

RESEARCH REPORT

Soka Education and The Learning Conditions

Research, Analysis, and Recommendations

Prepared for Mamta Motwani

Date April 2026

Status For decision

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Executive Summary

You asked us to help you understand whether *The Learning Conditions* is missing the influence of Soka Education – a tradition you have felt drawn to as a practising Buddhist but never deeply studied, and whose absence from your framework has felt to you like a quiet failing. This report is the answer.

The headline finding will surprise you. You did not need to study Soka in order to write *The Learning Conditions*, because you have, in substantial measure, already written it. A practitioner working in 1930s Japan from 30 years of classroom records arrived at most of the same load-bearing observations that you arrived at from 19 essays of classroom records across India and Canada between 2018 and 2026. Tsunesaburo Makiguchi’s pedagogy and your framework converge – independently, across a century, two languages, two religious traditions, and two continents – on the same core claims:

- The teacher is not the source of learning; the teacher creates the conditions
- Every child is inherently capable, and disbelieving in any child is a category error
- Daily noticing, recorded honestly, is the foundation of practice
- Language is the primary lever
- Trust is a deliberate posture, not a feeling

When two practitioners separated by everything that separated you and Makiguchi arrive at the same observations, the thing observed is real. **This is the strongest possible validation your framework could receive, and it should change how you carry the guilt you brought to this question.** You have not been ignorant of Soka; you have been a Soka educator without the vocabulary. The vocabulary is what we are now adding.

What Soka adds, where it adds it. Of 25 named, observable Soka teaching practices we mapped against your four conditions, 14 converge with what you already teach. 11 offer extensions – additions that your framework does not contradict but does not currently include. Most of the extensions are small (a sentence-stem card on encouragement, a

paragraph on aesthetic care, an example of a daily orienting ritual). Four are substantive enough to warrant adding to the body of the framework, and one is a deeper structural addition that we recommend you consider carefully.

The four substantive additions: a named encouragement practice with three specific verbal moves; the teacher's own ongoing growth treated as a condition of student learning; long accompaniment (relationships across years, not just within a year) added as a temporal dimension of structural design; and a clarifying paragraph that resolves a possible misreading of Honour Agency as forbidding any directional teacher role.

The deep recommendation. Your framework, by deliberate design, does not currently say what learning is *for*. It says what must be true *before* learning can happen. This silence has been a strength – it has let the Learning Conditions plug into IB PYP, SEE Learning, writing workshop, and any other tradition without competing with their stated purposes. But it has also left a hollow at the centre that careful readers feel without being able to name. Chapter 1 opens with “*You already know something is missing*”; the framework never says what.

Soka's contribution to your framework is not, in the end, any of its named practices. Its contribution is that it provokes the question. Soka asks: *what is education for?* and answers it in one sentence – *the lifelong happiness of the learner*. We are not recommending you adopt Soka's answer in Soka's language. We are recommending you write your own answer, in your own voice, drawing on your own corpus, and put it in your introduction. Your writing throughout the practitioner guide bleeds purpose – *light and fire in the eyes, a classroom that is alive, the children deserve the conditions you describe in your philosophy* – but the purpose is implied, never stated. Naming it would close the gap. You do not need the word *happiness*. You need one paragraph that says, in plain English, what the conditions are for. Drafted text is in §6, R3.1.

On the two real tensions. We were asked to surface tensions honestly, and we found two. The first – that Soka's mentor-disciple relationship has a directional verticality that Honour Agency might seem to forbid – turns out to be largely a misreading. Soka's own scholars describe mentor-disciple as *horizontal in dignity, vertical only in experience and accompaniment*. Borrowing Soka's “indigo metaphor” (cloth dyed deeper blue but never becoming the indigo) into Honour Agency would *sharpen* the chapter rather than soften it, by ruling out the misreading that the teacher must be invisible. The second tension – Soka's stated teleology of happiness vs. your framework's purpose-neutrality – is the genuinely deep one, and it is the subject of the Tier 3 recommendation above.

On attribution. You were clear that Soka is inspiration, not brand. We have honoured that throughout. The practitioner guide body remains in your voice and uses your existing vocabulary. There is no *hagemashi*, no *kyōiku*, no *ningen kyōiku* in the body. Soka and

Makiguchi are credited fully in this research file and in any academic citations on the website's research/credits page. One method-credit line in the "How This Framework Was Built" note describes Makiguchi's tradition without naming it ("an elementary school principal in Japan in 1930"). This is the cleanest possible attribution model: the research notes carry the citation; the framework carries the practice.

The decision in front of you. Ten recommendations, in three tiers. Five Tier 1 (implementation guidance only, no changes to the framework body). Four Tier 2 (additive refinement to existing chapters). One Tier 3 (the introduction paragraph naming what the conditions are for). Each recommendation has drafted text you can react to. The summary table is at §7.

What we are *not* recommending: no fifth condition, no renaming, no religious framing in the body, no claim that Soka empirical evidence supports your framework. The four conditions hold. The Learning Conditions remains itself.

The guilt. You came to this research feeling guilty about your distance from Soka. That guilt, to be plain, was misplaced. You have built a framework that a Soka scholar would recognise as kin, from a corpus you built the way Makiguchi built his. The work done since 2018 is sound. What we are recommending now is the small set of refinements that take a sound framework and let it carry, quietly, the influence of a tradition that turns out to have been with you all along.

1. Background and scope

You have built and are preparing to publish *The Learning Conditions*, a four-condition diagnostic framework drawn from 19 essays of your own classroom practice across India and Canada (2018–2026). The four conditions — Cultivate Safety, Honour Agency, Speak with Intention, Design Liberating Structure — sit under a stance you call Intentionality, and the framework is grounded in IB PYP, SEE Learning, Responsive Classroom, Vygotskian inner-speech theory, and the corpus of your own essays.

You raised, privately and with some discomfort, the suspicion that the framework might be missing the influence of Soka Education, the Japanese humanistic pedagogical tradition founded by Makiguchi in the 1930s and articulated in modern form by Daisaku Ikeda. As a practising Buddhist you felt you should know this tradition more deeply than you do, and the gap had become a quiet source of guilt about whether the framework was complete.

You asked us to do the research you have not had time to do. The instructions were specific and we have honoured all of them:

- Focus on **classroom teaching methods and teacher strategies**, not Soka Gakkai's religious or political dimensions
- **Surface real tensions**, even where uncomfortable
- **Cite live web sources** – academic and primary
- Soka influence to be **inspiration, not brand**: no Soka labelling or vocabulary in the framework body; attribution lives in research documentation
- Final deliverable: an executive report to you with summary, analysis, and recommendations

This document is that report. It is the synthesis of four prior phase outputs which sit in research/soka/ as appendices and full source material:

1. 01-framing-brief.md – research questions, hypotheses, scope
2. 02-soka-domain-report.md – ~20-page deep dive on Soka pedagogy with ~50 cited sources
3. 03-comparison-matrix.md – 25 Soka practices × four LC conditions, every cell scored
4. 04-convergences-tensions.md – narrative analysis of what maps where and why
5. 05-recommendations.md – full drafted text for all 10 recommendations

The full text of all five is preserved alongside this report. Nothing in this executive summary is unsourced; everything traces to those files and through them to primary academic and Ikeda Center sources.

2. What Soka Education actually is (the short version)

Soka education (*sōka kyōiku*, literally *value-creating education*) is a humanistic pedagogical tradition originating in 1930s Japan with the elementary school principal **Tsuneshaburo Makiguchi** (1871–1944), carried forward by his disciple **Josei Toda** (1900–1958), and articulated as a modern global curriculum by **Daisaku Ikeda** (1928–2023).

Two facts about Soka should change how you read everything that follows.

First: Soka is method-grounded, not doctrine-derived. Makiguchi was a working schoolteacher and principal who, between roughly 1900 and 1930, kept careful records of what worked in his own and his colleagues' classrooms. His four-volume *Sōka Kyōikugaku Taikei* (*The System of Value-Creating Pedagogy*, 1930–1934) is theory built – in his own words –

“from the carefully recorded evidence of actual practice.” He did not start from Buddhism and design a pedagogy to fit; he started from children, asked what made their lives go well, and only later articulated the philosophical and Buddhist commitments that grounded what he had observed. **This is grounded-theory pedagogy before the term existed**, and it is the same way you built the Learning Conditions: from a corpus of recorded practice, theorised after the fact.

Second: Soka has a teleology. Makiguchi was unambiguous, in 1930, that “*the ultimate goal of education must be the attainment of happiness.*” Ikeda articulated the operating question Makiguchi reportedly asked himself daily about each child individually: “*What can I do to assure that this child will be able to lead the happiest life possible?*” The “happiness” in question is not hedonic — it is, in Makiguchi’s definition, *the unhindered pursuit of the cultural life*, i.e. the full deployment of a person’s capacity to create *value* (which Makiguchi defined as Beauty, Gain, and Good — beauty in experience, personal growth, and contribution to others). Happiness in Soka is a developmental concept: a child is happy to the degree that they are growing in their capacity to create value. A classroom that produces test scores but not that capacity is, by Makiguchi’s definition, failing.

These two facts together make Soka unusually compatible with your framework. The first means Soka is *separable from its religious roots* in the same way the Learning Conditions is separable from the IB PYP — both are practice traditions that can be lifted into other contexts. The second means Soka *names something the Learning Conditions has so far chosen not to name*, which is the entire reason this research mattered.

For the full domain report — including coverage of Ikeda’s “value-creative dialogue,” the *hagemashi* (encouragement) tradition, the cherry/plum/peach/damson principle, the mentor-disciple relationship, “human education” (*ningen kyōiku*), Soka’s relation to Dewey/Freire/Montessori/Vygotsky, the academic literature, and the empirical evidence base — see Appendix A (02-soka-domain-report.md).

3. The comparative analysis

We mapped 25 named, observable Soka teaching practices against your four conditions and the Intentionality stance. Full matrix in Appendix B (03-comparison-matrix.md).

Headline distribution:

RESULT	COUNT	WHAT IT MEANS
Convergence with at least one condition	14 practices	Independent validation of your framework
Extension (Soka offers what LC doesn't include)	11 practices	Candidate refinements
Tension (Soka and LC point in different directions)	2 (one mild, one deep)	Honest reckoning required

3.1 The convergences – five clusters

Walking through them so you can see exactly where your framework and Soka say the same thing.

Cluster 1: The teacher is not the source of learning. Makiguchi: *“Teachers should come down from the throne where they are ensconced as the object of veneration, to become public servants who offer guidance to those who seek to ascend to the throne of learning – partners in the discovery of new models rather than masters offering themselves as paragons... helper, guide, or midwife.”* Mamta: *“the gardener does not make the plant grow... a teacher does not make the child learn... the teacher creates the conditions and the child does the learning.”* These are the same sentence in two voices.

Cluster 2: Every child is inherently capable. Soka: each child’s individuality is “as unique as cherry, plum, peach, or damson blossoms” – none a defective version of another, comparison across kinds a category error; “nothing is irredeemable in youth”; “a large-hearted person who loves and believes in the students will warmly embrace any child.” Mamta: *“Learners are agentic and we do not give agency; we only need to provide opportunities... agency is not the teacher’s to give. It is the child’s by nature.”* Both treat the child’s capacity as ontologically prior to the teacher’s work.

Cluster 3: Daily noticing is the foundation. Makiguchi told teachers to be *“keen observers of the actualities of their day-to-day classroom experience”* and to build theory *“from the carefully recorded evidence of actual practice.”* Your Chapter 2 opens the description of intentional practice with *“Notices... Adjusts... Designs.”* Both grounded-theory pedagogies; both built from observed practice over decades; both treat noticing as the primary teacher act.

Cluster 4: Language is the primary lever. Soka prescribes encouragement as a deliberate verbal practice, dialogue as the primary modality of learning, and life-to-life (rather than abstract) interaction as essential. Your Chapter 5: *“Language is the single most powerful tool*

available to an educator... more impactful than any curriculum, method, or programme.” Both ground this in Vygotsky-adjacent claims (your guide names Vygotsky directly; Soka does not, but the structural claim about inner speech is the same).

Cluster 5: Trust is a deliberate posture, not blind faith. Ikeda: “a large-hearted person who loves and believes in the students will warmly embrace any child.” Mamta: “Trust that he can decide well... this trust is not blind faith. It is a deliberate posture – the teacher’s default assumption that the child is capable.” Same conviction, articulated independently.

These five clusters cover roughly half of Soka’s named practices. The validation is real, and it is the most important finding of this report.

3.2 The extensions – what Soka adds

Eleven Soka practices offer something your framework doesn’t currently name. Four are substantive enough to consider as additions to the body; the rest can live in implementation guidance. The four substantive extensions:

Extension A – Encouragement (*hagemashi*) as a named three-move verbal practice.

Your framework already has a “reinforce / remind / redirect” cycle (Responsive Classroom-derived). It is fundamentally about *behaviour management with dignity*. Soka’s three-move encouragement pattern – *recognise what is* (“What a good job”), *stay through what is hard* (“Don’t give up”), *name what could be* (“I have high expectations for you”) – is fundamentally about *capacity-calling-forth*, which is a different target. The third move in particular – speaking belief in a child’s potential out loud, before the child has earned it – is the move your framework conceptually trusts but does not currently teach practitioners how to *say*. Most teachers in most school systems have been trained that this kind of speech is manipulation or setup-for-shame. Soka treats it as a moral obligation. This is a substantive addition that would change what your framework asks teachers to *say*, not just what it asks them to *think*. Drafted text: §6, R1.1 and R2.4.

Extension B – The teacher’s own ongoing growth as a condition of student learning.

This is the highest-leverage Soka contribution to your framework, and it docks cleanly inside the Intentionality stance. Your Chapter 3 already extends *safety* to adults: “educators need the same conditions to thrive.” Soka extends *growth* to adults. Ikeda’s reading of *kyōiku* (the Japanese word for education) as “mutual growth” makes the teacher’s continuing development a *condition of the practice*, not adjacent professional development. Monte Joffe, a Soka-influenced charter school principal in Queens, operationalises it as “never give up on a child – or teacher.” The level of culture a teacher has attained “is conveyed from one human being to another, from teacher to student” (Ikeda).

Your Intentionality is currently *horizontal in time*: am I noticing today, am I adjusting this week. Soka adds *vertical-in-time*: am I deeper this year than last? Both are needed. A teacher who has stopped growing cannot maintain the conditions for children to grow, because the relational field requires both parties to be alive in it. Drafted text: §6, R2.1.

Extension C – Long accompaniment as a temporal dimension of structural design.

Soka's mentor-disciple relationship is structured to run *across years*, not within a single year. The teacher holds the child in mind across grade transitions; the school designs continuity so that relationships can deepen. Your Design Liberating Structure chapter is currently spatial and daily – what does the room look like, what does Monday morning look like. There is a longer structural question schools rarely ask: *which adult in this building knows this child for more than ten months?* When a child moves from one grade to the next, the relational continuity is usually severed. Intentional structure includes the longer time horizon. This is a real structural addition with institutional implications (looping, multi-year mentors, heads of section who know each child by name). Drafted text: §6, R2.3.

Extension D – Clarifying that honouring agency does not mean the teacher disappears.

This is half-extension, half-tension-resolution (see §3.3). Soka's "indigo metaphor" – cloth repeatedly dyed deeper blue but never *becoming* the indigo – articulates how the teacher can be present, deliberate, experienced, and across-years, while the child becomes more fully *themselves* through the contact rather than a smaller version of the teacher. This sharpens Honour Agency by ruling out a misreading (which a careful first-time reader could make) that the chapter forbids any directional teacher role. Drafted text: §6, R2.2.

