

tinkering**school**



HI!
I'M GEVER TULLEY, AND
THIS IS THE COMIC BOOK
OF THE TALK I GAVE AT
TED 2009.*



**SOMEWHAT EXPANDED.
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GEVER TULLEY, 2009. GEVER@TINKERINGSCHOOL.COM*

IS THAT A STICK?

YOU KNOW THE
RULE ABOUT
STICKS.

THIS IS THE MOMENT THAT I STARTED
CREATING TINKERING SCHOOL.



A PLACE WHERE KIDS CAN PICK UP STICKS, AND HAMMERS, AND OTHER DANGEROUS OBJECTS AND BE TRUSTED.



TRUSTED NOT TO HURT THEMSELVES, TRUSTED NOT TO HURT OTHERS.



IT'S A PLACE WHERE CHILDREN ARE GIVEN THE FREEDOM TO BUILD, AND DESTROY, AND FAIL IN A WAY THAT IS VERY DIFFERENT FROM HOW THEY ARE NOW TAUGHT AT SCHOOL OR HOME.

TINKERING SCHOOL DOES NOT FOLLOW A SET CURRICULUM; THERE ARE NO TESTS, AND WE DON'T SET OUT TO TEACH ANYONE ANY SPECIFIC THING.



WHEN KIDS ARRIVE, THEY ARE CONFRONTED WITH LOTS OF "STUFF" - ROPES, WHEELS, WOODEN PLANKS, CARDBOARD, DUCT TAPE AND TOOLS, LOTS OF REAL TOOLS.



IT'S A TWELVE-HOUR-
PER-DAY, SIX-DAY
IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE.



WHICH ALLOWS US TO
OFFER THE KIDS TIME -
A COMMODITY THAT
SEEMS IN SHORT
SUPPLY IN THEIR OVER-
BOOKED LIVES.

OUR GOAL IS TO
ENSURE THAT THEY
LEAVE WITH A BETTER
SENSE OF HOW TO
MAKE THINGS THAN
THEY HAD WHEN THEY
ARRIVED...



AND THE REALIZATION THAT
THEY CAN FIGURE THINGS OUT..



BY FOOLING AROUND.



AS IN LIFE, NOTHING EVER
TURNS OUT AS PLANNED.



EVER.



THEY SOON LEARN, THAT
ALL PROJECTS GO AWRY.



