

# BUILDING MINDS

## Designing Learning Spaces for Connection & Coherence

Dr. Parul Minhas



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## DR PARUL MINHAS

*Director of Research & Innovation at  
Education Design International (EDI)*



**Drawing on Expertise from 59 Countries**



# EDI's Most Recent Publications:

Ideas Backed By Research



**A NEW Language of  
School Design**  
Prakash Nair,  
Dr. Parul Minhas



**Building Minds**  
Dr. Parul Minhas  
Prakash Nair  
Kevin Bartlett



*The journey of creating  
change often starts with something  
deeply personal.....*







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# THRIVING HEALTH

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# THRIVING HEALTH



# THRIVING HEALTH

PHYSICAL EMOTIONAL SPIRITUAL



HAPPINESS  
SUCCESS

RESILIENCE  
CONFIDENCE

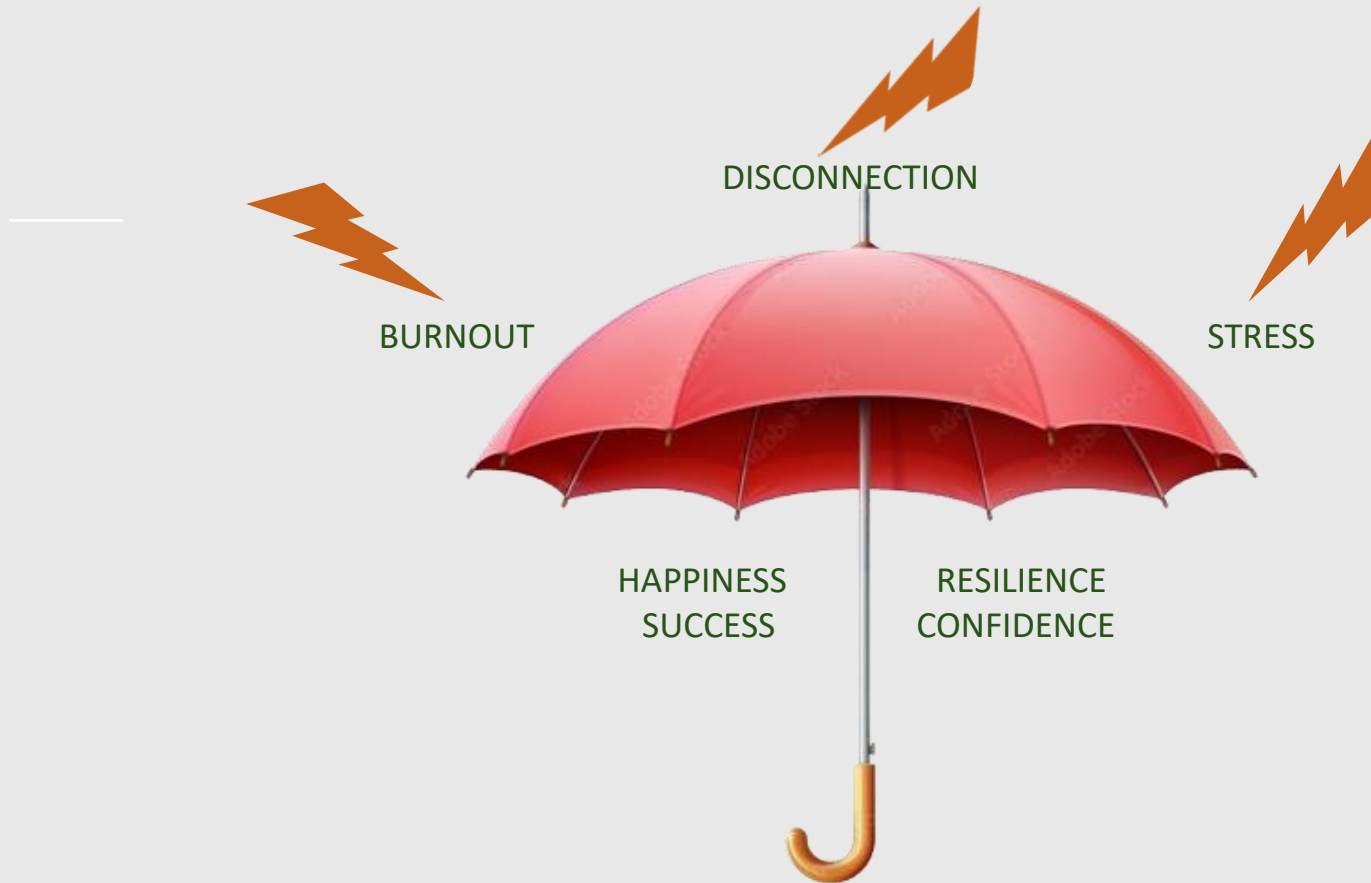


Cognitive Development  
Academic Success



Social-emotional Health  
Spiritual Health

# THRIVING HEALTH





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# **THRIVING HEALTH AS A FOUNDATION**