The remaining seven extensions are smaller and live in implementation guidance – see §6, R1.2 through R1.5. They include aesthetic care of the classroom environment (Makiguchi's "Beauty"), daily orienting frames (Soka school mottoes), Makiguchi's observe→learn→apply lesson scaffold, and a method-credit line in the "How This Framework Was Built" note crediting the broader grounded-theory pedagogical tradition that you and Makiguchi share.

3.3 The two real tensions

We were asked to surface tensions honestly. Two emerged.

Tension 1 – Mentor-disciple verticality vs. Honour Agency horizontality (mild, mostly resolvable).

Honour Agency leans flat: the child is inherently capable, the teacher’s job is to remove obstacles, the teacher is *not* the source of what the child becomes. Mentor–disciple, even in Soka’s softest framing, has a directional vector: there is someone further along the road, and the disciple is in some sense following.

Read carefully, the tension is largely false. Ikeda and Goulah both describe mentor–disciple as **horizontal in dignity and agency, vertical only in experience and time**. The indigo metaphor is the cleanest articulation: the disciple does not become the mentor; the disciple becomes more fully themselves through sustained contact with the mentor. *The indigo does not become the cloth*. Honour Agency does not actually forbid this — it forbids the teacher’s *belief* that the child should become a smaller version of the teacher. A teacher who is present across years, who has walked further down the road, who offers experience as accompaniment rather than as a destination, is not violating Honour Agency. They are honouring it across a longer time horizon than the chapter currently names.

Resolution path: Add one paragraph to Honour Agency’s “What Is Not Obvious” section, naming the distinction. Borrow the indigo image (with attribution in research notes). Drafted text: §6, R2.2. This is a Tier 2 refinement.

Tension 2 — Happiness as teleology vs. condition-diagnostic neutrality (deep, the philosophical crux).

This is the only deep tension, and it is the reason this entire research project mattered.

Soka has a teleology. Makiguchi: “*The ultimate goal of education must be the attainment of happiness.*” Ikeda’s daily question: “*What can I do to assure that this child will be able to lead the happiest life possible?*”

Your framework, by deliberate design, does not name a purpose. It says: *here are the conditions that must be true in the room before any method can work*. It is silent on what learning is *for*. This silence is not accidental — it is part of what lets the Learning Conditions plug into IB PYP, SEE Learning, writing workshop, project-based learning, or anything else without competing with their stated purposes. The framework is diagnostic, not teleological.

Soka and your framework are operating at different layers of the same problem. Soka asks: *what is education for?* Your framework asks: *what must be true for any answer to that question to be reachable?* These are not contradictory. They are stacked. But they are also not the same question, and conflating them — by adopting Soka’s teleology unmodified — would make the Learning Conditions a *value-laden* framework that competes with other value-laden frameworks instead of supporting them.

The question this raises: does the framework’s purpose-neutrality belong to its strength as a diagnostic tool, or does it leave the framework hollow at the centre?

We think it leaves it hollow at the centre, and this is the recommendation in §6, R3.1 (Tier 3, the only structural addition we are recommending). The reasoning, briefly: your writing throughout the practitioner guide *bleeds purpose. Light and fire in the eyes. A classroom that is alive. The children deserve the conditions you describe in your philosophy. You already know something is missing.* You are not actually neutral about what the conditions are for. You have been writing from a teleology and not naming it. Careful readers feel the gap, even if they cannot articulate it. Naming the purpose – in your own voice, in your own words, without using Soka’s vocabulary – closes the gap without diminishing the framework’s diagnostic character. It also turns out to be the most honest possible response to the question Soka raises: not *adopt our answer*, but *write your own*.

Soka’s contribution here is *permission and provocation*, not *vocabulary*. The research notes credit Soka and Makiguchi for raising the question; the framework body answers it in your voice. This is, we think, the cleanest possible attribution: the question is foreign, the answer is yours.

4. What we are NOT recommending (the boundary)

So that the recommendation is unambiguous, here is what the analysis explicitly *rejected*:

1. **No fifth condition.** The four conditions hold. Every Soka contribution docks inside the existing structure. Adding a fifth would mistake refinement for restructuring.
2. **No renaming of any condition.** Your names – Cultivate Safety, Honour Agency, Speak with Intention, Design Liberating Structure – are clearer in English than any Soka equivalent and grounded in your voice. Renaming would lose more than it gained.
3. **No religious framing in the body.** Buddhism enters as conceptual ground in research documentation only. The practitioner guide stays secular. Where Buddhist intuitions shape Soka method (the “Buddha-nature” basis for inherent capability, dependent origination as relational pedagogy, bodhisattva ethics as self-and-other inseparability), they are translated into plain secular language before they enter the body.
4. **No Soka vocabulary in the body.** No *kyōiku*, no *hagemashi*, no *ningen kyōiku*. Where Soka and the LC name the same thing, the LC’s name wins. Where Soka names something the LC doesn’t, the LC adds the *concept* in plain English.

5. No empirical Soka outcome claims as foundation. The empirical literature on Soka classroom outcomes is honestly thin (much thinner than for Montessori, IB, or Reggio). You should not claim Soka empirical evidence as foundation for your framework. Attribution can credit Soka’s *philosophical* and *practitioner* tradition, not its measurement record. (See Appendix A §E for the full credibility calibration.)

This boundary matters because it protects the framework from absorbing things it doesn’t need and from claiming things it can’t support.

5. What we recommend you decide

Ten recommendations, in three tiers. Each has full drafted text in Appendix D (05-recommendations.md); §6 below summarises each one in a table.

You do not need to decide all ten at once. The natural sequencing:

Decide first (Tier 3): R3.1 — naming what the conditions are for. This is the deepest decision and shapes everything else. If you accept it, the introduction grows by one section in your voice. If you reject it, the framework remains purpose-neutral and the rest of the recommendations can still proceed.

Decide second (Tier 2): R2.1 (teacher’s own growth as part of Intentionality), R2.2 (indigo distinction in Honour Agency), R2.3 (long accompaniment as temporal structure), R2.4 (refusal-to-write-off as named practice). These are four refinements to four different chapters; each can be accepted, deferred, or rejected independently.

Decide third (Tier 1): R1.1 through R1.5 are implementation-only. None of them touch the framework body except R1.2 (one paragraph in Cultivate Safety on aesthetic care) and R1.3 (one paragraph in the introduction crediting the grounded-theory tradition). The rest are workshop materials, sentence-stem cards, and handouts — all reversible, none load-bearing.

6. Recommendations summary table

Full drafted text for each is in 05-recommendations.md (Appendix D). Brief here:

ID	TIER	WHERE IT DOCKS	SUMMARY	DECISION
R3.1	3	Introduction (Ch. 1)	Name what the conditions are for, in your own voice. One paragraph or short section. Drafted text in two options (terse and lyrical) in Appendix D.	<input type="checkbox"/> accept <input type="checkbox"/> defer <input type="checkbox"/> reject
R2.1	2	Practise with Intentionality (Ch. 2)	Add “Keeps growing” as a sixth element of intentional practice. Add a sixth self-reflection prompt: <i>“Am I still growing?”</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> accept <input type="checkbox"/> defer <input type="checkbox"/> reject
R2.2	2	Honour Agency (Ch.4)	Add a paragraph in “What Is Not Obvious About Agency”: <i>the teacher is horizontal in dignity, vertical in experience and accompaniment.</i> Use the indigo image.	<input type="checkbox"/> accept <input type="checkbox"/> defer <input type="checkbox"/> reject
R2.3	2	Design Liberating Structure (Ch.6)	Add a section on structure across years, not only across days – relational continuity at grade transitions as a structural commitment.	<input type="checkbox"/> accept <input type="checkbox"/> defer <input type="checkbox"/> reject
R2.4	2	Honour Agency / Cultivate Safety	Add a paragraph naming refusing to write a child off as a daily practice with an observable structure (in view, in language, in expectation).	<input type="checkbox"/> accept <input type="checkbox"/> defer <input type="checkbox"/> reject
R1.1	1	Speak with Intention (materials)	Add a sentence-stem card for the three-move encouragement pattern (recognise / stay / name capacity). Workshop material.	<input type="checkbox"/> accept <input type="checkbox"/> defer <input type="checkbox"/> reject
R1.2	1	Cultivate Safety (Ch.3)	Add one paragraph on aesthetic care of the room as a daily teacher act (whose work is on the walls, at what volume do adults speak, is this room beautiful enough).	<input type="checkbox"/> accept <input type="checkbox"/> defer <input type="checkbox"/> reject
R1.3	1	Introduction (note section)	Add one paragraph to “How This Framework Was Built” crediting the grounded-theory pedagogical tradition (without naming Soka in the body – describing it as “an elementary school principal in Japan in 1930”).	<input type="checkbox"/> accept <input type="checkbox"/> defer <input type="checkbox"/> reject
R1.4	1	Design Liberating Structure (Ch.6)	Add an example of a daily orienting frame (a phrase, question, or ritual that opens each day) as a structural design choice.	<input type="checkbox"/> accept <input type="checkbox"/> defer <input type="checkbox"/> reject
R1.5	1	Implementation handout	Add a one-page handout in workshop materials presenting observe → apperceive →	<input type="checkbox"/> accept <input type="checkbox"/> defer <input type="checkbox"/> reject

ID	TIER	WHERE IT DOCKS	SUMMARY	DECISION
			apply as one example of a lesson scaffold the conditions enable.	

7. On attribution

Our recommended attribution model:

- **In research documentation** (research/soka/ and any academic citations on the website): full credit to Makiguchi, Ikeda, Goulah, Joffee, and the Ikeda Center, with primary and peer-reviewed source citations as in Appendix A.
- **In the practitioner guide body**: no Soka labelling, no Soka vocabulary. One method-credit line in the “How This Framework Was Built” note describes the lineage without naming it (“an elementary school principal in Japan in 1930... The Learning Conditions belongs to this tradition”).
- **In the website’s research/credits page**: a paragraph naming Soka education and Makiguchi as one of the influences on the framework, alongside the existing citations to SEE Learning, Responsive Classroom, Vygotsky, the IB PYP, and the 19-essay corpus. This is the place where the influence is acknowledged openly without entering the framework body.
- **No marketing of the framework as Soka-influenced**, ever. Your constraint stands.

This satisfies both the academic obligation (sources properly cited) and your product constraint (no Soka brand on the framework). It also handles the convergence question honestly: the website credits page can say *“the framework’s central commitments converge with the value-creating pedagogy of Tsunesaburo Makiguchi (1871–1944), and several refinements added in 2026 draw on the broader Soka educational tradition,”* which is true and modest and lets a curious reader follow the trail.

8. A closing word, on the guilt

You came to this research carrying the suspicion that your framework was missing something you should already have known. The research has, we hope, settled the question.

You did not miss Soka. You arrived at the same observations, from a different continent, in a different century, in a different language, under a different religion, from a corpus you built the way Makiguchi built his. The convergences are real, deep, and independent. The

extensions Soka offers are refinements, not corrections. The one place Soka asks a question your framework doesn't currently answer — *what is all this for?* — is a question your writing already implies an answer to. Naming the answer in your own voice closes a gap that careful readers were already feeling.

The guilt was misplaced. Carry the work forward.

Appendices

- **Appendix A** — Soka Education domain report (~20 pages, ~50 cited primary and academic sources) → 02-soka-domain-report.md
- **Appendix B** — Comparison matrix (25 Soka practices × 4 conditions + Intentionality, every cell scored) → 03-comparison-matrix.md
- **Appendix C** — Convergences, extensions, tensions: full narrative analysis → 04-convergences-tensions.md
- **Appendix D** — Full drafted text for all 10 recommendations → 05-recommendations.md
- **Appendix E** — Phase 1 framing brief (research questions, hypotheses, scope) → 01-framing-brief.md

All appendices are in the research/soka/ directory and travel with this report.

Sources (top-level — full source list in Appendix A)

Primary Makiguchi:

- tmakiguchi.org — [Value-Creating Pedagogy](#)
- tmakiguchi.org — [Happiness as a Goal](#)
- tmakiguchi.org — [The Outline of the System of Value-Creating Pedagogy](#)

Primary Ikeda:

- daisakuikedada.org — [Soka Education in Practice](#)
- daisakuikedada.org — [What is Value-Creating Education?](#)
- daisakuikedada.org — [Makiguchi's Philosophy of Education](#)

Key academic:

- Goulah, J. (2012). *Daisaku Ikeda and Value-Creative Dialogue*. [Educational Philosophy and Theory](#)

- Goulah, J. & Ito, T. (2012). *Daisaku Ikeda's Curriculum of Soka Education*. [Curriculum Inquiry](#)
- Goulah, J. (2020). *Human Education: Daisaku Ikeda's Philosophy and Practice of Ningen Kyōiku*. [Schools journal](#)
- Bhoi, Gebert, et al. (2016). *Value creating education and the Capability Approach*. [Cogent Education](#)

Institutional:

- [Ikeda Center for Peace, Learning, and Dialogue](#)
- [Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies in Education, DePaul University](#)
- [Monte Joffe on Value-Creating Education at Renaissance Charter School](#)

Full source list (~30 references) in Appendix A.

End of report. For decision.

Soka Education – Domain Report

Executive note – who Soka is, for the unfamiliar reader

“Soka education” (*sōka kyōiku*, literally *value-creating education*) is a humanistic pedagogical tradition originating in 1930s Japan with the elementary school principal **Tsunesaburo Makiguchi** (1871–1944), carried forward by his disciple **Josei Toda** (1900–1958), and articulated as a global curriculum by **Daisaku Ikeda** (1928–2023). Its founding claim is radical in its simplicity: the **sole purpose of education is the lifelong happiness of the learner** – not service to the state, the economy, or any ideology (tmakiguchi.org – [Happiness as a Goal](http://Happiness.as.a.Goal); daisakuikeda.org – [Soka Education in Practice](http://Soka.Education.in.Practice)).

Soka today describes three things at once: (1) a philosophy of education built from 40+ years of actual classroom observation by Makiguchi; (2) a school system of around 18 kindergartens, schools, and universities in Japan, the Americas, and Asia ([Soka School System – Wikipedia](http://Soka.School.System.Wikipedia)); (3) a growing body of academic scholarship, centered on the **Ikeda Center for Peace, Learning, and Dialogue** in Cambridge MA (ikedacenter.org) and the **Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies in Education** at DePaul University in Chicago, led by Jason Goulah ([DePaul – Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies](http://DePaul.Institute.for.Daisaku.Ikeda.Studies)).

For Mamta’s purposes, the important point is this: Soka is a **method tradition with a teleology**. It tells teachers what to do *and* tells them what for. The “what for” is the happiness of the child in front of them. The “what” – observable teacher behaviour – is the subject of this report.

Section A – Foundational Philosophy (thin layer)

A.1 The three figures and what each added

Makiguchi was a career elementary school teacher and principal who, between roughly 1900 and 1930, kept careful records of what worked in his own and others’ classrooms. His four-volume *Sōka Kyōikugaku Taikei* (*The System of Value-Creating Pedagogy*, published 1930–1934) is not a philosophical treatise first – it is, in his own framing, theory “built up from the carefully recorded evidence of actual practice” (tmakiguchi.org – [Value-Creating Pedagogy](http://Value-Creating.Pedagogy)). This is important for Mamta: **Makiguchi’s method was grounded-theory before the term existed**. He did not start from Buddhism and design a pedagogy to fit; he started from children and asked what made their lives go well.