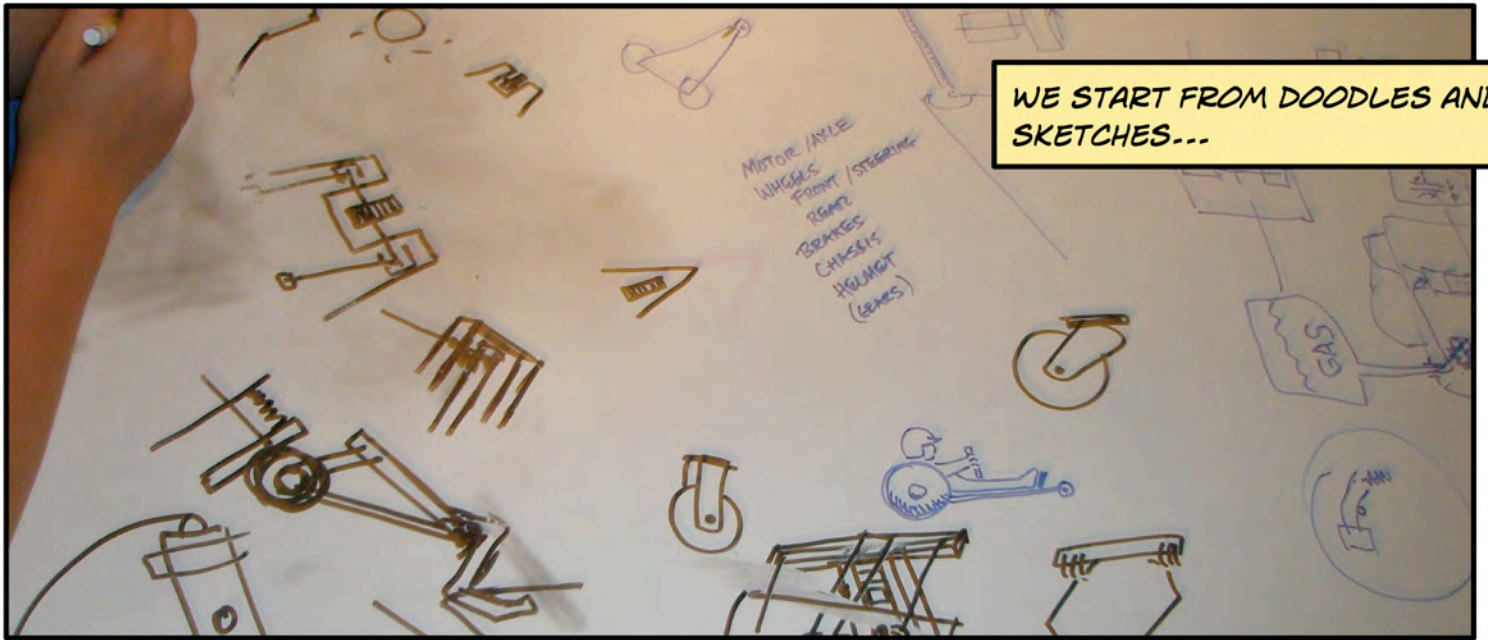
AND BECOME AT EASE
WITH THE IDEA THAT
EVERY STEP IN A
PROJECT...



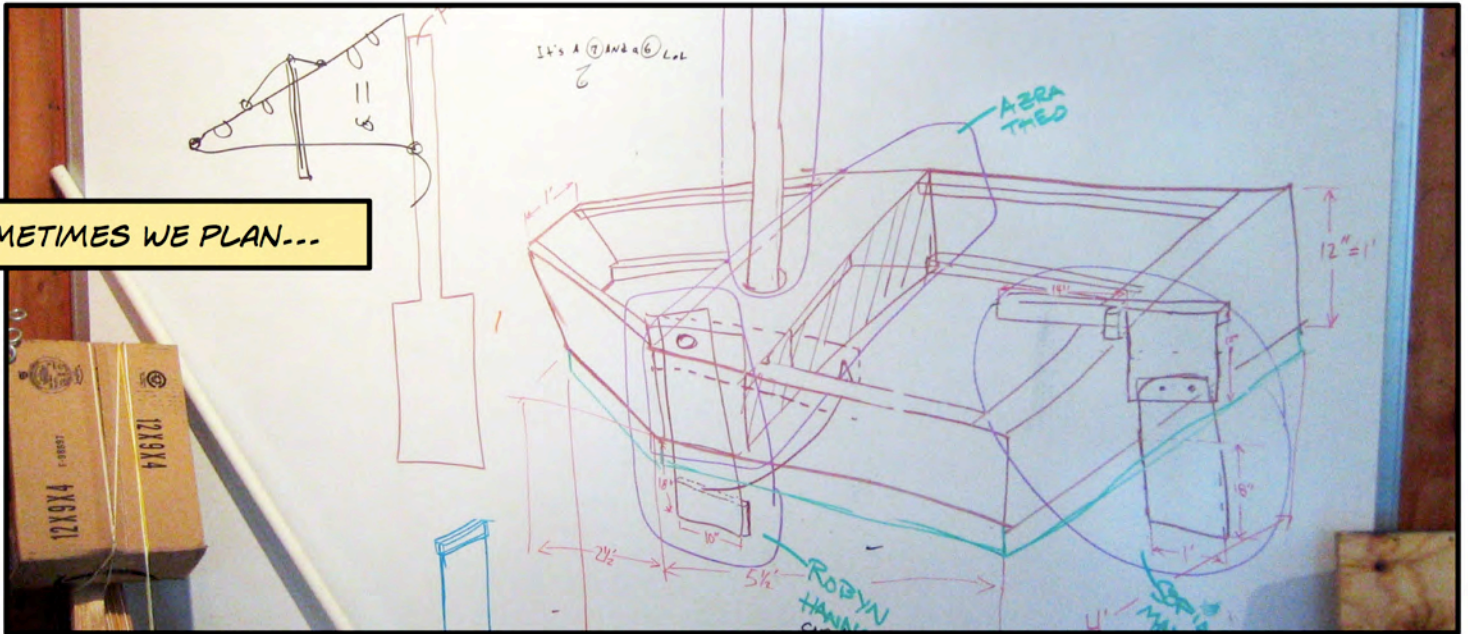
IS A STEP CLOSER TO
SWEET SUCCESS...



