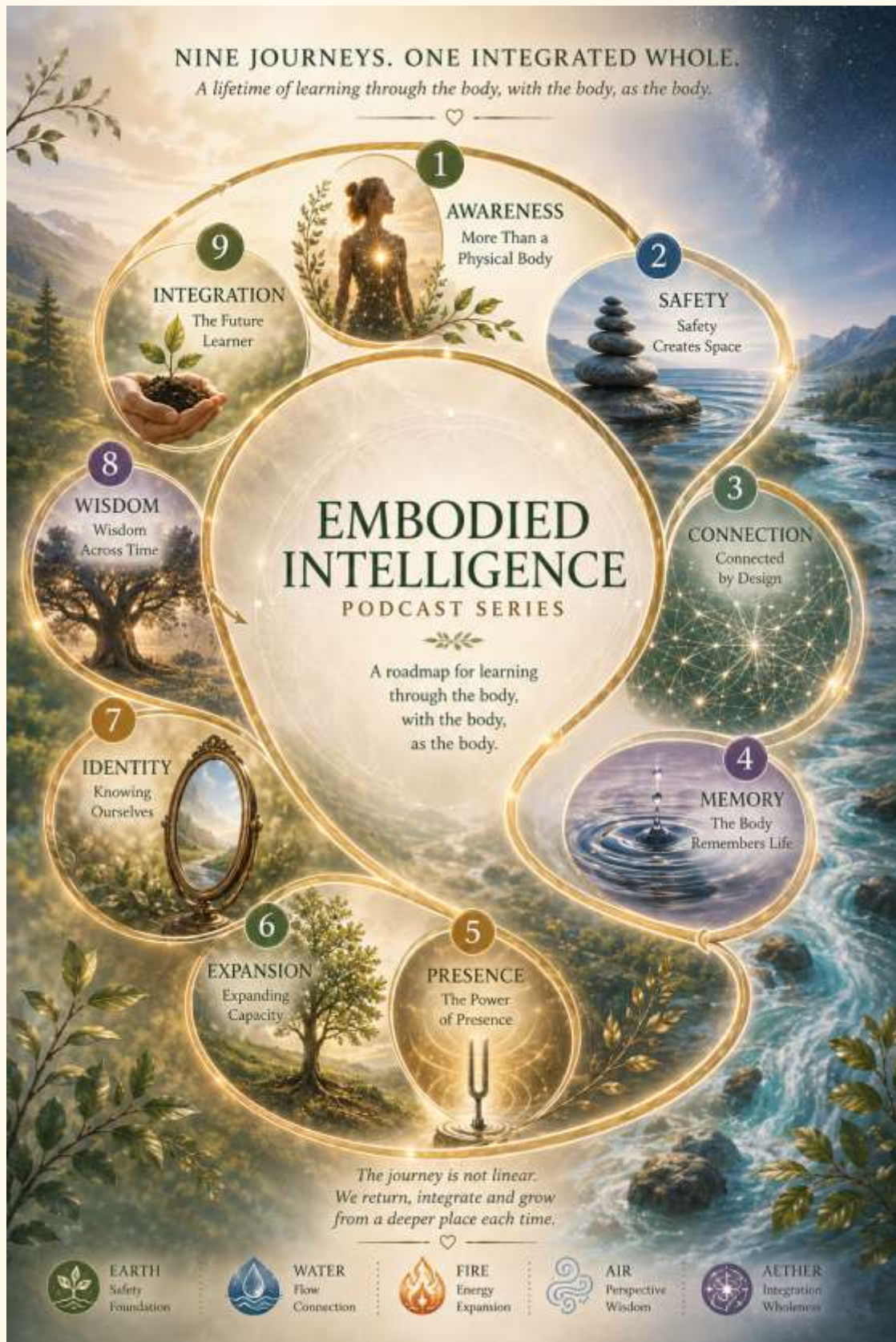


With Teresa's weekly podcast '[All Learning Reimagined](#)' on BBSRadio
6am Saturday AEST or 3pm Friday CT



Expanding Capacity

Episode 6 – Embodied Intelligence Series

Have you ever looked back at something that once felt overwhelming and wondered why it seems so much easier now?

Perhaps it was speaking in front of a group, driving a car, starting a new job or becoming a parent. Sometimes it is learning a new skill. At the time, it may have felt uncomfortable, uncertain or even impossible and yet over time something changed. The challenge may have remained the same however your capacity to meet it grew.

This is one of the most fascinating aspects of being human. We are not fixed as we can adapt, learn and expand. For many of us, growth has been associated with effort; to push harder, work more, try harder and keep going. Yet nature offers a different perspective. A seed does not force itself into becoming a tree. A river does not force its way to the ocean. Growth unfolds through stages, seasons, cycles. In nature there are periods of rest and periods of expansion.

The body follows similar principles. When we encounter something new, **the nervous system assesses whether it feels safe**. If the challenge feels too large, we may experience overwhelm. If the challenge feels too small, we may experience boredom and yet somewhere between the two lies a powerful space. A place where growth becomes possible. A place where we stretch beyond what feels familiar without moving so far that we lose our sense of safety. This is often where expansion occurs. It is amazing to observe and magnificent to consciously experience.