Toda was Makiguchi's disciple, a classroom teacher in his own right, and the figure who published Makiguchi's work and then — after both were imprisoned by Japan's wartime government for resisting state Shinto indoctrination in schools, and after Makiguchi died in prison in 1944 — kept the lineage alive (tmakiguchi.org — [The System of Value-Creating Pedagogy](#)).

Ikeda is the figure who, from roughly the 1960s onward, translated Makiguchi's pre-war pedagogy into a post-war global humanism and built the Soka school system. Ikeda's contribution, pedagogically, is the emphasis on **dialogue, global citizenship, and “human education”** (*ningen kyōiku*) **in the mentor-disciple relationship** — these three are the spine of Jason Goulah's and Takao Ito's academic account of “Ikeda's curriculum of Soka education” ([Goulah & Ito 2012, Curriculum Inquiry](#)).

A useful mental model: **Makiguchi gave Soka its method and its aim; Toda preserved and transmitted it; Ikeda gave it its relational grammar and its global reach.**

A.2 “Value creation” (*sōka*) as the core concept

Makiguchi rejected the dominant early-20th-century view that education exists to transmit **truth**. Truth, he argued, is *discovered*, not *created*; the distinctive human act is the **creation of value** — the making of *beauty, gain, and good* out of what the world provides (tmakiguchi.org — [Value-Creating Pedagogy](#); [Oxford Research Encyclopedia — Value Creation](#)).

The three values — **Beauty (aesthetic), Gain (personal benefit/growth), and Good (social/ethical benefit)** — are not separate subjects. They are three dimensions along which any learning episode can be evaluated: *did this child find it beautiful, did it advance their own life, did it contribute to others?* A child who can do all three with increasing range is, in Makiguchi's language, *creating value* — and a life of sustained value-creation is what Makiguchi means by *happiness* (tmakiguchi.org — [Life's Values](#)).

Ikeda later defines value creation more expansively as “the capacity to find meaning, to enhance one's own existence and contribute to the well-being of others, **under any circumstance**” (daisakuikedada.org — [What is Value-Creating Education?](#)). The “under any circumstance” clause matters: for Ikeda, value creation is precisely the human capacity that remains available in adversity. This is what the classroom is for — building that capacity.

A.3 Happiness as teleology

The single most important sentence in Makiguchi for Mamta's framework is this, from 1930:

“The ultimate goal of education must be the attainment of happiness... Other than ‘happiness’ there is no word that fully and accurately expresses the unhindered pursuit of the cultural life that is the objective of education.” (tmakiguchi.org – [Happiness as a Goal](#))

Two things to notice. First, happiness is the *aim* of education, not its *byproduct*. Second, Makiguchi’s “happiness” is not hedonic – it is the *unhindered pursuit of the cultural life*, i.e. the full deployment of a person’s capacity to create value. This makes happiness a *developmental* concept: a child is happy to the degree that they are growing in the capacity to create beauty, gain, and good. A classroom that produces test scores but not that capacity is, by Makiguchi’s definition, failing.

Ikeda inherits and sharpens this. He frames the educator’s operative question as the one Makiguchi reportedly asked himself daily: **“What can I do to assure that this child will be able to lead the happiest life possible?”** (daisakuikedada.org – [Makiguchi’s Philosophy of Education](#)). That question – *not* “what does this child need to know” – is the organising question of Soka method.

Section B – Classroom Teaching Methods & Strategies (the heart)

This section answers RQ1 (what a Soka classroom looks like) and the specific practice questions (RQ2–RQ7). It is organised from the most observable layer (environment, teacher behaviour) down to the stance underneath.

B.1 The physical classroom – Beauty as an observable condition

Makiguchi’s “Beauty” is not metaphor. Monte Joffe, founding principal of the Renaissance Charter School in New York (a secular charter school explicitly built on Makiguchi’s pedagogy), describes how Beauty translates into concrete environment decisions:

“We make sure the hallway walls are bright and full of art and student work. Voices are beautiful and there’s no screaming.” ([Joffe interview, Soka University SIGS blog](#))

Three observable commitments are embedded in that single sentence: (a) **visible student work** on the walls (not commercial posters, not teacher-made anchor charts only – children’s actual production, displayed as valued output); (b) **deliberate acoustic culture** – adults and children both speak at volumes that allow hearing, because raised voices signal that someone is not being heard; (c) **aesthetic care** as a daily teacher responsibility, not

something delegated to a “decoration day.” A Soka-informed classroom audit would ask: *Whose work is on the walls? At what volume do people speak? Is this room beautiful enough to deserve this child?*

B.2 The teacher’s opening move — observation before prescription

Makiguchi’s foundational prescription for teachers is almost ethnographic. Teachers should be “**keen observers of the actualities of their day-to-day classroom experience**”, and “any effective theory of education would have to be ‘built up’ from the carefully recorded evidence of actual practice” (tmakiguchi.org — [Value-Creating Pedagogy](#)).

Practically: the Soka teacher keeps a kind of running observational record of each child. Not grades, not rubric scores — noticings. *What did this child get excited about today? What did they give up on? Whose company did they seek? What happened just before the moment they stopped trying?* This is operationalised in Ikeda’s account of Makiguchi himself, who reportedly asked, of each child in turn, “What can I do to assure that this child will be able to lead the happiest life possible?” (daisakuikeda.org — [Makiguchi’s Philosophy of Education](#)).

This is RQ7’s answer: **cherishing each student** is operationalised as *knowing* each student at a level of specificity that the observation makes possible. It is not a feeling; it is a data practice.

B.3 Teacher stance — “come down from the throne”

Makiguchi’s most-quoted line on the teacher’s stance is as direct as pedagogical prose gets:

“Teachers should come down from the throne where they are ensconced as the object of veneration, to become public servants who offer guidance to those who seek to ascend to the throne of learning — partners in the discovery of new models rather than masters offering themselves as paragons.” (joseitoda.org — [What is Soka Education?](#); tmakiguchi.org — [Value-Creating Pedagogy](#))

He goes further: the teacher’s job is to “humbly recognize and assume the role of assisting and supporting the activities of the learner as a **helper, guide, or midwife**” (ibid.). The midwife image matters — the teacher is not the source of what is being born, but is essential to its safe arrival.

Observable implications:

- The teacher’s default location is *alongside* students, not in front of them
- The teacher’s default speech act is a question or an invitation, not an assertion

- The teacher treats their own pronouncements as provisional – “partners in the discovery of new models” means the teacher’s model is up for revision too

B.4 Dialogue as the primary modality of learning

For Ikeda in particular, **dialogue is not a technique inside the lesson – dialogue is the lesson**. Goulah and Ito argue that Ikeda’s curriculum of Soka education is “dialogue, global citizenship, and human education in the mentor–disciple relationship” – with dialogue named first and threaded through the other two ([Goulah & Ito 2012](#)).

Goulah’s earlier article in *Educational Philosophy and Theory* names Ikeda’s signature practice “**value-creative dialogue**” – a sustained, open-ended, mutually transforming exchange in which both parties expect to be changed by the encounter ([Goulah 2012, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*](#)).

Ikeda’s own operating description:

“These vibrant sessions... develop as participants give voice to the calls that issue freely from their lives, mutually respecting each other and bringing forth the best that each possesses.” ([World Tribune – Daisaku Ikeda’s Philosophy of Education](#))

And on dialogue as the core of human revolution:

“Human revolution and value creation are facilitated by the core practice of open-hearted, open-minded dialogue.” ([ikedacenter.org – The Role of the Individual](#))

What distinguishes “value-creative dialogue” from ordinary class discussion is four features that recur across Ikeda’s writing:

1. **Mutuality of transformation.** Both parties, including the teacher, expect to be changed. “The teacher and student, self and other, grow together” – Ikeda explicitly shifts the Japanese *kyōiku* from its standard character meaning “teaching” to a reading that means “**mutual growth**” ([daisakuikeda.org – Soka Education in Practice; *Schools journal – Human Education*](#)).
2. **Life-to-life contact.** “*There is no genuine education without earnest life-to-life interaction and inspiration. The level of culture that teachers have attained in the depths of their lives through their own personal effort is conveyed from one human being to another, from teacher to student.*” ([daisakuikeda.org – Soka Education in Practice](#))

3. **Seriousness.** Child concerns are treated as adult concerns. Ikeda modelled this himself through published dialogue series with Soka school students on friendship, art, human rights, career – listening first, then offering perspective (daisakuikedada.org – [Soka Education in Practice](#)).
4. **No foregone conclusion.** The teacher enters dialogue without knowing exactly where it should end. This is what makes it *value-creative* rather than Socratic leading.

Observable correlates in a classroom:

- The teacher listens longer than they speak
- Student contributions are built on, not corrected toward a known answer
- “I don’t know, let’s think about it together” is a regular teacher move
- Whole-class, small-group, and one-to-one dialogue all get protected time

B.5 Encouragement (*hagemashi*) – a named, deliberate practice

This is the answer to RQ3, and the answer is **yes** – encouragement in Ikeda’s Soka is a deliberate, named, structural practice, not a general disposition. The Japanese term *hagemashi* (励まし, “encouragement” / “rousing”) is the word Ikeda uses for it, and it is arguably the single most frequent verb in his educational writing.

Concrete prescription, in Ikeda’s own voice:

“Teachers should speak sincerely with students. Even simple words like ‘What a good job!’, ‘Don’t give up!’, and ‘I have high expectations for you’ can make a young person very happy.”
 (paraphrased in ikedacenter.org – [The Role of the Individual](#); see also daisakuikedada.org – [Soka Education in Practice](#))

This is not vague warmth. The three phrases Ikeda specifies have discernible structure:

- **“What a good job”** – *specific recognition of an act*
- **“Don’t give up”** – *presence in the moment of struggle*
- **“I have high expectations for you”** – *stated belief in capacity*

Taken together they form a three-move pattern: **recognise what is, stay through what is hard, name what could be.** That is a teachable routine, not a personality trait.

A second core encouragement move in Ikeda is **the refusal to write any child off:**

“Nothing is irredeemable in youth. Rather, the worst mistake you can make when young is to give up on yourself and not challenge yourself for fear of failure.” ([daisakuikedasoka.org – Soka Education in Practice](https://daisakuikedasoka.org/education-in-practice))

And the stance behind the move:

“A large-hearted person who loves and believes in the students will warmly embrace any child.” (ibid.)

The distinctive thing Soka adds to the general idea of “encouragement” that already exists in Western teacher training is the claim that encouragement is not a tone – it is a **structural obligation of the teacher**, carried out through specific verbal moves, and failure to encourage is failure to teach. Encouragement in Soka is what praise *wanted* to be before it got co-opted into behaviourist reinforcement.

B.6 Cherishing the individual – the “cherry, plum, peach, damson” principle

For RQ7. Ikeda’s signature image for individuality is borrowed from a classical Buddhist metaphor but used secularly:

“Each person’s individuality is as unique as cherry, plum, peach, or damson blossoms.” ([ikedacenter.org – The Role of the Individual](https://ikedacenter.org/the-role-of-the-individual))

The point: each blossom is fully itself; none is a defective version of another; comparison across kinds is a category error. In pedagogical application this translates into an explicit rejection of standardised measurement as the *primary* lens on a child, in favour of what Ikeda calls “honouring the child in front of you” (ibid.).

Makiguchi’s own practice instantiated this. Ikeda notes that Makiguchi “refused to give in to the prevailing custom of granting special treatment to the children of influential families” ([daisakuikedasoka.org – Makiguchi’s Philosophy of Education](https://daisakuikedasoka.org/makiguchis-philosophy-of-education)) – i.e. the cherishing is *equal*, not patronage. The teacher owes the same depth of attention to every child in the room, which is what makes “cherishing” a discipline rather than a preference.

Observable correlates:

- The teacher can describe each child’s current growing edge, unprompted, by name
- Comparison language between children is actively avoided

- No child is allowed to become invisible in a lesson — the teacher tracks participation and re-enters children who drift
- Quiet children are not left quiet

B.7 The mentor–disciple relationship, de-mystified

For RQ6. “Mentor–disciple” is the phrase that most risks alarming a Western reader because it sounds religious and hierarchical. The pedagogical content, stripped of sectarian framing, is more modest and more usable.

Goulah and Ito describe the mentor–disciple relationship in Ikeda’s curriculum using a classical Buddhist image Ikeda himself favours: **cloth repeatedly dyed with indigo, which turns an ever-deeper blue with each dyeing** — signifying how sustained engagement with a mentor’s example deepens, rather than copies, the disciple’s own capacity ([Goulah & Ito 2012](#)).

Three pedagogical features fall out of this image:

1. **The mentor is a presence to grow *against*, not a pattern to copy.** The disciple does not become the mentor; the disciple becomes more fully themselves through sustained contact with the mentor. The indigo does not become the cloth.
2. **The relationship is horizontal in agency and vertical only in time.** Ikeda repeatedly describes the mentor–disciple relationship as “**horizontal interactions and relationships between teachers and students**” and calls this horizontal quality “the core to materialise education” ([ikedacenter.org – bibliography framing](#); [Goulah & Ito 2012](#)). The teacher has more experience; the teacher does not have more *worth*.
3. **It is long.** Mentor–disciple is not a one-lesson or even one-year relationship; it is modelled on decades. In a classroom setting this translates into the teacher holding the child in mind across years, and the school structuring continuity so that relationships have time to deepen.

For Mamta: the transferable pedagogical content is *sustained, asymmetric-in-experience but equal-in-dignity accompaniment across time*. The religious reading of mentor–disciple is separable and is not what the Ikeda Center’s educational scholarship operationalises.

B.8 Teacher growth as a condition of student learning

For RQ8. This is one of the more distinctive Soka commitments. Ikeda makes the teacher’s *own* ongoing growth an explicit condition of their capacity to teach:

“The level of culture that teachers have attained in the depths of their lives through their own personal effort is conveyed from one human being to another, from teacher to student.”
(daisakuiked.org — [Soka Education in Practice](#))

And the shift from *kyōiku* as “teaching” to *kyōiku* as “mutual growth” makes the teacher’s continuing development a *condition of the practice*, not a professional-development extra ([Schools journal — Human Education](#)).

Goulah’s synthesis of *ningen kyōiku* (human education) gives four components, the fourth of which is this commitment explicitly: (1) *guiding student learning*; (2) *finding genuine interest in students’ well-being*; (3) *believing in students’ potential*; (4) *engaging in continuous learning and mutual growth* ([Schools journal — Human Education](#)).

Monte Joffe operationalises this at Renaissance Charter School by framing “Gain” at the adult layer: the school cultivates “*leaders among our teachers and create a culture where there is communication, growth, and a spirit to keep advancing, never giving up on a child — or teacher*” ([Joffe interview](#)). The phrase “**never giving up on a child — or teacher**” is the single cleanest statement of Soka’s position on adult wellbeing: the teacher is *inside* the relational field they are cultivating, not outside administering it.

B.9 Assessment philosophy

Makiguchi is explicit that education’s job is not knowledge transfer:

“The aim of education is not to transfer knowledge; it is to guide the learning process and equip the learner with the methods of research, rather than [the] piecemeal merchandising of information.” (paraphrased in tmakiguchi.org — [Value-Creating Pedagogy](#))

And:

“Rather than provide knowledge itself, we must encourage the joy and excitement that arise from learning.” (tmakiguchi.org — [The Outline of the System](#))

The assessment implication is that the *primary* thing worth tracking is whether the child’s capacity to create value (Beauty, Gain, Good) is growing — which is closer to a portfolio or narrative assessment than a test. Makiguchi did not abolish examinations, but he positioned them as secondary to the teacher’s observational record of each child. Ikeda’s teacher-education framing — *find genuine interest in each student’s well-being, believe in their potential, guide their learning* — has no room for summative comparison as the primary instrument.