# THRIVING HEALTH

**THE CATCH:** YOU CAN'T BUILD THE THRIVING HEALTH UMBRELLA FOR CHILDREN





# THRIVING HEALTH

BASIC PSYCHOLOGICAL NEEDS



The slide features a light gray background with decorative white line art of leaves in the corners. The top-left and top-right corners each contain a cluster of several elongated, pointed leaves. The bottom-left and bottom-right corners each contain a single, larger, heart-shaped leaf with internal vein details. The central text is in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

# SELF DETERMINATION THEORY

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# SELF DETERMINATION THEORY

AUTONOMY

RELATEDNESS

COMPETENCE





# AUTONOMY





# RELATEDNESS







# COMPETENCE





# SELF DETERMINATION THEORY

AUTONOMY

COMPETENCE

RELATEDNESS



# AUTONOMY

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WHAT, HOW, WHEN & WHERE





# AUTONOMY

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FOSTERING RESPONSIBILITY

SELF AWARENESS

SELF REGULATION



The image features a light gray background with decorative white line art of leaves and branches in the corners. The top-left and top-right corners each have a branch with several oval leaves. The bottom-left and bottom-right corners each have a heart-shaped leaf divided into four quadrants by a cross, with a small branch and two leaves extending from the bottom. Centered in the middle is the text "CREATING SPACE AND TIME" in a large, bold, black sans-serif font. Below this text is a short horizontal line, followed by the text "FOR LEARNING INDEPENDENCE" in a smaller, all-caps, gray sans-serif font.

# CREATING SPACE AND TIME

FOR LEARNING INDEPENDENCE

















QUIET CORNERS FOR REFLECTION





COLLABORATIVE AREAS





OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENTS





HANDS-ON LEARNING



The image features a light gray background with stylized white line art of leaves and branches. On the left side, there is a cluster of several elongated, pointed leaves at the top, and a single heart-shaped leaf with internal vein details below it. On the right side, there is a similar cluster of elongated leaves at the top, and a heart-shaped leaf with internal vein details below it. The central text is positioned between these two clusters.

# MOVEMENT MATTERS

SITTING IS THE NEW SMOKING

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# SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

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THE FUTURE OF EDUCATION





















# ***What does all this mean for the design of library spaces?***





# Libraries—The Original Spaces for Self-Directed Learning



# My savior during the difficult times....

"My Place for Self-Discovery"







Why Libraries are here to stay?





# **Neuroscience Strategies for Designing Libraries for Thriving Health**

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# Core Neuroscience Strategies for Library Design