OR GLEEFUL CALAMITY!



WE START FROM DOODLES AND SKETCHES...



SOMETIMES WE PLAN...



SOMETIMES WE JUST START BUILDING.

*BUILDING IS AT THE HEART
OF THE EXPERIENCE...*



*...HANDS ON, FULLY COMMITTED,
AND DEEPLY IMMersed.*



ACTING AS COLLABORATORS, MORE THAN INSTRUCTORS, ROBYN AND I KEEP THE CHAOTIC LANDSCAPE OF THE PROJECTS TILTED TOWARDS COMPLETION.



SUCCESS IS IN THE DOING...



AND FAILURES ARE CELEBRATED AND ANALYZED.

PROBLEMS BECOME PUZZLES...



AND OBSTACLES DISAPPEAR.



WHEN FACED WITH DIFFICULT
SETBACKS, A SURPRISING
BEHAVIOR SPONTANEOUSLY
EMERGES...



DECORATION.



DECORATION, YOU SEE, IS A FORM OF CONCEPTUAL INCUBATION.



BY KEEPING THEIR HANDS ON THE PROJECT, THEY REFINE THEIR INTUITIVE UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THEY ARE BUILDING, AND THE MATERIALS THEY ARE BUILDING WITH.



AND, FROM THESE INTERLUDES COME INTUITIVE LEAPS, LEADING TO NEW APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM THAT HAD THEM FRUSTRATED JUST TWENTY MINUTES EARLIER.



EVERY MATERIAL
HAS POTENTIAL -
EVEN THOSE
UBIQUITOUS PLASTIC
GROCERY BAGS...



---BECAME A BRIDGE---





---AMAZE EVEN THEMSELVES.



A TRUSS BRIDGE.



A ROLLERCOASTER.



THEY TAKE THESE IDEAS HOME...



...AND BUILD MORE INCREDIBLE THINGS.



TINKERING SCHOOL IS
A LAB, THAT CALLS
ITSELF A SCHOOL.



A PLACE TO TINKER WITH
THE VERY IDEA OF SCHOOL.

THE END.

IT WAS MY GREAT PLEASURE TO PARTICIPATE IN TED 2009. FOR MORE AMAZING IDEAS AND GRAND NOTIONS, PLEASE VISIT [HTTP://WWW.TED.COM](http://www.ted.com)

ADDENDUM



THE WORLD IS A MARVELOUSLY COMPLICATED PLACE, AND SIMPLE RULES ARE INSUFFICIENT TO PROTECT KIDS FROM DANGER.



LET THEM ENGAGE WITH REAL TOOLS AND MATERIALS...



AND THEY WILL LEARN TO RECOGNIZE AND MANAGE RISK FOR THEMSELVES.

*WE, THE ADULTS, ARE ALL
SUPERHEROS, ENDOWED WITH
THE POWER OF SUPERVISION.*

*LET US USE OUR POWERS
WISELY AND BE AMAZED AT
WHAT CHILDREN CAN DO.*

THE END.