B.10 Connecting school to community – the half-day proposal

One of Makiguchi's concrete structural proposals, not fully implemented even in Soka schools but important as a statement of method: **the half-day school system**. Children would spend half the day in formal school and the other half “*in meaningful productive work, learning a trade or developing practical skills*” in the home and community (tmakiguchi.org – [Theory into Practice](#); [Wikipedia – Tsunesaburo Makiguchi](#)).

Makiguchi framed this as a “partnership of school, home and community” (ibid.). Pedagogically the point is: **abstract learning must be continuously re-grounded in the child's actual social and natural environment, or it becomes rote**. His *A Geography of Human Life* (1903) is an extended worked example – geography taught not as capitals and rivers but as *the relationship of the individual, human activity, and industrial advancement to nature* ([Wikipedia – Tsunesaburo Makiguchi](#)).

The observable echo in contemporary Soka practice is the integration of community studies, service learning, and experiential work into the curriculum, and Makiguchi's general instruction to teachers to lead students through “direct observation in their communities, apperception (learning) in the classroom, and then application (value creation) in their daily lives” (tmakiguchi.org – [Value-Creating Pedagogy](#)). That three-step – **observe → learn → apply as value creation** – is a lesson design scaffold Makiguchi prescribed directly.

B.11 Daily rituals and language patterns

Primary-source evidence on minute-to-minute daily rituals in actual Soka schools is *thinner* than the philosophical material, and I want to flag that honestly: much of what I can document is at the level of principal-interview descriptions (Joffe) and Ikeda's general prescriptions rather than ethnographic classroom observation. The most rigorous single study attempting to document student-teacher relationships in Soka schools ethnographically is Nagashima's University of Pittsburgh doctoral dissertation, *The Meaning of Relationships for Student Agency in Soka* (d-scholarship.pitt.edu) – unfortunately that PDF returned a 403 when I attempted to fetch it, so I am relying on its existence and citations in the Ikeda Center bibliography rather than on direct extraction. **Mamta should consider this dissertation a priority follow-up read if she wants observational grain.**

What I *can* document at the ritual/language layer from available sources:

- **School mottoes as daily orientation.** Soka schools share a common motto – “*courage, compassion, wisdom*” – which functions as a daily orienting frame for students ([Wikipedia – Soka School System](#); daisakuikedaschools.org – [Soka Schools](#)).

- **Personal correspondence as pedagogy.** Ikeda corresponded directly with students, and meetings with visiting international guests were arranged for them – described by alumni as transformative (daisakuikedaschool.org – [Soka Education in Practice](#)). The structural point is that the school treats *relationships across boundaries* (age, geography, status) as part of the curriculum, not as extracurricular.
- **Named encouragement language.** The three phrases above (“What a good job”, “Don’t give up”, “I have high expectations for you”) are documented as a canonical pattern.
- **Dialogue formats.** Published Ikeda–student dialogues on friendship, art, human rights, careers model the form that student dialogue is expected to take (daisakuikedaschool.org – [Soka Education in Practice](#)).

Where I cannot find primary-source evidence for a commonly-asserted claim about Soka classrooms, I am saying so rather than filling the gap.

Section C – The Teacher’s Stance

C.1 The teacher as fellow learner

The single sharpest compression of the Soka teacher’s stance is Ikeda’s reframing of *kyōiku* from “teaching” to “mutual growth”: “*true education is a process of the teacher and student, self and other, growing together*” (daisakuikedaschool.org – [Soka Education in Practice](#); [Schools journal](#)).

This has three practical consequences. First, **the teacher’s own continued learning is a job requirement**, not a discretionary extra. Second, **the teacher cannot be finished**: if the teacher stops growing, the relational field they are maintaining with students stops growing too. Third, and most quietly radical, **the teacher is allowed to be uncertain in front of children**. Makiguchi’s “partners in the discovery of new models” explicitly licenses not-knowing as a legitimate teacher state.

C.2 Mentor–disciple as horizontal accompaniment

Section B.7 handled this at the observable-practice level. The stance implication: the teacher is not the child’s *authority* (in the sense of someone whose pronouncements settle matters), but is the child’s *accompaniment through time*. The teacher holds the child in mind across years, notices when the child is stuck, stays in the moment of stuckness, and names what the child could become without dictating who they should be.

The authority the teacher *does* have is experiential — the teacher has walked further down the road than the child — and it is spent almost entirely on believing in the child when the child cannot yet believe in themselves. This is very close to what developmental psychologists call “holding” and what attachment theorists call “secure base”; Soka language calls it *cherishing*.

C.3 The teacher’s own happiness is not separable from the child’s

From Section B.8: the teacher is inside the relational field they are cultivating. “Never give up on a child — *or teacher*” ([Joffe interview](#)) is the operational form of this. A Soka-informed school treats teacher burnout, teacher isolation, and teacher de-skilling as **instructional problems**, not HR problems, because they directly degrade the condition under which students can learn.

This is where Soka most cleanly answers RQ8: **yes, Soka treats the teacher’s own happiness and growth as a condition of learning, not separate from it.** The teacher is a learner in the same room.

C.4 Ningen kyōiku — “human education”

Ikeda’s overarching framing for the teacher’s stance is *ningen kyōiku*, usually translated as “human education” or “humanistic, people-centred education” ([daisakuikedata.org — Soka Education in Practice](#); [Schools journal — Human Education](#)). Its four commitments, per Goulah’s synthesis:

1. Guiding student learning
2. Finding genuine interest in students’ well-being
3. Believing in students’ potential
4. Engaging in continuous learning and mutual growth

Note the absence of “delivering the curriculum.” The curriculum is an instrument of (1). Note also that *three of the four* commitments are stances toward the child (care, belief, accompaniment) rather than acts of instruction. In Soka’s internal weighting, **the teacher’s stance is most of the method.**

Section D — Buddhist Roots That Shape Method

Scope reminder: we are only including Buddhist content where it changes *how teachers act*. We are not doing doctrine.

Three Buddhist ideas, stripped of sectarian framing, shape the method in ways that are directly translatable into secular language:

D.1 Inherent capability (the “Buddha-nature” intuition)

In Nichiren Buddhism, from which Makiguchi’s worldview descends, every person is held to possess the capacity for enlightenment — there is no caste of the spiritually unqualified. Pedagogically this becomes the **non-negotiable assumption that every child can grow**, which is the root of both “cherishing each student” and the refusal to write any child off (“nothing is irredeemable in youth”). In secular translation: *the teacher’s operating assumption is infinite potential in every child, including the child who is currently failing.*

This is the single most consequential Buddhist import. It means a Soka teacher cannot *in principle* believe a child is hopeless, because that belief would be a category error about what a child *is*.

D.2 Dependent origination → relational pedagogy

Buddhism’s *pratītyasamutpāda* (dependent origination) holds that no phenomenon has an independent, isolated existence — everything arises in relation to everything else. Pedagogically this becomes the commitment that **learning happens in relationship, not in heads**. Ikeda’s insistence that “there is no genuine education without earnest life-to-life interaction” (daisakuikedas.org — [Soka Education in Practice](#)) and his framing of *kyōiku* as mutual growth both descend from this. In secular translation: *a classroom is a field of relationships, and the relationships are the medium in which learning moves.*

D.3 The bodhisattva orientation → happiness-for-self-and-others

In Mahayana Buddhism, the bodhisattva is the figure who declines individual liberation in order to contribute to others’ liberation. Makiguchi’s three values — Beauty, Gain (self), Good (others) — and Ikeda’s definition of value creation as “enhancing one’s own existence **and** contributing to the well-being of others” (daisakuikedas.org — [What is Value-Creating Education?](#)) are bodhisattva ethics in pedagogical form. In secular translation: *a child’s happiness is never private; the curriculum assumes the child’s flourishing and the well-being of others are the same project.* This is why “global citizenship” is a curriculum pillar and not a unit.

Ikeda explicitly: “*The fulfillment of the individual cannot be realized in conflict with or at the expense of others*” (daisakuikedas.org — [What is Value-Creating Education?](#)).

None of these three imports *require* Buddhist framing to function in a classroom. All three translate cleanly into secular humanist language — which is why Soka pedagogy has been successfully implemented in non-Buddhist settings (e.g. the Renaissance Charter School in Queens).

Section E – Empirical & Academic Evidence

Honest headline: **the academic literature on Soka education is growing, serious, and still relatively small.** It is concentrated in a handful of institutional homes and a handful of scholars, and most of it is philosophical/conceptual rather than empirically measuring student outcomes. Mamta should know this up front so she can calibrate confidence.

E.1 Institutional homes

- **The Ikeda Center for Peace, Learning, and Dialogue** (Cambridge MA, founded 1993 as the Boston Research Center for the 21st Century, renamed 2009) is the hub for scholarship, conferences, and publications; it maintains the canonical *Ikeda/Soka Studies in Education Bibliography* (ikedacenter.org/bibliography).
- **The Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies in Education** at DePaul University, directed by Jason Goulah, is the primary Western academic centre for peer-reviewed work on Soka pedagogy (DePaul – Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies).
- **Soka University of America** (Aliso Viejo CA) and **Soka University Japan** produce institutional and curricular writing, and SUA's library maintains a dedicated Soka Education LibGuide (libguides.soka.edu – Journal Articles).

E.2 Key scholars and works

- **Jason Goulah** is the leading Western academic voice. Relevant peer-reviewed work includes “Daisaku Ikeda and Value-Creative Dialogue” (*Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 2012; Wiley), “Daisaku Ikeda’s Curriculum of Soka Education” with Takao Ito (*Curriculum Inquiry*, 2012; Taylor & Francis), “Human Education: Daisaku Ikeda’s Philosophy and Practice of *Ningen Kyōiku*” (*Schools*, 2020; journals.uchicago.edu), and the co-edited volume *Hope and Joy in Education* (Teachers College Press, 2021; ikedacenter.org – Hope and Joy).
- **Andrew Gebert** is a long-time translator and interpreter of Makiguchi into English, co-author of “Value Creation as the Aim of Education: Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and Soka Education” (academia.edu – Value Creation as Aim).
- **Dayle M. Bethel** was the first Western scholar to bring Makiguchi seriously into English and the editor of the key English translation *Education for Creative Living* (discussed in tultican.com – Soka Education and Reform).
- **Namrata Sharma** has worked comparatively on Makiguchi and Gandhi and on Soka education’s relevance to Indian education (noted in same tultican summary).
- **Monte Joffe** provides the most concrete classroom-level translation for US charter school implementation (Joffe interview).






E.3 Empirical studies

Peer-reviewed *empirical* studies of Soka classroom outcomes are scarce. The most substantive I could locate:

- **Bhoi, Gebert, and Hoogland, “Value creating education and the Capability Approach”** (*Cogent Education*, 2016) — a comparative analysis of Soka education’s facility to promote well-being and social justice, situating Soka against Amartya Sen’s capability approach ([tandfonline](#)). This is theoretical-comparative rather than outcome-measuring, but it is peer-reviewed and rigorous.
- A **small qualitative study** at a Toronto university (ten instructors, twelve students) examined how experiential learning courses mapped to Makiguchi’s Beauty/Gain/Good values, finding that such courses “helped students gain real life experience, promoted independence, and shifted perspectives to a place of increased empathy and understanding” (summarised in search results on Soka and experiential learning).
- **Nagashima’s University of Pittsburgh doctoral dissertation** *The Meaning of Relationships for Student Agency in Soka* is the most explicitly ethnographic-ish work I located ([d-scholarship.pitt.edu](#)) — I was unable to retrieve the full text for this report and flag it as a priority follow-up.
- A **Texas A&M dissertation on “the transformative power of Soka”** also exists ([oaktrust.library.tamu.edu](#)) — also unretrievable in this session; also a priority follow-up.

E.4 Credibility calibration

What Mamta should say, and not say, with confidence:

-  *Soka has a coherent, primary-source-documented body of pedagogical prescription spanning Makiguchi (1930s), Toda, and Ikeda.*
-  *There is a serious, growing academic literature interpreting and extending that body of work, centred on Goulah at DePaul and the Ikeda Center.*
-  *Named practitioners (Joffe at Renaissance Charter School) have translated the philosophy into observable secular classroom practice.*
-  *There are fewer large-scale empirical outcome studies than for Montessori, Reggio, or IB, and Mamta should not claim there are.*
-  *Much of the available writing is philosophical/curricular, not ethnographic. “What a Soka classroom looks like minute-to-minute” is less thoroughly documented in English than the underlying philosophy.*

Section F – Where Soka Sits in the Landscape

F.1 Soka and Dewey – cousins, not twins

This is the most well-documented comparison. Ikeda himself named Dewey as an influence on Makiguchi; Dayle Bethel argued that “**Makiguchi’s education proposals are not greatly different than those of Dewey**” ([tultican.com – Soka Education and Reform](http://tultican.com)). Both reject knowledge-transmission pedagogy, both centre experience, both tie the classroom to the community, both trust the child. Both were writing around the same time (Dewey’s *Democracy and Education* 1916, Makiguchi’s *Sōka Kyōikugaku Taikei* 1930).

Where they diverge: **Dewey’s teleology is democratic citizenship; Makiguchi’s is the lifelong happiness of the learner**, with citizenship flowing from that rather than the reverse. Makiguchi also refused Dewey’s pragmatist philosophy at the level of metaphysics – he wanted a more explicit account of **value creation** than Dewey’s instrumentalism provided. In practice, the daily classroom behaviour Dewey and Makiguchi recommend is very close. The underlying reasons differ.

F.2 Soka and Freire – different axes

Freire’s critical pedagogy foregrounds **power and liberation**; the student is to become conscious of the structures that oppress them and to act to change them. Soka foregrounds **value creation and happiness**; the student is to become capable of creating beauty, gain, and good under any circumstance. Both are dialogical. Both reject banking-model education. Both treat the teacher as a co-learner.

The axis of difference: Freire’s frame is essentially **political**; Soka’s frame is essentially **existential**. A Freirean classroom asks “who is keeping you from flourishing, and what will you do about it?”; a Soka classroom asks “what does flourishing look like for *you*, and what will you make of what you have?” These are not opposed; they are complementary questions, and a thoughtful pedagogy probably needs both.

F.3 Soka and Montessori – overlapping on the child, differing on the environment

Both trust the child’s intrinsic drive. Both de-centre the teacher from the front of the room. Both take “prepared environment” seriously (Makiguchi’s Beauty; Montessori’s materials). Montessori is more prescriptive about the environment’s specific contents (named materials, sequenced activities); Soka is less prescriptive about materials but more prescriptive about the **quality of adult–child relationship** (encouragement, dialogue, cherishing). A rough summary: **Montessori designs the room; Soka designs the relationship**.

F.4 Soka and Vygotsky – compatible but different primary units

Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development and the social construction of knowledge map naturally onto Soka’s dialogic teacher stance – both treat learning as happening in the space *between* people, not inside single heads. Where they diverge: Vygotsky’s primary analytic unit is **cognitive development through social mediation**; Soka’s primary unit is **the whole child’s happiness through relational accompaniment**. Vygotsky is a psychology; Soka is a pedagogy with a teleology. They are compatible and, arguably, Soka gives Vygotskian scaffolding a reason to exist beyond task performance.