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**1. Biophilic  
Design**

**2. Sensory  
Harmony**

**3. Movement  
& Spatial  
Diversity**

**4. Cognitive  
Restorative  
Spaces**





## ***1. Biophilic Design—Connecting Libraries to Nature***





## 2. Sensory Harmony—Calming the Nervous System





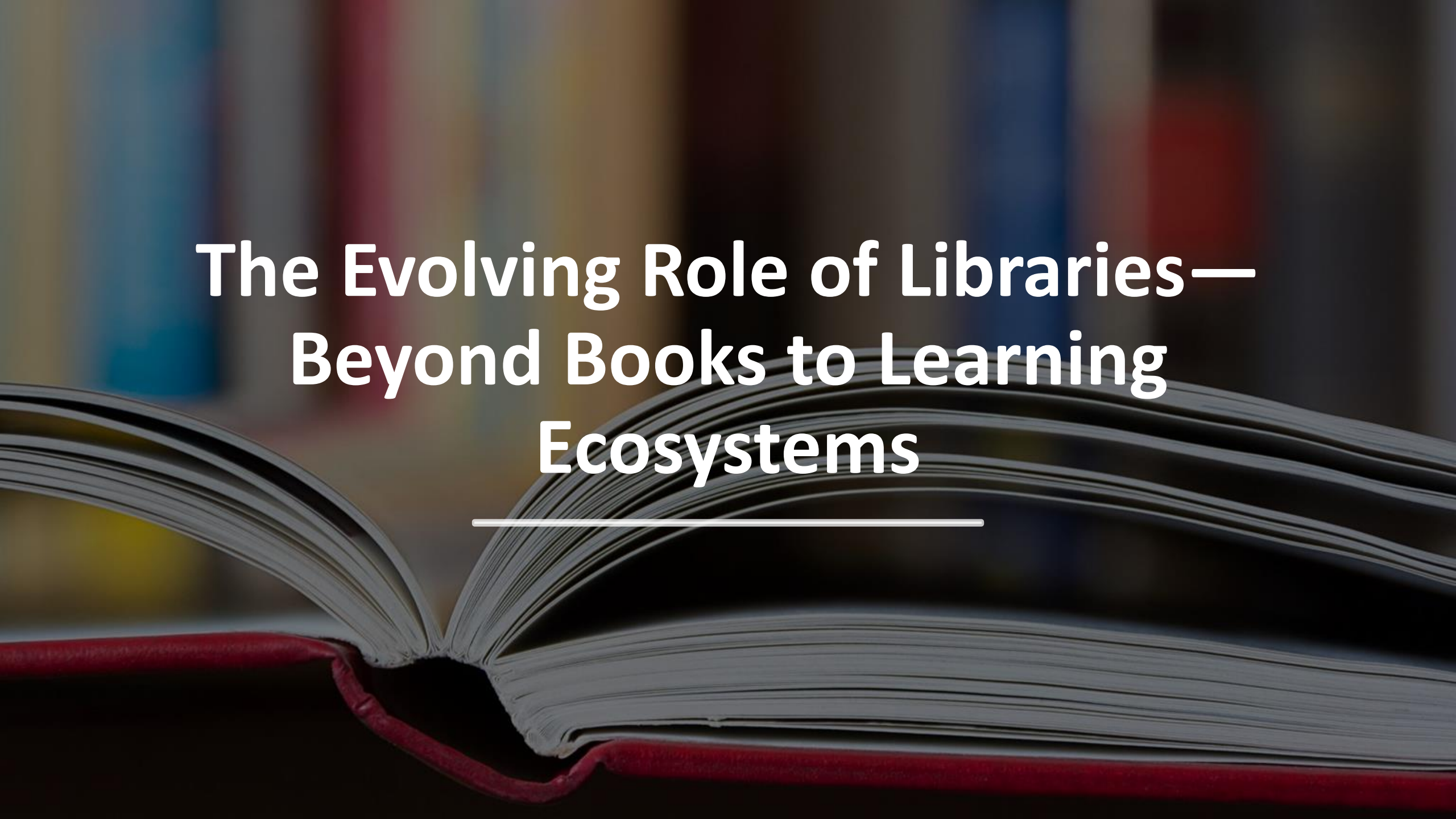
### 3. Movement & Spatial Diversity





#### 4. Cognitive Restorative Spaces





# The Evolving Role of Libraries— Beyond Books to Learning Ecosystems

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**Tech-Free Zones for  
Deep Thinking**

