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ABSTRACT

Learning can be optimally facilitated by understanding larger social and cultural factors in society, and by including aspects of social group membership and social identity in learning spaces. Meaningful learning discusses what aspects of experience meaning arises from, and how it motivates individuals to achieve success in social space. This work also continues forward and describes the construction of learning spaces and technological systems for the advancement of education in the classroom. The work concludes with the rationalization that existing accountability measures are failing academic institutions and offers an example solution for the accurate measure of student learning performance as well as a measure of instructor accountability as a part of the education community.

PREFACE

The first thing to recognize when asking how best to teach a meaningful lesson, is that teaching is a multidisciplinary function within the larger social context, it is the act of helping to empower someone through the instruction of knowledge. While there are conventional techniques, pedagogies, andragogies, and systems of thinking according to the attribution theory of human motivation; largely the western or individualist cultural context lends itself to a kind of teaching that is systematic, and as educators we talk a lot about how best to engage students or to foster deep learning.

One of the things to think about as a part of this introduction is, *what really does motivate people to learn or to otherwise achieve goals in the larger social milieu?*. Bernard Weiner (2010), writes extensively about the motivational theory known as attribution theory, or the idea that people have a perceived value to which they assign to making an accomplishment, and to this he adds that some people may be very reluctant to achieve if they perceive a risk of failure unless motivated by highly valued tasks, which he then says a sense of ambiguous personal meaning may influence; but he also wrote that he had not fully evaluated *meaning*. As an author I took this as a challenge and I sought to integrate systems for understanding human motivation in a way that describes meaning and the motivations which people have to become empowered and to enrich and enliven themselves in a way that benefits the larger society through prosocial change and the development of expertise. To add to the challenge learned helplessness is also a part of the attribution theory of human motivation which exists when individuals perceive that their efforts or actions and the outcomes of experience are not related, and demonstrates the harmfulness of non-volitional experience where individuals cannot influence easily the outcome of their efforts; some individuals can be said to generalize learned helplessness from one context to another and some may not assume a lack

of control between failure situations that are dissimilar (Alloy, Peterson, Abramson & Seligman, 1984). Whether failure is assumed to be the outcome of a lack of autonomy or personal ability to affect the outcomes of experience in every situation, or whether it is considered during each failure in dissimilar situations which lack personal control, seems to be a matter of personality or of something which some other variable is involved.

Attribution theory could be said to be the *conventional* wisdom regarding motivation in education, remembering that teaching is a multidisciplinary task, the first thing that I can impart to the reader is that there are many *traditional* systems for understanding and learning that are often overlooked by the machination of standards and rubrics we have collectively created in the system which describes only a view of the value of achievement. Traditional teaching involves holding the space for a group of students and being able to respond to the needs of students and to *hear as much as to speak*. Traditional methods for peacemaking for example, involve large amounts of dialogue and group process in a way that facilitates meaningful community understanding (Pranis, 2005). Peacemaking is a method that has found a renewed interest in criminal justice circles, and it is respectively a way of re-publicizing a method which has roots in traditional culture and human history that was otherwise unaffected by the assembly-line view of encouraging achievement. This is one example of a cross-disciplined awareness which comes from a field well outside of the mainstream teaching practice that can help educators better understand how to facilitate deep and engaged learning.

The purpose of this text is to describe *meaningful learning* and to present in one succinct handbook a few of the interdisciplinary approaches that will benefit the mainstream educator in the process of educating their respective populations, in a way that is evidence-based according to

established theories of motivation and learning; this as he or she begins implementing her or his strategy for facilitating learning that is *communally-constructivist, epistemically-engaged*, while creating links to the larger life-context in a *community-oriented* system of knowledge and epistemic framework.

INTRODUCTION

Rapidly establishing a positive relationship with the learning group and, respectively, the individuals in the group is firstly the most essential task in the classroom. In this context it is referred to as the rapid establishment of rapport. My greatest example of the necessity to be a good listener and a good communicator comes from Jefferson County, Colorado in 2014. In 2014 Colorado secondary students had organized a rally (CBS Local, 2014). They had referred to as the State of the Student rally, which has an internet resource available (<http://denver.cbslocal.com/2014/03/03/students-hold-state-of-the-student-address-at-capitol-for-education-reform/>), and it was largely unsuccessful in that there were a large number of student demonstrators present but no public involvement; there was media coverage of the rally, but it did not include the message of the rally that consisted of a complaint from the students themselves that the standardized and automated testing system in Colorado, USA was a symptom of institutionalized racism, and a demonstration of the need for better reforms. My role as the students demonstrated was one of listening and then repeating and reporting, I listened to the demonstrations and I met with the student who led them at the Jefferson County Open School in Lakewood, Colorado; and I reported my findings in a written letter to The President of The United States. As the movement in the United States grew stronger, new federal legislation would change the state of education reform throughout the entire country, this first story will serve as a prototypical theme through this writing which will carry the message of the need for strong communication and leadership in the teaching profession.