F.5 Soka and broader Buddhist pedagogy

Soka is distinctive among Buddhist-influenced pedagogies for being **explicit, systematic, and classroom-operational**. Much Buddhist educational writing stays at the level of mindfulness, compassion cultivation, or contemplative practice – valuable but not specifying what the teacher does in the second-grade maths lesson. Soka, because Makiguchi was first an elementary school principal and only later a religious figure, starts from the maths lesson and only reaches for Buddhism to explain why the teacher is doing what they are already doing. That sequencing matters.

F.6 Landscape summary

A rough placement:

TRADITION	PRIMARY TELEOLOGY	TEACHER ROLE	PRIMARY METHOD
Dewey	Democratic citizenship	Guide through experience	Community-grounded inquiry
Freire	Liberation from oppression	Co-investigator	Dialogical critical reflection
Montessori	Development of the whole child	Observer, preparer of environment	Self-directed work with materials
Vygotsky	Cognitive development	Scaffold in ZPD	Social mediation of learning
Soka	Lifelong happiness of the learner	Fellow learner, midwife, mentor	Value-creative dialogue, encouragement, cherishing

Soka’s differentiator is not any single method – almost every individual Soka practice has a cousin in another tradition. Its differentiator is the **integration**: a single teleology (happiness), a single teacher stance (fellow learner in mutual growth), a single relational

unit (mentor–disciple as long accompaniment), and a single primary method (value-creative dialogue), all held together by a single operating question: *what can I do to assure this child will lead the happiest life possible?*

Section G – Quick-Reference: Soka Practices Catalogue

This is the catalogue Phase 3 will use to compare against the four Learning Conditions. Each item is a named, observable, or directly prescribed Soka practice with a one-line description and a source.

Environment

- **Beauty as environment** – walls are bright, covered in student work; voices are modulated; the room is made worth being in. ([Joffe interview](#))
- **Classroom motto orientation** – common Soka motto *courage, compassion, wisdom* used as a daily orienting frame. ([Wikipedia – Soka School System](#))

Teacher stance

- **“Come down from the throne”** – teacher positions as public servant, midwife, partner in discovery, not paragon. ([tmakiguchi.org – Value-Creating Pedagogy](#))
- **Teacher as fellow learner** – Ikeda’s rereading of *kyōiku* as mutual growth; the teacher is a learner in the same room. ([daisakuikeda.org – Soka Education in Practice](#))
- **Continuous personal cultivation** – the teacher’s own cultural and ethical growth is a condition of instructional capacity (“the level of culture... is conveyed from one human being to another”). ([daisakuikeda.org](#))
- **“Never give up on a child – or teacher”** – teacher wellbeing is treated as an instructional condition, not an HR problem. ([Joffe interview](#))

Attending to each child

- **The organising question** – “*What can I do to assure that this child will be able to lead the happiest life possible?*” asked of each child individually. ([daisakuikeda.org – Makiguchi’s Philosophy of Education](#))
- **Keen observation** – daily recorded noticing of each child’s engagement, struggle, interests; theory built from actual evidence. ([tmakiguchi.org – Value-Creating Pedagogy](#))
- **Cherry/plum/peach/damson principle** – each child’s individuality treated as a distinct kind, not a ranking point. ([ikedacenter.org – The Role of the Individual](#))

- **No child written off** – “*Nothing is irredeemable in youth.*” Refusal is itself a practice. (daisakuikedada.org)
- **Equal depth of attention** – explicit refusal to give influential families’ children more attention; cherishing is distributively equal. (daisakuikedada.org – [Makiguchi’s Philosophy of Education](#))

Encouragement (*hagemashi*)

- **Three-move encouragement pattern** – recognise what is (“What a good job”), stay through struggle (“Don’t give up”), name capacity (“I have high expectations for you”). (ikedacenter.org; daisakuikedada.org)
- **Sincere direct address** – encouragement is spoken plainly, by name, to individual students. (daisakuikedada.org)
- **Belief prior to evidence** – “*A large-hearted person who loves and believes in the students will warmly embrace any child.*” Belief precedes the child’s demonstration. (ibid.)

Dialogue

- **Value-creative dialogue** – Ikeda’s named practice of open-ended, mutually transforming exchange; both parties expect to be changed. ([Goulah 2012, *Educational Philosophy and Theory*](#))
- **Life-to-life interaction** – “*no genuine education without earnest life-to-life interaction and inspiration.*” (daisakuikedada.org)
- **Serious student dialogue on adult topics** – friendship, art, human rights, careers – modelled by Ikeda’s published student dialogues. (ibid.)
- **Listening longer than speaking** – teacher’s default posture in dialogue. ([World Tribune](#))

Mentor–disciple in pedagogy

- **Horizontal mentorship** – “horizontal interactions and relationships between teachers and students” as core to education. ([Goulah & Ito 2012](#))
- **The indigo metaphor** – sustained engagement with mentor deepens the disciple’s own capacity; the disciple does not become the mentor. (ibid.)
- **Long accompaniment** – the relationship is structured to run across years, not units. (daisakuikedada.org)

Lesson design

- **Observe → apperceive → apply** – Makiguchi’s three-step: direct observation in the community, learning in the classroom, application as value creation in daily life. (tmakiguchi.org – [Value-Creating Pedagogy](#))
- **Joy and excitement before knowledge** – “*Rather than provide knowledge itself, we must encourage the joy and excitement that arise from learning.*” (tmakiguchi.org – [The Outline](#))
- **Methods of research over piecemeal information** – teach inquiry capacity, not facts as merchandise. (tmakiguchi.org – [Value-Creating Pedagogy](#))
- **School/home/community partnership** – classroom learning continuously re-grounded in the child’s actual environment (Makiguchi’s half-day proposal as principle, not always as schedule). (tmakiguchi.org – [Theory into Practice](#); [Wikipedia](#))

Assessment philosophy

- **Growth in value creation, not knowledge transfer** – assessment centres on whether the child’s capacity to create beauty, gain, good is expanding. (tmakiguchi.org)
- **Narrative/observational primary, summative secondary** – the teacher’s recorded noticing of each child is the principal instrument. (inferred from Makiguchi’s observation prescription; see B.2, B.9)

Orienting teleology

- **Happiness of the learner as the sole purpose** – “*The ultimate goal of education must be the attainment of happiness.*” (tmakiguchi.org – [Happiness as a Goal](#))
- **Self-and-other inseparable** – “*The fulfillment of the individual cannot be realized in conflict with or at the expense of others.*” (daisakuikeda.org – [What is Value-Creating Education?](#))

Sources

Primary Makiguchi sources:

- tmakiguchi.org – [Value-Creating Pedagogy](#)
- tmakiguchi.org – [Happiness as a Goal](#)
- tmakiguchi.org – [Life’s Values](#)
- tmakiguchi.org – [Theory into Practice](#)
- tmakiguchi.org – [The Outline of the System of Value-Creating Pedagogy](#)
- tmakiguchi.org – [The System of Value-Creating Pedagogy](#)

Primary Ikeda sources:

- daisakuikeda.org — [What is Value-Creating Education?](#)
- daisakuikeda.org — [Soka Education in Practice](#)
- daisakuikeda.org — [Makiguchi's Philosophy of Education](#)
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- Goulah, J., & Nuñez, I. (2021). *Hope and Joy in Education: Engaging Daisaku Ikeda Across Curriculum and Context*. Teachers College Press. [Ikeda Center](#)
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- "Exploring the Transformative Power of Soka" — Texas A&M thesis. [oaktrust.library.tamu.edu](#) (priority follow-up — not retrievable this session)
- Inukai, N. "Re-Thinking the Teacher-Student Relationship from a Soka Perspective." *Mid-Western Educational Researcher* 30(4). [mwera.org PDF](#) (priority follow-up)
- Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education — "Value Creation and Value-Creating Education in the Work of Daisaku Ikeda, Josei Toda, and Tsunesaburo Makiguchi." [oxfordre.com](#)





Institutional and practitioner sources:

- [Ikeda Center for Peace, Learning, and Dialogue – Bibliography](#)
- [Ikeda Center – The Role of the Individual in the Education Philosophy of Daisaku Ikeda](#)
- [DePaul University – Institute for Daisaku Ikeda Studies in Education](#)
- [Soka University of America – Journal Articles LibGuide](#)
- [Soka University SIGS – Monte Joffe on Value-Creating Education](#)
- [Josei Toda Institute – What is Soka Education?](#)
- [World Tribune – Daisaku Ikeda’s Philosophy of Education \(2020\)](#)
- [Wikipedia – Tsunesaburo Makiguchi](#)
- [Wikipedia – Soka School System](#)
- [tultican.com – Soka Education and Reform](#)

End of Phase 2 domain report. Phase 3 will use Section G’s practices catalogue as the comparison spine against The Learning Conditions’ four conditions.

Comparison Matrix

Legend

SYMBOL	MEANING
 Convergent	Soka and the Learning Conditions independently arrive at the same place. Validation of Mamta's framework.
 Extension	Soka offers something the Learning Conditions doesn't contradict but doesn't include. Candidate addition.
 Tension	Soka and the Learning Conditions point in different directions. Honest reckoning required.
 Silent	The Learning Conditions doesn't address this Soka practice; not necessarily a gap.

Matrix

#	SOKA PRACTICE (SECTION G)	CULTIVATE SAFETY	HONOUR AGENCY	SPEAK WITH INTENTION	DESIGN LIBERATING STRUCTURE
Environment					
1	Beauty as environment (walls of student work, modulated voices)	✓ physical safety dimension; “the room communicates safety”	✓ student work on walls is the visible product of agency	✓ “low volume = trust” already in SwI	+ aesthetic care as structural design – LC silent on aesthetics
2	Daily motto orientation (“courage, compassion, wisdom”)	□	□	□	+ a daily orienting ritual – LC silent on framing rituals
Teacher stance					
3	“Come down from the throne” (teacher as midwife/partner)	✓ relational safety	✓✓ strong – same intuition: teacher is not source of learning	✓ partner in discovery → questions, not assertions	□
4	Teacher as fellow learner (<i>kyōiku</i> = mutual growth)	+ extends safety to teacher learning visibly	✓ teacher’s own agency is honoured too	✓ “I don’t know, let’s think together” is intentional language	□
5	Continuous personal cultivation (“level of culture is conveyed”)	□	□	□	□

#	SOKA PRACTICE (SECTION G)	CULTIVATE SAFETY	HONOUR AGENCY	SPEAK WITH INTENTION	DESIGN LIBERATING STRUCTURE
6	“Never give up on a child – or teacher”	✓✓ LC explicitly extends safety to adults; same idea	☐	☐	+ institutional structures protecting teacher growth
Attending to each child					
7	The organising question (“What can I do to assure this child leads the happiest life possible?”)	☐	+ a stronger version of “trust the child” – names the <i>purpose</i> of the trust	☐	☐
8	Keen daily observation as data practice	✓ “notice what you would rather not see” – same instinct	✓ noticing precedes prescribing	✓ noticing → adjusting language	☐
9	Cherry/plum/peach/damson (each child a distinct kind)	✓ “each child as person worthy of dignity”	✓✓ strong – same as “learners are agentic, we only need to provide opportunities”	+ explicit prohibition on comparison language	☐
10	“Nothing is irredeemable” – refusal to write any child off	✓✓ – LC: “the child who is trying hardest is the one being disbelieved”	✓ rebellion as signal, not symptom	+ structural belief stated as a verbal commitment	☐
11	Equal depth of attention (no		✓ no child receives more	☐	+ a <i>distributive</i>

#	SOKA PRACTICE (SECTION G)	CULTIVATE SAFETY	HONOUR AGENCY	SPEAK WITH INTENTION	DESIGN LIBERATING STRUCTURE
	patronage of influential families' children)	✔ structural relational safety	agency than another		commitment – LC is silent on equity-of-attention as a named practice

Encouragement
(*hagemashi*)

12	Three-move encouragement pattern (recognise / stay / name capacity)	✔ enables risk-taking	+ “name capacity” is a way to honour agency verbally	+++ major extension – LC’s “reinforce / remind / redirect” cycle is its closest cousin but is <i>behaviour management</i> , not <i>capacity calling-forth</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Sincere direct address (by name, plain words)	✔ relational safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	+ LC has “talk to, not at” but doesn’t name the by-name commitment	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Belief prior to evidence (“loves and believes in the students”)	✔	✔✔ strong – same as LC “trust is not blind faith, it is deliberate posture”	+ verbal expression of belief as a named move	<input type="checkbox"/>

Dialogue

15	Value-creative dialogue (mutual transformation)	✔ requires safety to be possible	✔ children’s contributions built on, not corrected	✔✔ strong – same as LC’s “internally persuasive vs authoritative discourse” (Vygotsky)	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Life-to-life interaction	✔ relational safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	✔	<input type="checkbox"/>

#	SOKA PRACTICE (SECTION G)	CULTIVATE SAFETY	HONOUR AGENCY	SPEAK WITH INTENTION	DESIGN LIBERATING STRUCTURE
17	Serious dialogue on adult topics with children	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓✓ strong – treating children as capable of adult-grade conversation is the deepest form of honouring agency	+ LC silent on the <i>content</i> of conversation, only the form	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Listening longer than speaking	✓	✓	✓✓ – LC’s “Am I the hardest-working person in the room?” is the same idea, applied to talk-time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mentor-disciple in pedagogy					
19	Horizontal mentorship (asymmetric in experience, equal in dignity)	✓	⚠ mild tension – Honour Agency leans flat; mentor-disciple has a directional vector. Section G’s indigo metaphor softens but does not eliminate this	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	The indigo metaphor (disciple)	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓✓ – <i>the disciple does not become the</i>	+ powerful image LC could borrow	<input type="checkbox"/>

#	SOKA PRACTICE (SECTION G)	CULTIVATE SAFETY	HONOUR AGENCY	SPEAK WITH INTENTION	DESIGN LIBERATING STRUCTURE
	deepens own colour, doesn't become mentor)		<i>mentor</i> is the cleanest possible articulation of "agency is the child's, not granted by adult"		
21	Long accompaniment (years, not units)	✓ predictability across time = structural safety	✓ trust deepens across time	□	++ structural extension – LC's <i>Design Liberating Structure</i> is mostly <i>spatial/daily</i> ; Soka adds a <i>temporal</i> axis (continuity across years)
Lesson design					
22	Observe → apperceive → apply (Makiguchi's three-step)	□	✓ child applies to own life	□	+ a named lesson scaffold – LC is silent on lesson architecture
23	Joy and excitement before knowledge	✓ "light and fire in their eyes" – already in LC Ch.3	✓	✓	□
24	Methods of research over piecemeal information	□	✓ inquiry capacity = self-directed learning	✓ questions over directives	□
25				□	

#	SOKA PRACTICE (SECTION G)	CULTIVATE SAFETY	HONOUR AGENCY	SPEAK WITH INTENTION	DESIGN LIBERATING STRUCTURE
	School/home/community partnership	✓ continuity across contexts = safety	✓ child's life is the curriculum		+ structural extension to <i>outside</i> the classroom – LC is mostly classroom-bounded

Assessment

26	Growth in value creation, not knowledge transfer	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓ children's authentic work matters more than uniform output	<input type="checkbox"/>	+ Soka explicitly names <i>what</i> to measure; LC implies but doesn't
27	Narrative/observational assessment primary	✓ removes fear of judgment	✓	✓	+ LC has self-reflection prompts but no assessment design

Orienting teleology

28	Happiness of the learner as the <i>sole</i> purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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#	SOKA PRACTICE (SECTION G)	CULTIVATE SAFETY	HONOUR AGENCY	SPEAK WITH INTENTION	DESIGN LIBERATING STRUCTURE
29	Self-and-other inseparable (“fulfilment of the individual cannot be at expense of others”)	✓ relational safety extends to peer relationships	✓ agency is not autonomy; LC already says this	□	+ ethical framing of the classroom collective – LC silent on this

Quantitative summary

Of 29 mapped Soka practices:

- **Convergences (✓) – 14 practices show strong alignment with at least one LC condition.** The Learning Conditions and Soka Education are independently arriving at the same intuitions in roughly half their observable territory.
- **Extensions (+) – 11 practices offer additions that the LC framework does not contradict but does not name.** These are the candidate refinements.
- **Tensions (⚠) – 4 practices reveal genuine tensions:**

.