**Adaptive & Intuitive  
Learning Layouts**

**Seamless Indoor-  
Outdoor Learning  
Spaces**

**Libraries as Hands-  
On Knowledge Labs**

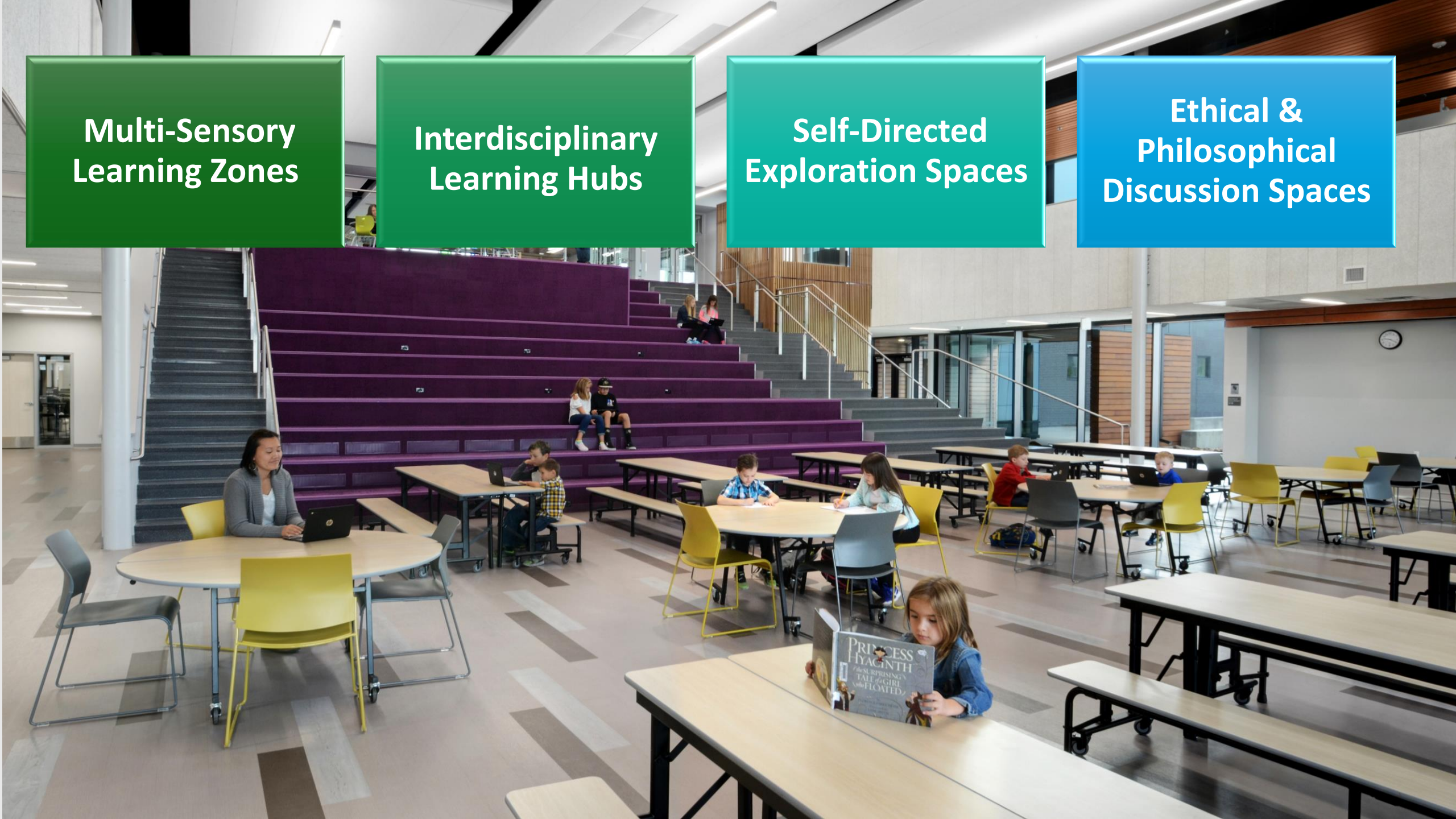


**Multi-Sensory  
Learning Zones**

**Interdisciplinary  
Learning Hubs**

**Self-Directed  
Exploration Spaces**

**Ethical &  
Philosophical  
Discussion Spaces**







**“BEGIN WITH THE  
END IN MIND.”**

**- STEPHEN R. COVEY**



FranklinCovey  
LIFE-CHANGING LEADERSHIP TRAINING



# THRIVING HEALTH

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THOUGHTFUL DESIGN  
STRONG RELATIONSHIPS  
GENUINE SUPPORT





# THRIVING HEALTH

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THOUGHTFUL DESIGN  
STRONG RELATIONSHIPS  
GENUINE SUPPORT



**ALL IS WELL**

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**Building Minds: Designing Learning Spaces for Connection & Coherence** advocates for a transformative approach to education, emphasizing environments that are not merely places of learning but vibrant spaces that foster connection and engagement. Each chapter offers practical solutions grounded in interdisciplinary research to guide educators, architects, and policymakers in creating more effective, humane, and transformative learning environments.

## AUTHORS



**Dr. Parul Minhas** is the Director of Research and Digital Innovation at Education Design International (EDI). She stands out for her pioneering work in the design of learning environments that actively promote student health and well-being. Parul is the creative force behind the design of various EDI APPS that focus on educational excellence. She collaborates with Prakash Nair on transformative research in school design. Her groundbreaking work and keynote presentations on neuroarchitecture and biophilic design have garnered worldwide attention.



**Prakash Nair, AIA** is a futurist, a visionary architect and the Founding President & CEO of Education Design International, a company with consultations in 58 countries on six continents. He is the recipient of many international awards including the A4LE MacConnell Award, the highest honor worldwide for school design. He has written extensively in leading international journals and is the author of three books including the landmark publication "Blueprint for Tomorrow: Redesigning Schools for Student-Centered Learning" published by Harvard Education Press.



