as a considerable incentive for children in their learning and teachers in their teaching – she is on to something here.)

Connected: Educators are linking with others globally, sharing ideas, and undertaking global projects. (To think that Waikuku could be out there mixing it with the world.)

She then moved smoothly to strategic thinking.

Strategic planning is not enough, she said, we must move to strategic thinking.

Is that where I went wrong?

Reality: Internally, micro and macro.

Options: What might happen?

Choices/Preferences: What are our preferred choices? What will we do?

Action: How will we do it?

That's the one. No problem could remain resistant to such a process.

To illustrate the power of strategic planning she turned epigrammatically Wildean:

Stand-alone strategic events **…** to a dynamic strategic process of ongoing conversation and action

Done and dusted … to iterative, always in beta

Doing strategy … to being strategic (I see this as the big one.)

A list of targets … to big ideas cascading to clear actions

Full of jargon … to accessible language for users and stakeholders (Jargon, especially of the neoliberal variety, utterly absent.)

Verbal diarrhoea … to key ideas, use of video and visuals. (This is literature.)

I'm impatient to get this on display in the staffroom: I envisage hours of stimulating discussion over the tea cups.

Our philosopher guide finished the course with a dissection of the concept of collaboration:

Day-to-day Collaboration: Intentional displays of ways of working together, regular connection to these displays, and fail-safe, fail-fast feedback loops are just some ways of creating meaningful day-to-day collaboration. (That's cleared that one up.)

Organisational Collaboration: Learning connectedness intentionally supports teams to develop flow in learning, with specialist teachers still having a deep understanding of their subjects, but also connecting to the different lenses of other specialists and growing transversal skills in themselves and their students. (Nailed it.)

Associate Industry Collaboration: This extends thinking beyond a school to other schools and educational places of learning.

Christchurch, she adds, is a hotbed for collaboration.

I'm overcome with the wonderfulness of the experience. Some school organisation courses I have been to are clearly a cobbling together of trendy ideas from a range of self-styled gurus, daring in sweep, but expressed in a language unknown to most practitioners, laden with jargon and strange expressions that provide plenty of intrigue but precious little enlightenment.

School organisation advice I have come to appreciate should grow from the characteristics of the curriculum area being considered not float unattached on the hot air produced. This course was well and truly grounded. What could be more so than: The *Internet of Me* takes the pervasiveness of technology and crafts it to meet *my* needs. Sensors monitor behaviour in real time and *bots* alter experiences.

Well, there you have it, the Mecca for future-focused schools is Christchurch and outwards mind-frame is its name. Never has the essence of education been expressed so clearly, so jargon-free, and been dived into so deeply.