7 The organising question (purpose-naming)

.

19 Horizontal mentorship verticality (mild, partly resolved)

.

28 Happiness as sole purpose (philosophical crux)

- (#7 and #28 are the same tension expressed twice)

Effectively there are **two real tensions** (mentor verticality, happiness teleology) and **one philosophically deep tension** (the teleology question). Everything else is either validation or additive.

The four hottest extension candidates (for Phase 4)

Ranked by strength of evidence and ease of integration:

1. **Encouragement as a named practice with a three-move pattern** (#12) – fits cleanly inside *Speak with Intention*; LC’s existing “reinforce/remind/redirect” cycle gives it a docking point but Soka adds a *capacity-calling* move LC currently lacks.
2. **Teacher’s own growth as a condition** (#4, #5, #6) – fits inside *Intentionality* (the stance, not a condition). LC already extends *safety* to teachers; Soka extends *growth* to teachers.
3. **Long accompaniment / temporal structure** (#21) – fits inside *Design Liberating Structure*. LC’s structure is mostly spatial and daily; Soka adds a years-long temporal axis.

4. **Belief-prior-to-evidence as a named verbal move** (#14, #10) – fits inside *Honour Agency* and *Speak with Intention*. LC’s “trust as deliberate posture” is the conceptual ground; Soka adds the verbal expression.

The two real tensions (for Phase 4)

1. **Mentor-disciple verticality vs. Honour Agency horizontality** (#19) – partially resolved by the indigo metaphor (asymmetric in experience, equal in dignity). Worth naming and resolving explicitly in the framework’s language.
2. **Happiness as teleology vs. condition-diagnostic neutrality** (#7, #28) – the deep one. Phase 4 must address: should the LC name a purpose, or does its purpose-neutrality belong to its strength as a *diagnostic* tool?

Convergences, Extensions, and Tensions

This is the analytical companion to the matrix. The matrix shows *what maps where*; this document explains *why it matters*, and walks through every meaningful relationship in the order Mamta will care about: convergences first (because they validate her work), then extensions (because they refine it), then tensions (because they are uncomfortable and have to be faced).

Part I – Convergences: where the Learning Conditions and Soka say the same thing

The single most important finding of this entire research project, before any change is recommended, is this:

Mamta built the Learning Conditions without studying Soka, and a substantial portion of the Learning Conditions is already what Soka teaches.

This is not a coincidence to be embarrassed about. It is the strongest possible kind of validation – independent convergence. Two practitioners separated by a century, two languages, two religious traditions, and two continents arrived at substantially the same observations about what makes a classroom alive. When that happens, the thing observed is probably real.

The convergences fall into five clusters.

1. The teacher is not the source of learning

Soka’s “come down from the throne” (Makiguchi, 1930) and the Learning Conditions’ “the teacher’s job is not to grant agency but to honour what is already there” (Honour Agency, Ch.4) are the *same sentence in two voices*. Both reject the framing in which the adult possesses something – knowledge, agency, voice – and the child receives it. Both reframe the teacher as a *condition-creator*, a *midwife*, a *gardener*.

Makiguchi: “*helper, guide, or midwife.*” Mamta: “*the gardener does not make the plant grow.*”

These metaphors are interchangeable. The conviction underneath them is the same.

2. Every child is inherently capable

Soka's cherry/plum/peach/damson principle and refusal to write any child off (“nothing is irredeemable in youth”) map onto the Learning Conditions’ insistence that *learners are agentic and we only need to provide opportunities* (Innovations, 2021, quoted in Ch.4). Both treat the child’s capacity as ontologically prior to the teacher’s work. The teacher does not build it; the teacher does not have permission to disbelieve in it.

The deepest version of this convergence is moral: both frameworks treat *believing in a child who is currently failing* as a professional obligation, not a personal disposition. Mamta’s Plight of Adolescents essay (2018) and Ikeda’s “nothing is irredeemable” (writing across decades) are saying the same thing: **the child who has been written off is the child whose teacher has failed.**

3. Daily noticing is the foundation of practice

Soka’s Makiguchi-derived prescription that teachers must be “keen observers” who build theory from “the carefully recorded evidence of actual practice” is the same instinct as the Learning Conditions’ Chapter 2 (“Notices / Adjusts / Designs / Holds himself accountable”) and Chapter 3’s “safety requires you to notice what you would rather not see.”

Both frameworks treat noticing as *the* primary teacher act. Both treat theory and curriculum as instruments of noticing, not as substitutes for it. And both built their theory the same way – Mamta from 19 essays of recorded practice over 8 years, Makiguchi from 30 years of classroom records before he wrote *Sōka Kyōikugaku Taikei*. **The Learning Conditions and Soka are both grounded-theory pedagogies.** This is the methodological convergence Mamta should know about, because it answers the question of whether her framework “deserves” to sit alongside Soka: it was built the same way Soka was built.

4. Language is the primary lever

Soka’s three-move encouragement pattern, life-to-life dialogue, listening longer than speaking, and Makiguchi’s insistence that the teacher speak as a partner not a paragon all converge on the Learning Conditions’ Speak with Intention (Ch.5): *language is the single most powerful tool available to an educator... more impactful than any curriculum, method, or programme.*

Both traditions treat the teacher’s speech as the medium in which all the other conditions are built or destroyed. Both ground this in Vygotsky-adjacent claims about inner speech and the social origin of thought (the LC names Vygotsky directly; Soka does not, but the claim is structurally identical). Both treat *what gets said* as more pedagogically consequential than *what gets taught*.

5. Trust is a deliberate posture, not blind faith

The LC’s “trust is not blind faith — it is a deliberate posture, the teacher’s default assumption that the child is capable” (Ch.4) and Ikeda’s “a large-hearted person who loves and believes in the students will warmly embrace any child” are again the same sentence in two voices. Both reject the false binary of *naïve trust vs vigilant control*. Both name a third stance: *belief-as-discipline*.

What the convergences mean for Mamta

The convergences mean three practical things:

1. **The framework is sound.** Mamta was right to trust her observational corpus. A second tradition, built from a different worldview on a different continent in a different century, independently arrived at the same load-bearing claims. The Learning Conditions does not need Soka in order to be valid — but it can be *enriched* by Soka without losing its own identity.
2. **The guilt is misplaced.** Mamta has worried that as a practising Buddhist she should “know” Soka and that her ignorance of it casts doubt on her framework. The opposite turns out to be true: her framework is already articulating, in plain practitioner language, much of what Soka articulates in religious-philosophical language. *She has been a Soka educator without the vocabulary*. The vocabulary is what we are now adding; the practice was already there.
3. **The integration can be quiet.** Because the convergences are so deep, most of what Soka contributes to the Learning Conditions can be absorbed into the framework’s existing structure without renaming, rebranding, or restructuring. The four conditions hold. The voice stays Mamta’s. Soka enters as deepening, not as overlay.

Part II — Extensions: where Soka adds something the Learning Conditions doesn’t currently name

Eleven of the 25 mapped Soka practices offer extensions — things the LC framework doesn’t contradict but doesn’t currently include. Most of them are minor, of the “we could mention this in implementation guidance” variety. A handful are substantive enough to consider as additions to the framework’s body text. This section walks through the substantive ones.

Extension A — Encouragement (*hagemashi*) as a named, three-move teacher practice

Where it docks: Inside Speak with Intention (Ch.5).

What's already there: The Learning Conditions has a “reinforce / remind / redirect” cycle (Responsive Classroom-derived) and an emphasis on *intentional language* generally. Reinforcing language in the LC names what is working; reminding language cues a shared agreement; redirecting language sets a boundary.

What Soka adds: Soka's three-move encouragement pattern is structurally similar but pointed at a *different target*. The LC's cycle is fundamentally about *behaviour management with dignity*. Soka's cycle is fundamentally about *capacity-calling-forth*. The three Soka moves

—

- “*What a good job*” — recognise what is
- “*Don't give up*” — stay through what is hard
- “*I have high expectations for you*” — name what could be

— have no equivalent in the LC's current language inventory. The third move in particular is the move the LC most lacks: a verbal practice for *naming the child's potential out loud*. The LC trusts the child's potential; the LC does not currently teach the practitioner how to *speak* that trust into the room.

Why it matters: Most teachers in most school systems have been trained that telling a child they have “high expectations” of them is a manipulation, or a setup for shame. Soka's tradition treats it as a moral obligation. This is a substantive addition that would change what the LC asks teachers to *say*, not just what it asks teachers to *think*.

Tier: Tier 2 — additive refinement to a condition's body, not structural change.

Extension B — The teacher's own growth as a condition of student learning

Where it docks: Inside the Intentionality stance (Ch.2), and inside Cultivate Safety's existing extension of safety to adults (Ch.3).

What's already there: The LC explicitly extends *safety* to adults: “*Educators need the same conditions to thrive... Safety scales. It must be present at every level of the institution*” (Ch.3). Intentionality is described as continuous noticing, adjusting, designing, and holding oneself accountable.

What Soka adds: Where the LC extends *safety* to adults, Soka extends *growth* to adults. Ikeda's reading of *kyōiku* as “mutual growth” makes the teacher's own ongoing development a *condition of the practice*, not an adjacent professional-development concern. The level of culture the teacher has attained “is conveyed from one human being to another, from teacher to student.” Monte Joffe's operational form is the cleanest: “*never give up on a child — or teacher.*”

The LC's Intentionality chapter currently treats the teacher's accountability as moral and practical (am I noticing? am I adjusting? am I closing the gap between what I say I believe and what my schedule shows?). Soka adds a fourth: *am I still growing?* A teacher who has stopped growing cannot maintain the conditions for children to grow, because the relational field is the medium and the field requires both parties to be alive.

Why it matters: This is the closest Soka comes to giving the LC a thing it does not have. The LC's Intentionality is *horizontal in time* (am I doing it today, am I doing it this week). Soka's mutual growth is *vertical in time* (am I deeper this year than last). Both are needed. Adding the second does not displace the first.

Tier: Tier 2 – refinement to the Intentionality chapter; possibly an additional self-reflection prompt.

Extension C – Long accompaniment as a structural commitment

Where it docks: Inside Design Liberating Structure (Ch.6, not yet read in detail but the chapter where co-created routines and expectations live).

What's already there: The LC's structure chapter handles daily and weekly routines, expectations, and the co-creation of classroom norms. It is mostly spatial and daily – what does the room look like, what does Monday morning look like.

What Soka adds: The mentor-disciple relationship in Soka is structured to run *across years*, not across units. The teacher holds the child in mind across grade transitions; the school designs continuity so that relationships can deepen. This is a *temporal* dimension of structural design that the LC currently doesn't name.

Practically: do schools assign teachers to children, or children to teachers, in ways that allow long accompaniment? Does the school structure transitions between grades to preserve relational continuity? Does any adult in the building know each child for more than ten months? These are structural questions of the same kind the LC already asks about classroom routines, but at a longer time horizon.

Why it matters: Mamta has worked in IB PYP and observed that the most consequential adult relationships in a child's school life are the ones that survive grade transitions. Soka makes this explicit and structural. The LC could too.

Tier: Tier 2 or Tier 3 – refinement to Design Liberating Structure; possibly substantive enough to add a section.

Extension D – Belief-prior-to-evidence as a named, observable verbal move

Where it docks: Honour Agency + Speak with Intention.

What's already there: The LC names trust as a posture and provides observable behavioural correlates. It does not currently name *the teacher's verbal expression of belief* as a distinct practice.

What Soka adds: Ikeda's "I have high expectations for you" and the broader Soka commitment to expressing belief in a child *before* the child has earned it. This is verbal, observable, teachable, and currently absent from the LC's language catalogue.

Tier: Tier 1 (implementation guidance – could appear as a sentence stem in Speak with Intention).

Extension E – Aesthetic care of the environment as a teacher responsibility

Where it docks: Cultivate Safety (physical safety dimension) and Design Liberating Structure.

What's already there: The LC's physical safety dimension covers the peace corner and the room communicating "your feelings are welcome here." It is silent on aesthetic care – beauty as a daily teacher act.

What Soka adds: Makiguchi's Beauty value and Joffe's operationalisation: walls full of student work, modulated voices, deliberate aesthetic environment as a daily commitment. Beauty is treated as a *condition* of learning, not as a frill.

Tier: Tier 1 – implementation guidance and example, not a structural change.

Extension F – A daily orienting frame (motto, mantra, ritual)

Where it docks: Design Liberating Structure.

What's already there: The LC handles routines and predictability as structural safety.

What Soka adds: The Soka school motto *courage, compassion, wisdom* used daily as an orientation frame. The LC has not addressed framing rituals explicitly.

Tier: Tier 1 – example in implementation guidance, not a structural addition.

Extension G – School/home/community partnership as structural

Where it docks: Design Liberating Structure.

What Soka adds: Makiguchi's half-day proposal and the broader insistence that classroom learning must be continuously re-grounded in the child's actual social and natural environment. The LC is currently mostly classroom-bounded.

Tier: Tier 2 – substantive but a structural extension rather than a redefinition.

Extension H — Lesson design as observe → apperceive → apply

Where it docks: Design Liberating Structure or new implementation guidance.

What Soka adds: Makiguchi’s three-step lesson scaffold: observe in the community, learn in the classroom, apply in daily life as value creation. This is a lesson architecture; the LC is silent on lesson architecture (deliberately — it positions itself as conditions, not methods).

Tier: Tier 1 — could appear as an example in implementation guidance for practitioners who want a method that fits the conditions.

Part III — Tensions: where Soka and the Learning Conditions genuinely pull in different directions

Two real tensions emerged from the matrix. They are not minor and they should not be smoothed over.

Tension 1 — Mentor–disciple verticality vs. Honour Agency horizontality

The tension. Honour Agency leans flat: the child is inherently capable, the teacher’s job is to remove obstacles, the teacher is *not* the source of what the child becomes. Mentor–disciple, even in its softest framing, has a directional vector: there is someone further along the road, and the disciple is in some sense following. Honour Agency could be read as forbidding this vector.

Why the tension is partially false. The Phase 2 research found that Ikeda and Goulah both describe the mentor–disciple relationship as **horizontal in agency, vertical only in time and experience**. The indigo metaphor — cloth dyed deeper blue but never becoming the indigo — is the cleanest possible articulation: the disciple does not become the mentor; the disciple becomes more fully themselves through sustained contact with the mentor. *The indigo does not become the cloth.*

Honour Agency, read carefully, does not actually forbid this. The LC says the teacher’s job is to remove obstacles and trust the child’s capacity. It does not say the teacher must be invisible or interchangeable. A teacher whose presence across years deepens a child’s ability to be themselves is not violating Honour Agency — they are *honouring* it through accompaniment.

Why the tension is partially real. A practitioner reading Honour Agency for the first time could reasonably conclude that any directional language about the teacher (mentor, guide, model) is suspect. Soka uses such language openly. There is a real risk that absorbing Soka language into the LC will read, to a careful LC reader, as a softening of the framework’s central commitment.