**Kevin Bartlett** is the Founding Director of the Common Ground Collaborative and Director of Education at EDI. He has held leadership positions in the UK, Tanzania, Namibia, Austria, and Belgium, where he was most recently Director of the International School of Brussels from 2001-2015. Kevin is a regular author of articles on a range of topics and a keynote/workshop leader at multiple international and national conferences. He is a writer and trainer in curriculum design and leadership for learning for the Principals' Training Center. As a curriculum designer, he initiated and led the IB Primary Years Programme.



The Association for Learning Environments is a professional non-profit association whose sole mission is improving the places where children learn.

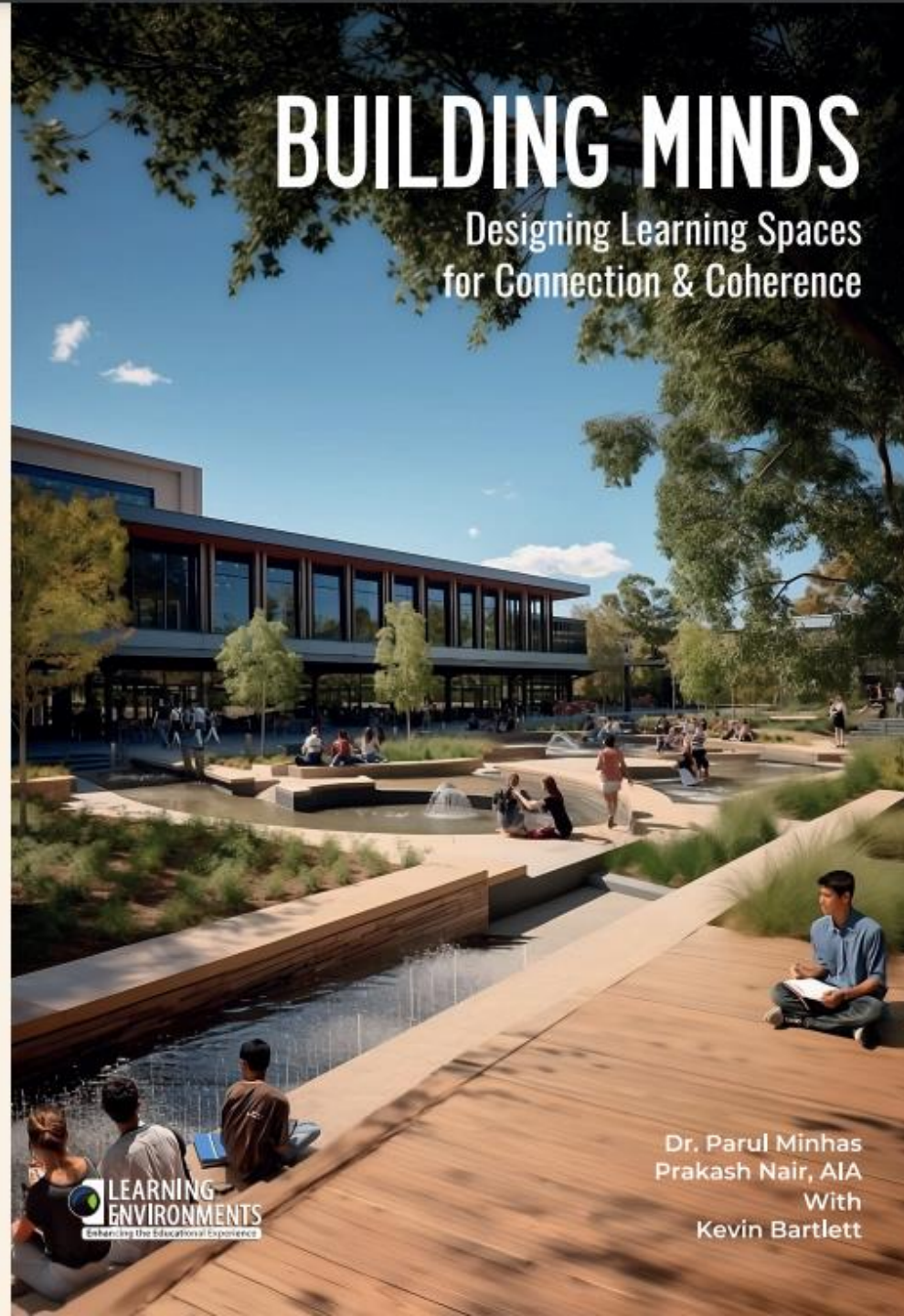


## BUILDING MINDS

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# BUILDING MINDS

Designing Learning Spaces  
for Connection & Coherence



Dr. Parul Minhas  
Prakash Nair, AIA  
With  
Kevin Bartlett

Thank You!



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