Many people assume that expansion means becoming more; more successful, more productive, more accomplished. It is what our society has programmed many of us to believe. This message is immersed in media and many cultures. When we slow down, remove weapons of mass distraction and reflect a perspective arises. Perhaps there is another way to view expansion.

What if expansion is about developing the capacity to express more of who you already are, not becoming someone else?

Consider a small cup being filled with water. Eventually it overflows simply because the container has reached its current capacity. Now imagine a larger vessel where the same amount of water can be held with ease. Life often works in a similar way. Sometimes opportunities arrive that feel larger than our current capacity.

- ✓ A new responsibility.
- ✓ A leadership role.
- ✓ A difficult conversation.
- ✓ A creative project.
- ✓ Greater visibility.
- ✓ A new stage of life.

The opportunity itself may not be the problem. **The invitation may be to expand the container in order to gradually build our capacity to hold what is being offered.** This perspective can change how we view learning as children are continually expanding capacity like: learning new

skills, building confidence, developing emotional awareness, navigating relationships. Adults are doing exactly the same thing. The difference is that many adults believe they should already know how. Yet learning does not stop when formal education ends as growth remains a lifelong process.

Nature reminds us of this constantly. Trees expand ring by ring. Muscles strengthen through adaptation. Neural pathways develop through repetition. Rivers slowly carve valleys over time. **Growth rarely happens overnight...it unfolds naturally through experience.**

Perhaps one of the most valuable things we can learn is how to recognise the difference between expansion and overwhelm. Expansion often feels like curiosity mixed with uncertainty, excitement mixed with challenge or stretching beyond what is familiar. Whereas overwhelm often feels like contraction, shutdown, exhaustion or even loss of connection. Have you experienced either?

The wisdom lies in recognising the difference. This is relevant to all settings, not just in education. Not every challenge requires pushing harder and alternatively sometimes growth is supported by slowing down.

Pausing.

Integrating.

Creating safety.

Then taking the next step and then another.

Spaced learning is essential so why do many learning environments have rigid timetables which rarely allow for this integration time and space. Besides creating space to rest and integrate what else can we do to experience expansion without overwhelm?

There is another simple practice that many people find helpful: **speaking aloud.**

Throughout history people have used spoken words, stories, songs, declarations and prayers to influence how they feel and respond. When we hear our own voice, something interesting happens; the body and nervous system recognises it. It feels safe because it is your home frequency. Speaking out loud to yourself is effective.

We are receiving information from outside ourselves as well as participating in the experience. Perhaps one of the most powerful things we can say is:

"I am safe to grow."

"I am safe to expand."

"I can hold more of myself."

"I can express my gifts with confidence."

Try this and observe how it feels in your body. Do this while gently moving to immerse the feeling in your fascia. Your whole body is part of this process – we are not separate.

Mankind cannot force change with words. **These statements are an invitation, a reminder that a signal to the body that growth does not have to be accompanied by fear.** Perhaps this is the deeper lesson of expansion by gradually developing the capacity to embody more of who we already are. Just like every tree was once a seed, every learner was once a beginner and every skill was once unfamiliar. Every stage of growth begins with a single step beyond what feels known.

Expansion is a lifelong unfolding, not a destination and perhaps the greatest gift we can offer ourselves is the safety, patience and compassion required to grow at the pace of life itself. Try this micro practice and observe the difference.



Micro Practice

Expanding Through Your Own Voice

Stand comfortably and allow your knees to soften. Begin gently swaying from side to side or slowly twisting through your torso. Simply move in a way that feels natural without force.

As you move, speak aloud:

- ✓ I am safe to grow.
- ✓ I am safe to expand.
- ✓ I can hold more of myself.
- ✓ I can hold more of my gifts.
- ✓ I can express myself with confidence.
- ✓ I can move forward one step at a time.

Notice:

- Your breathing
- Your posture
- Your energy
- Your emotions
- Any shifts in sensation

The purpose is to create an experience of safety while exploring expansion. There is no need to convince yourself of anything.

Reflection Questions

- What challenges once felt overwhelming but now feel manageable?
- Where have I expanded over the past year?
- What currently feels just beyond my comfort zone?
- What helps me feel safe while growing?
- What might become possible if I trusted my capacity to expand?

Weekly Integration

At the end of each day ask 'How did I expand today?'

Perhaps you spoke up or tried something new. Perhaps you rested when you needed to or you asked for help.

Notice the small moments as expansion is often quieter than we expect.

Universal Law Connection

Evolution

Growth is woven throughout nature. Seeds become trees. Streams become rivers.

Learners become teachers. A question worth contemplating: What if expansion is not something we force? What if it is something we allow?

Cultivating self-trust. Nurturing wisdom. Inspiring contribution. Strengthening community.

I invite you to connect to a weekly 30-minute podcast, **'All Learning Reimagined'**.

<https://bbsradio.com/alllearningreimagined>

Discussions share wisdom enhanced by a short article with practical activities to assist with exploring, experiencing, expressing and living learning.



In-joy and gratitude!

Teresa

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