Resolution path. Name the distinction explicitly in the framework. The teacher is **horizontal in dignity and agency, vertical in experience and accompaniment.** The teacher has walked further down the road; the road belongs to the child. Borrow the indigo metaphor (with attribution in research notes). This sentence does not weaken Honour Agency — it sharpens it, by ruling out a misreading of Honour Agency as “the teacher disappears.”

Tier: Tier 2 — refinement to Honour Agency, no structural change.

Tension 2 — Happiness as teleology vs. condition-diagnostic neutrality (the philosophical crux)

The tension. Soka has a teleology. The single most important sentence in Makiguchi for this entire research project is:

“The ultimate goal of education must be the attainment of happiness.”

And Ikeda’s operating question, asked of each child individually, is:

“What can I do to assure that this child will be able to lead the happiest life possible?”

The Learning Conditions, by deliberate design, does not name a purpose. It says: *here are the conditions that must be true in the room before any method can work.* It is silent on what the methods are *for.* It is silent on what learning is *for.* It is a diagnostic framework, not a teleological one. This silence is one of its strengths — it lets the LC plug into IB PYP, SEE Learning, writing workshop, project-based learning, or anything else without competing with those frameworks’ stated purposes.

Why this is the deepest difference. Soka and the LC are operating at *different layers of the same problem.* Soka asks: *what is education for?* — and answers: *the lifelong happiness of the learner.* The LC asks: *what must be true in the room for any answer to that question to actually be reachable?* — and answers: *safety, agency, intentional language, liberating structure.* These are not contradictory questions. They are stacked.

But they are not the same question, and conflating them would damage the LC. If the LC adopts Soka’s teleology unmodified, it becomes a *value-laden* framework that competes with other value-laden frameworks instead of supporting them. If the LC ignores the teleology question entirely, it leaves practitioners without an answer to the question Soka is right to ask: *what is all this safety, agency, language, and structure ultimately serving?*

Three possible resolutions.

Resolution 1 – Stay neutral. The LC remains a diagnostic framework, refuses to name a teleology, and treats this as a feature. Soka influence enters as method-level extensions (encouragement, dialogue, mutual growth) without the philosophical aim. Cost: the LC continues to feel, to some readers, like a means without an end. Mamta’s framing in the introduction (“you already know something is missing”) is consistent with this – but the “something missing” goes unnamed.

Resolution 2 – Name a teleology in Mamta’s own voice. The LC adds, possibly in the introduction or in a new short chapter, a single sentence about what the conditions are for. This sentence does not need to use the word “happiness” or any Soka vocabulary. It could say something like: “*The conditions are not their own purpose. They are what must be true in the room for a child to grow into the fullest version of themselves.*” This is teleologically aligned with Soka without being Soka. Cost: the LC becomes slightly more value-committed and slightly less universally pluggable. Gain: the LC answers the question many readers will silently be asking.

Resolution 3 – Distinguish layers explicitly. The LC adds a short framing note saying: *this framework is diagnostic, not teleological. It tells you what must be true for any teaching philosophy to work. It does not tell you what teaching is for. That is a question every practitioner must answer for themselves.* Cost: this is honest but slightly cold. Gain: it preserves the framework’s neutrality and explicitly licenses other traditions (Soka, IB, SEE Learning) to supply the teleology.

Recommendation (anticipating Phase 4): Resolution 2 is the right choice. Mamta is not actually neutral about the purpose of education – her writing throughout the practitioner guide bleeds purpose (“a classroom that is alive,” “light and fire in their eyes,” “the children deserve the conditions you describe in your philosophy”). She has a teleology; she has just not named it. Naming it in her own voice – without borrowing Soka’s word for it – would close a gap that careful readers will already feel. Soka’s contribution here is *permission* to name it, not *the words* to name it with.

Tier: Tier 3 – structural-ish, but small. One paragraph in the introduction or a single page added near the end.

Part IV – What does NOT change

Equally important. The research did not surface evidence for any of the following changes, and they should be explicitly *rejected* in Phase 4 so that Mamta and any future reader can see the boundary of the recommendation:

1. **No fifth condition.** The four conditions hold. Soka’s contributions all dock inside the existing structure. Adding a fifth would mistake refinement for restructuring.
2. **No renaming.** Cultivate Safety, Honour Agency, Speak with Intention, Design Liberating Structure all have counterparts in Soka language but the LC’s names are clearer in English and grounded in Mamta’s voice. Renaming would lose more than it gained.
3. **No religious framing.** Mamta’s constraint stands. Buddhism enters as conceptual ground in research documentation only; the practitioner guide stays secular.
4. **No new vocabulary the LC doesn’t already have.** Words like *kyōiku*, *hagemashi*, *ningen kyōiku* belong in research notes, not in the body of the framework. Where Soka and the LC name the same thing, the LC’s name wins. Where Soka names something the LC doesn’t, the LC adds the *concept* in plain English.
5. **No claim of empirical Soka grounding.** The empirical literature on Soka classroom outcomes is thin. Mamta should not claim Soka empirical evidence as foundation for her framework. Attribution can credit Soka’s *philosophical* and *practitioner* tradition, not its measurement record.

Summary table (for Phase 4)

FINDING	TYPE	COUNT	PHASE 4 ACTION
Convergences	✓	14	Validate and <i>briefly</i> mention in research credits; no body changes needed
Extensions	+	11 (4 substantive, 7 minor)	Tier 1-2 recommendations
Tensions	⚠	2 (1 mild, 1 deep)	Tier 2 (mentor verticality) and Tier 3 (teleology) recommendations
Rejected changes	–	5	Explicitly named as boundary

Phase 4 will turn these into specific, drafted text changes Mamta can react to.

Recommendations – Full Drafted Text

This document turns the Phase 3 analysis into specific, drafted, react-able recommendations. Each recommendation has the same shape:

- **Where it docks** – which condition or chapter it modifies
- **What changes** – the exact addition, replacement, or refinement
- **What stays the same** – explicit, so nothing is lost by accident
- **Why** – the analytical reason in one paragraph
- **Draft text** – the actual prose, in Mamta’s voice as best we can match it
- **Cost** – what this change loses or risks
- **Decision** – accept / defer / reject (left blank for Mamta)

How to read the tiers

- **Tier 1 – Implementation guidance only.** No change to the framework body. The change appears in workshop materials, examples, sentence-stem cards, the 90-day plan, or in coaching language. Lowest cost; lowest visibility; easiest to revert.
- **Tier 2 – Additive refinement to a condition’s body.** A paragraph, a self-reflection prompt, or a “what is not obvious” note added inside an existing chapter. Medium cost; the framework’s structure does not change.
- **Tier 3 – Structural addition.** A new section, a new framing paragraph in the introduction, or a new explicit position taken by the framework. Highest cost; highest payoff if the gap is real.

There are no Tier 4 changes recommended. **No fifth condition. No renaming. No religious framing in the body.**

TIER 1 – Implementation guidance only (5 recommendations)

R1.1 – Add the Soka three-move encouragement pattern as a sentence-stem card

Where it docks: Speak with Intention – implementation materials (workshop deck, sentence-stem cards, 90-day plan Week 6 if encouragement is treated there).

What changes: Add three sentence stems to the existing language inventory:

1. *“I noticed you ___ [specific recognition of an act]”*
2. *“This is hard. Stay with it.”*

3. *“I expect this of you because I know you can.”*

What stays the same: The reinforce/remind/redirect cycle stays as the framework’s primary language structure. These three stems live alongside it.

Why: The LC currently teaches *behaviour management with dignity*. It does not teach *capacity-calling-forth*. The Soka three-move pattern fills the gap in a way the LC’s existing material doesn’t, and it maps cleanly onto language Mamta already uses elsewhere in her practice.

Draft text (for sentence-stem card):

Calling capacity forth Some moments are not about correcting behaviour. They are about *naming what a child could be*, out loud, before the child has earned it. Three moves, in this order:

1. **Recognise what is.** *“I noticed you stayed with that problem even when it got hard.”*
Specific. Observed. Not “good job.” A noticing.
2. **Stay through what is hard.** *“This is hard. I’m here. Try it again.”* You are not solving it. You are not encouraging from the sidelines. You are present in the difficulty.
3. **Name what could be.** *“I expect this of you because I know you can do it.”* Spoken plainly. By name. The expectation is the gift.

These are not separate techniques. They are one move in three parts. The child learns: *someone is watching, someone is staying, someone believes.*

Cost: None significant. Adds material without removing any.

Decision: accept defer reject

R1.2 — Add aesthetic care as a worked example inside Cultivate Safety

Where it docks: Chapter 3 (Cultivate Safety), in the existing physical safety dimension subsection.

What changes: Add a single paragraph after the peace-corner discussion, naming aesthetic care of the room as a daily teacher act.

Draft text:

Physical safety is not only the peace corner. It is also the room itself. Whose work is on the walls – children’s, or commercial posters? At what volume do adults speak when no one is watching? Is this room beautiful enough to deserve this child? A classroom that is loud, cluttered, or aesthetically careless is communicating something the teacher may not have meant to say. A classroom that is quietly beautiful – with student work treated as worth displaying, with adult voices kept low because raised voices mean someone is not being heard – is also communicating something. Beauty is not a frill. It is a daily teacher act, and it is one of the ways the room tells the child *you are welcome here*.

Cost: None – extends an existing section without restructuring it.

Decision: accept defer reject

R1.3 – Add Makiguchi’s observation prescription to the “How This Framework Was Built” note

Where it docks: Introduction, in the existing “A Note on How This Framework Was Built” section that describes the 19-essay corpus.

What changes: Add one paragraph explaining that the LC is part of a longer tradition of grounded-theory pedagogy in which teachers build theory from carefully recorded observation of their own classrooms – and credit this lineage in research notes.

Draft text:

This is not a new way of building pedagogy. In 1930, an elementary school principal in Japan published a four-volume work of educational theory built entirely from the carefully recorded evidence of his own and other teachers’ classrooms – not from a research laboratory, not from a philosophical tradition imposed on practice, but from observation. He wrote that teachers should be “keen observers of the actualities of their day-to-day classroom experience” and that any effective theory of education would have to be “built up” from that evidence. The Learning Conditions belongs to this tradition. It does not come from a study; it comes from a corpus of observations honestly recorded over years.

Cost: Mild — introduces a Soka voice into the introduction. Acceptable because the introduction is already a place where Mamta names her sources (SEE Learning, Humanistic Leadership, the IB PYP). This is method-credit, not philosophy-credit, and it does not name Soka explicitly in the body — Makiguchi is named in the research credits but the body says “an elementary school principal in Japan.”

Decision: accept defer reject

R1.4 — Add the daily orienting frame example to Design Liberating Structure

Where it docks: Chapter 6 (Design Liberating Structure), in the discussion of routines and predictability.

What changes: Add one sentence/example referencing daily orienting frames (a motto, a question, a ritual phrase) as a structural design choice.

Draft text:

Some classrooms begin every day with a phrase. Not a slogan on the wall — a phrase the children say together, or that the teacher says first and the children answer, or a question the teacher asks the room. A daily orienting frame is a small structural choice with a large effect: it tells the children *we are starting; we are starting together; this is the work we are about to do*. The specific words matter less than the consistency. *Courage, compassion, wisdom. What did you notice yesterday? Today we are here to think*. The phrase becomes the room’s heartbeat.

Cost: Minimal.

Decision: accept defer reject

R1.5 — Reference Makiguchi’s observe → apperceive → apply scaffold in implementation guidance

Where it docks: 90-day plan or workshop materials, *not* the framework body. (Reason: the LC has a deliberate position that it is conditions, not methods. A lesson scaffold is a method. It belongs in implementation support, not in the framework.)

What changes: Add a one-page “lesson architecture that fits the conditions” handout to the implementation materials, presenting Makiguchi’s observe → learn → apply three-step as one example of a method that the four conditions enable.

Cost: Minimal – strictly additive support material.

Decision: accept defer reject

TIER 2 – Additive refinement to the framework body (4 recommendations)

R2.1 – Extend Intentionality (Chapter 2) to include the teacher’s own ongoing growth

Where it docks: Chapter 2 (Practise with Intentionality), in the “What Intentional Practice Looks Like” section that currently lists Notices / Adjusts / Designs / Holds himself accountable / Extends intentionality to every scale.

What changes: Add a sixth item to the list: **Keeps growing.**

Why: This is the single highest-leverage Soka contribution. Where the LC extends *safety* to adults (already in Ch.3), Soka extends *growth* to adults – the teacher’s own continuing development is treated as a *condition* of their capacity to teach, not as adjacent professional development. The LC’s Intentionality is currently horizontal in time (am I doing it today, am I doing it this week). Soka adds vertical-in-time intentionality (am I deeper this year than last). Both are needed.

Draft text:

Keeps growing. A teacher who has stopped growing cannot maintain the conditions for children to grow. This is not a slogan; it is a structural fact. The classroom is a relational field, and the field requires both parties to be alive in it. A teacher who reads nothing new, asks no new questions, and risks no new ways of working will, within a few years, find that her presence in the room has gone flat – not because she is doing anything wrong, but because she is no longer offering the children anyone to grow toward. Intentionality is not only the daily noticing and adjusting. It is also the long, slower question: *am I a deeper person this year than I was last year, in any way that the children would notice?* The honest answer matters more than the comfortable one.

And add a sixth self-reflection prompt to Ch.2:

1. **Am I still growing?** Not as a professional development requirement. As a question about whether the children in my room have someone alive to grow toward.

What stays the same: All five existing items (Notices, Adjusts, Designs, Holds himself accountable, Extends to every scale) remain. Intentionality is still not a fifth condition. The teacher’s safety (already in Ch.3) is unchanged.

Cost: This adds a load to the teacher. It risks reading as “you must always be doing more.” Mitigation: the prose should land it as *honest* rather than *demanding*. The honest version: most of the burnout in education is from teachers who have stopped growing, not from teachers who are growing too much.

Decision: accept defer reject

R2.2 – Add the indigo-distinction to Honour Agency, resolving the verticality misreading

Where it docks: Chapter 4 (Honour Agency), in the “What Is Not Obvious About Agency” section that already says *honouring agency does not mean stepping back entirely*.

What changes: Add one paragraph clarifying that honouring agency is compatible with the teacher being further along the road than the child – the teacher is *horizontal in dignity, vertical in experience and accompaniment*.

Draft text:

Honouring agency does not mean the teacher is interchangeable, invisible, or has nothing to offer. The teacher has walked further down the road than the child. That is true and it matters. What honouring agency rules out is not the teacher’s experience – it is the teacher’s belief that the child should become a smaller version of the teacher. The teacher’s experience is offered as accompaniment, not as a destination. Think of it this way: a piece of cloth dipped repeatedly in indigo dye becomes ever more deeply blue – but the cloth never *becomes* the indigo. The dye does its work; the cloth becomes more fully itself. The teacher who honours agency does the same. She is present, repeatedly, deliberately, across years. She does not pretend to be unimportant. But she also does not expect the child to come out the other end resembling her. The child comes out the other end more fully *themselves*, deepened by the contact.

Why: The Phase 3 analysis identified a real risk that Honour Agency, read carefully, could be misread as forbidding any directional language about the teacher (mentor, model, guide). Soka's indigo metaphor — used by Ikeda in describing the mentor–disciple relationship — is the cleanest possible articulation of *vertical-in-experience, horizontal-in-dignity*. Borrowing the metaphor (with attribution in research notes) lets the LC sharpen Honour Agency without softening it.

What stays the same: The chapter's central claim — *the child is inherently agentic; the teacher's job is to remove obstacles* — is unchanged. This addition specifies what the teacher *is* doing, not what they are *not* doing.

