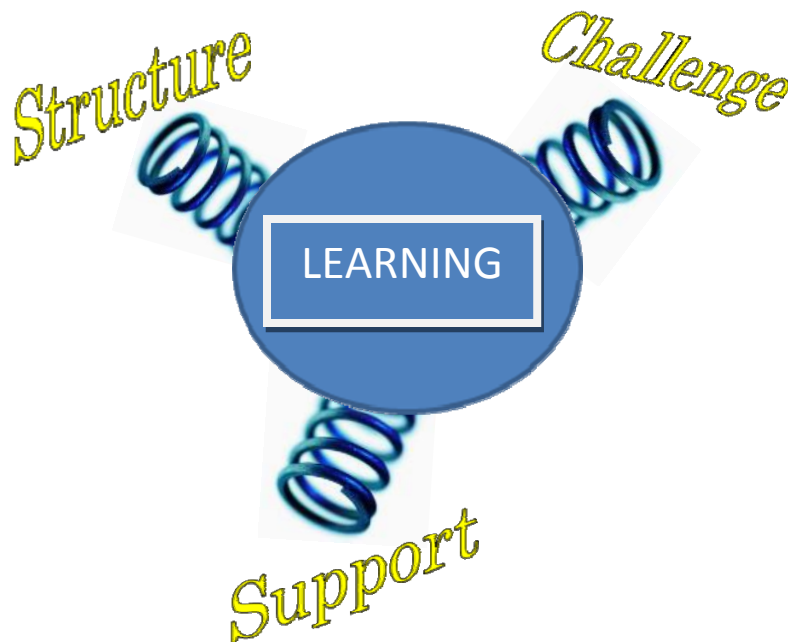


“To teach is to create a space in which obedience to truth is practiced.”<sup>1</sup>

### The Ultimate Learning Theory for Creating Space

For learning to take place, three factors must be held in healthy tension: “**support, structure, and challenge.**” If any one area of the three is weak in the learning environment, learning and healthy change will not likely take place. Likewise, if any one area is emphasized too much, learning will not occur. For example, when there is an overemphasis on structure, the learning climate can become inflexible and rigid, limiting creativity and reflection. If support is overly stressed, the climate can become smothering and enmeshed. And if challenge dominates, the learner can become performance-driven and/or discouraged.



**Structure** provides the physical and sequential organizing rationale of resources and relationships for the process of learning; including communication patterns, plans, dates, times, settings, criteria, and goals.

**Support** comprises the emotional and relational climate for learning; one that is non-threatening, guiding, hopeful, collaborative, forgiving, sustaining, and empowering.

**Challenge** involves the call and expectation to change in abilities and in habits of mind, and to grow and learn, through the meaningful engagement of authentic tasks of intrinsic value.

<sup>1</sup>Palmer, Parker J. 1993. *To know as we are known : Education as a spiritual journey*. San Francisco: Harper. Original edition, 1983. p.69.