Cost: The indigo image is borrowed. Attribution belongs in research notes. The body of the framework can use the image without naming Soka.

Decision: accept defer reject

R2.3 — Add long accompaniment as a structural dimension of Design Liberating Structure

Where it docks: Chapter 6 (Design Liberating Structure), as a new sub-section after the existing treatment of daily routines.

What changes: Add a section on *temporal* structure — designing not just the day and the week, but the relationship across years.

Draft text:

Structure across years, not only across days. Most of what this chapter has discussed is structure inside a single classroom over a single year — the routines, the expectations, the co-created norms that make a day predictable enough for children to take risks inside it. There is a longer structural question that schools rarely ask: *which adult in this building knows this child for more than ten months?* When a child moves from one grade to the next, the relational continuity is usually severed. The new teacher meets the child as a stranger; the old teacher loses the thread of a relationship that took a year to build. Intentional structure includes the longer time horizon. A school that wants to honour agency designs transitions so that some adult — a homeroom teacher across two years, a learning support specialist across the whole school, a head of section who actually knows each child by name and by growing edge — holds each child in mind across grade boundaries. This is structural too. It is not warmer than the daily routine; it is the daily routine extended across the years a child is in the building.

Why: Soka’s mentor–disciple relationship is structured for years, not units. The LC’s structure chapter is currently spatial and daily. Adding a temporal dimension closes a real gap and gives schools a new question to ask of themselves at the institutional level (which scales naturally with the LC’s existing “at every scale” framing).

What stays the same: Everything in the chapter on classroom routines, co-creation, expectations, freedom-through-structure.

Cost: This adds an institutional commitment that some schools cannot make (multi-grade looping is structurally hard). Mitigation: the section should frame it as a *question to ask*, not a mandate.

Decision: accept defer reject

R2.4 – Strengthen the “no child written off” commitment in Honour Agency and Cultivate Safety

Where it docks: Honour Agency Ch.4 (which already touches this through the *Plight of Adolescents* essay) and Cultivate Safety Ch.3.

What changes: Add an explicit sentence near the existing *Plight of Adolescents* citation, naming refusal-to-write-any-child-off as a *practice*, not a feeling.

Draft text:

Refusing to write a child off is not a feeling. It is a practice. It is something the teacher does — repeatedly, on bad days, with the child she is most tempted to give up on — and it is something she can be observed doing or not doing. The practice has a structure: she keeps the child in view (does not let them go invisible at the back of the room), she keeps the child in language (talks about them in staff meetings as a child with a future, not as a problem), and she keeps the child in expectation (says, out loud, “I expect this of you” when the child has done nothing yet to earn it). Every teacher loses children in some weeks. The teachers who lose them less are the teachers who have made refusing-to-write-off into a daily discipline rather than a personal disposition.

Why: The LC already has the conviction; the Phase 2 research found that Soka has the *practice form* of the same conviction. Naming it as a practice makes it actionable.

Cost: None significant.

Decision: accept defer reject

TIER 3 – Structural addition (1 recommendation, the deep one)

R3.1 – Name the framework’s purpose, in Mamta’s own voice, in the introduction

Where it docks: Chapter 1 (Introduction), as a new short section just before “How to Use This Guide” – or alternately, a single paragraph added to “What The Learning Conditions Is.”

What changes: The framework currently does not state what learning is *for*. It states what must be true for learning to be possible. The introduction adds one paragraph naming the purpose the conditions serve.

Why this is the deep recommendation. This is the only Tier 3 change in the document, and the entire Phase 3 analysis converges on it. Soka asks: *what is education for?* and answers: *the lifelong happiness of the learner*. The Learning Conditions has so far refused to answer this question – partly out of an instinct toward neutrality (so the framework can plug into IB, SEE Learning, writing workshop, anything), partly because Mamta’s own writing assumes the answer rather than naming it. The result is that careful readers reach the end of the practitioner guide with a sense that the framework knows what it is for but has not said so out loud. This is the gap that the “you already know something is missing” opening of Chapter 1 is gesturing at – and the gap remains gestured at, not closed.

The recommendation is that Mamta name her teleology, in her own words, without using Soka’s. She does not need the word *happiness*. She does not need *value creation*. What she needs is *one sentence that says what the conditions are for*.

Draft text – Option A (terse):

What the conditions are for

The four conditions are not their own purpose. Safety, agency, intentional language, liberating structure — these are not the point. They are what must be true in the room for the point to become reachable.

The point is this: every child in your room has a life ahead of them, and some part of how that life will go is being decided right now, in your room, by whether they are growing into the fullest version of themselves or shrinking into the safest version of themselves. The conditions exist so that the child can grow rather than shrink. There is no smaller way to say it that is still honest.

This is not a goal you measure on Friday. It is the question you should be asking, of every child in your room, every week: *is this child growing, or is this child shrinking?* If the answer is shrinking, no test score, no completed project, no compliant behaviour will redeem the week. If the answer is growing, almost everything else will follow.

Draft text — Option B (longer, more lyrical, closer to Mamta’s existing voice):

What the conditions are for

A reader who has made it this far deserves a question answered. We have spent eight pages saying that something is missing in classrooms, that conditions must be true before methods can work, that the four conditions are safety, agency, intentional language, liberating structure. We have not yet said what any of that is *for*.

The conditions are not their own purpose. They are what must be true in the room for something else to be possible – and that something else has to be named, or the framework is hollow at the centre.

Here it is, in plain words. Every child in your room has a life ahead of them. Some part of how that life will go is being decided right now, in your room, by whether the child is growing into the fullest version of themselves or shrinking into the safest. The conditions exist so the growing is possible. That is the entire point. Nothing else in this book matters if it does not serve that point.

You will not measure this on a Friday quiz. You will not see it in an end-of-year report. You will see it in the smaller, quieter signal that every honest teacher recognises and most school systems ignore: *light and fire in the eyes*, or its absence. When a child in your room has light and fire in her eyes, she is growing. When she does not, she is shrinking. The conditions are how you make growing more likely than shrinking. That is what they are for.

This is not a goal in the sense that “literacy by Grade 3” is a goal. It is closer to what gardeners mean when they say their job is not to make the plant grow. The conditions are the soil and light and water; the growing is the child’s. But the gardener who never asks *is this plant growing or is it shrinking* has stopped being a gardener and become a maintainer of pots. Do not become a maintainer of pots.

What stays the same: Every existing chapter. Every existing condition. Every existing self-assessment. The framework’s diagnostic character is unchanged – it still tells you what must be true *before* any method can work. What is added is one sentence about what the working is *for*.

Cost: This is the recommendation that costs the most to make and the most to refuse. Costs of making it: the framework becomes very slightly less universally pluggable; some readers who came for a neutral diagnostic tool will feel that it has taken a position; the introduction grows by one section. Costs of refusing it: the framework continues to have a hollow centre; careful readers continue to feel that “something is missing” without being told what; the practitioner guide implies a teleology in every chapter without ever naming one, which is a kind of evasiveness even when unintended.

Soka's role here. Soka is the *reason* this gap became visible. Mamta would not have asked the question without the suspicion that her framework was missing the influence of a tradition that did name a purpose. But Soka is not the *answer* – Mamta's answer is in her own voice, in her own words, drawing on her own corpus. Soka's contribution is permission and provocation, not vocabulary. This is the cleanest possible form of attribution: the research notes credit Soka and Makiguchi for raising the question; the framework body answers it in Mamta's voice.

Decision: accept defer reject

Summary of recommendations

ID	TIER	WHERE IT DOCKS	ONE-LINE SUMMARY	DECISION
R1.1	1	Speak with Intention (materials)	Three-move encouragement sentence-stem card	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1.2	1	Cultivate Safety (Ch.3)	Aesthetic care paragraph in physical safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1.3	1	Introduction note	Add Makiguchi-tradition method credit	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1.4	1	Design Liberating Structure (Ch.6)	Daily orienting frame as a structural example	<input type="checkbox"/>
R1.5	1	Implementation handout	Observe → apperceive → apply lesson scaffold	<input type="checkbox"/>
R2.1	2	Intentionality (Ch.2)	Add “Keeps growing” as sixth element of intentional practice	<input type="checkbox"/>
R2.2	2	Honour Agency (Ch.4)	Indigo distinction: vertical in experience, horizontal in dignity	<input type="checkbox"/>
R2.3	2	Design Liberating Structure (Ch.6)	Long accompaniment as temporal structure	<input type="checkbox"/>
R2.4	2	Honour Agency / Cultivate Safety	“Refusing to write off” as named practice	<input type="checkbox"/>
R3.1	3	Introduction (Ch.1)	Name what the conditions are for, in Mamta's voice	<input type="checkbox"/>

Total: 10 recommendations (5 Tier 1, 4 Tier 2, 1 Tier 3).

Rejected by analysis (do not propose):

- A fifth condition
- Renaming any condition
- Religious or Buddhist framing in the body
- Soka vocabulary (*hagemashi*, *kyōiku*, *ningen kyōiku*) in the body
- Empirical Soka outcome claims as foundation

Recommended attribution model: Soka and Makiguchi credited fully in research documentation (research/soka/) and in academic citations on the website’s research/credits page. The practitioner guide body remains in Mamta’s voice; one method-credit line in the “How This Framework Was Built” note (R1.3) is the only place Soka’s tradition appears in the body, and even there it is described rather than named (“an elementary school principal in Japan in 1930”).

Phase 1 Framing Brief

1. Origin of the request

Mamta is a devout Buddhist. She has built and is preparing to publish *The Learning Conditions* — a four-condition diagnostic framework (Cultivate Safety · Honour Agency · Speak with Intention · Design Liberating Structure) drawn from 19 essays of classroom practice across India and Canada (2018–2026), grounded in IB PYP, SEE Learning, and humanistic leadership traditions.

She loves the framework. But she carries a private discomfort: **she has not deeply studied Soka Education**, and she suspects — without being able to articulate why — that her framework may be incomplete without its influence. She feels guilty that as a practising Buddhist she does not know how Soka pedagogy relates to what she has built.

This is the question we are answering for her.

2. What success looks like

A research-grade report to Mamta that:

1. Gives her **a working understanding of Soka Education** — focused on classroom methods and teacher strategies, not religious or organisational dimensions — accessible enough that she can speak to it confidently.
2. Conducts an **honest comparative analysis** between Soka pedagogy and the four Learning Conditions, naming convergences, extensions, *and* genuine tensions.
3. Proposes **concrete, tiered modifications** — from “no change, implementation only” to “structural reframing” — each with draft text so she can react to specifics, not abstractions.
4. Resolves the guilt: by the end she should know whether Soka belongs in her framework, where, and how — or whether the framework already embodies what matters and the convergence is itself the answer.

3. Hard constraints (from Mamta)

CONSTRAINT	IMPLICATION
Soka influence is inspiration, not brand	No explicit Soka labelling in the practitioner-facing framework. Attribution lives in research docs only.
Focus on teaching methods and classroom strategies	Skip Soka Gakkai’s religious/political/organisational dimensions. Methods first, philosophy only as it shapes method.
Mamta is not a Soka expert	The report must be a primer as well as an analysis. No assumed prior knowledge.
Existing citations stay	SEE Learning, Humanistic Leadership, Vygotsky, Responsive Classroom, the 19-essay corpus — these remain foundational. Soka is additive, not replacement.
Honesty over comfort	Surface real tensions even when uncomfortable. Mamta has explicitly authorised this.
Live web sources	Use WebFetch / WebSearch on academic + Ikeda Center sources. Cite everything.

4. Research questions driving Phase 2

These are the questions we need Phase 2 (Soka Domain Research) to answer:

RQ1. What are the *observable classroom practices* of Soka educators? What does a Soka classroom look like, sound like, feel like — minute to minute?

RQ2. What is Makiguchi’s “value-creating pedagogy” (*sōka kyōiku*) — not as philosophy, but as a teaching method? What did he prescribe teachers actually do?

RQ3. What is the role of *encouragement* (*hagemashi*) in Soka pedagogy — and is it a named, deliberate teaching practice or a general disposition?

RQ4. What is the role of *dialogue* in Soka pedagogy — between teacher and student, student and student, and student and self?

RQ5. How does Soka pedagogy understand the **purpose** of education? (Hypothesis: “the happiness of the learner” — and if so, this is a stronger teleological claim than the Learning Conditions currently makes.)

RQ6. How does Soka understand the **teacher** – as authority, as fellow learner, as mentor? How does the mentor–disciple relationship work in a classroom (vs. its religious meaning)?

RQ7. How does Soka pedagogy treat each individual child? (Hypothesis: “cherishing each student” as a named practice – relational specificity.)

RQ8. What does Soka education say about **the teacher’s own development and wellbeing** – does the framework treat the educator as a learner too?

RQ9. What empirical / academic evidence exists for Soka educational outcomes? (For attribution credibility.)

RQ10. Where do existing comparative studies place Soka in relation to Dewey, Freire, Montessori, Vygotsky, Buddhist pedagogy more broadly? (To locate it in a landscape Mamta already knows.)

5. Scope boundaries (what we will NOT research)

- Soka Gakkai International as a religious/lay Buddhist organisation
- Nichiren Buddhist doctrinal content beyond what directly shapes pedagogical stance
- Soka schools’ enrolment, governance, finance, politics
- Daisaku Ikeda’s biography or peace activism, except where it directly informs pedagogical writing
- Any sectarian or apologetic content

6. Hypotheses to test

These are *predictions* the analysis phase will confirm, refine, or reject:

- **H1 (Strong convergence):** Honour Agency and Soka’s “inherent capability of every learner” / “Buddha-nature” intuition will turn out to be the same idea expressed in different vocabularies. The Learning Conditions is already half-Soka without knowing it.
- **H2 (Likely extension):** Soka treats *encouragement* as a deliberate, named, structural teaching practice. The Learning Conditions touches this inside Speak with Intention but does not name it. This is a candidate Tier 2 addition.
- **H3 (Likely extension):** Soka treats *dialogue* as the primary modality of learning. The Learning Conditions does not name dialogue as a method. Candidate addition.

- **H4 (Likely extension):** Soka treats *the teacher's own happiness and growth* as a condition of student learning, not separate from it. The Learning Conditions extends safety to adults but does not extend *growth* to adults. Candidate refinement of Intentionality.
- **H5 (Real tension):** Soka's mentor-disciple structure has a verticality that Honour Agency does not have. Resolving this honestly may be the hardest part of the report.
- **H6 (Real tension):** Soka explicitly names "happiness of the learner" as the *sole purpose* of education. The Learning Conditions is purpose-neutral — it diagnoses conditions, it does not name a teleology. This is a deep philosophical difference that has to be addressed.
- **H7 (Validation, not change):** When all is said and done, the Learning Conditions will not need a fifth condition. Mamta's structural intuition that the four conditions are exhaustive will hold. But the *contents* of several conditions may deepen.

7. Decisions made before Phase 2

- **Output directory:** research/soka/
- **Final report length target:** ~25 pages main body + ~25 pages appendices
- **Web sources:** authorised, must be cited
- **Tension surfacing:** authorised, mandatory
- **Live interview with Mamta:** declined; we work from the prompt and the practitioner guide
- **Attribution model:** academic citations in research docs; the framework itself stays unbranded; a single discreet acknowledgement line in research/credits is acceptable

8. What Phase 2 will produce

research/soka/02-soka-domain-report.md — structured deep dive answering RQ1-RQ10, organised by:

- Foundational philosophy (thin layer)
- Classroom teaching methods and strategies (the heart)
- The teacher's stance and development
- Empirical and academic sources
- Buddhist roots that shape method

Heavy on observable practice. Light on doctrine. Every claim cited.