Rapport

I am not just a scholar of education I spend time volunteering with The American Red Cross, and the best example of quickly establishing positive rapport that facilitates adaptation and learning comes from one of those experiences. Teaching is an interdisciplinary practice and so it is always relevant to think of the other practices which blend in well with the development of teaching and learning relationships in the classroom.

Remember that students just like people who are in crisis, are seeking some answer to a problem, and they are motivating themselves usually to find the resources that they need to solve the problem. In the context of the classroom, this is a student versus rubrics dynamic, the student is being asked to meet the standards of the course. In crisis intervention the client is seeking to meet immediate needs and to establish some sense of stability in future outcomes from a situation where there is not yet any immediate solution, there are some ways in which these experiences overlap for students and for clients in the field, students are seeking to succeed to find the best outcomes for their occupations of the future. So, I approached a client and I had been informed by the fire captain that the client's home had burned and that he would not be allowed to stay, he was resting in the back of one of his cars and it was a Subaru hatchback, and I approached him and I said "So, nice space you have here." and as I expected he immediately assumed I was referring to the house that he was living in prior to the disaster and he commented on the home, my immediate response was "No, I mean this space that you're sitting in with this car and the

hatchback protecting us from the rain.”. You see this intervention took his place of focus away from the losses that had happened to his immediate surroundings, and in a way that helped him to engage existing skills, his response was “Yeah, I’ve lived in this car I drove around the country once, I remember those times they were good.”. This is an example of rapidly establishing positive rapport. This is an essential microskill to be well-versed in and it almost always has to do with listening to the immediate moment, immediate needs, and immediate steps that can be taken toward success. In crisis intervention the establishment of positive rapport is discussed thoroughly, Roberts & Yeager (2009), have a great text about a system for crisis intervention but one of the things they wrote best about was the rapid establishment of positive rapport. According to Roberts & Yeager (2009), positive rapport essentially comes from “genuineness, respect, and acceptance of (the individual)” (p. 42).

The focal point of this bit on establishing positive and professional rapport is that as a teacher you will be expected to interact closely with students. In the method of teaching which is based on rubrics, Goodwin & Hubbell (2013), state that the best way to frame the conflicting dynamics for the student in the classroom is to act as a facilitator for the student to process her or his own motivation for meeting the rubrics in the course, the conflicting needs are then between the student’s intrinsic motivation and rubrics and not the student and the instructor. This way, a consulting relationship between student and educator forms, in order to facilitate the student’s success in meeting the rubrics, this is a process of communication that requires positive rapport; the best way to understand this set of microskills is to

examine fields where they are most important and critically employed, such as in counseling and crisis intervention.

Social Roles and Rites

An awareness of social groups and the roles of social groups in the local community, school, and classroom is essential to fostering an engaging environment that can nurture the rich meaningful experiences that educators in the current marketplace seek to facilitate. This role cannot be understated in that a functioning classroom is a large part of the community around the school as employers, parents, and administrators are also community stakeholders in the education which happens there. From an interpersonal perspective social groups provide a large part of the salient individual social identities which young people tend to demonstrate as a part of an awareness of the surrounding culture, as well as the cultural memes and texts that demonstrate communally held values, prototypes, and stereotypes in the collective social space. Social groups establish this social identity for individuals who experience increased self-esteem and motivation as a part of the process of self-identification with larger social groups within the context of the prevailing society (Tasdemir, 2011). Collective values are often found within mass media texts and presentations in a shared social space such as movies, television shows, music, video games, magazines, and modern culture in the west in general (Holtzman, 2000). Meaningful experience from the transpersonal motivational perspective is something which comes from transcending into the larger life-context and being cognizant of social group membership and recognition as a part of the larger society (Koltko-Rivera, 2010). Meaning and intrinsic motivation can be viewed in this way from the transpersonal paradigm, so the definition of meaningful learning is that

learning that *is recognized and useful to the larger society* (such as social *rites of passage*), but that also *establishes social group membership* and a salient interpersonal *expression of identity*. Rites of passage usually consist of a formalized ceremony for recognition, though some differences may exist to make them relevant to modern culture, in the west they consist mainly of graduation ceremonies and peer initiations as a part of social group membership (Delaney, 1995). The resource which this handbook creates for the reader is a brief introduction to the interdisciplinary fields of study that contribute to facilitating effective meaningful learning environments and traditional learning practices which facilitate social recognition.

Constructivism / Connectivism

Socially-constructed epistemologies for the acquisition of knowledge. A lot of people mention that they may wish to do things pragmatically, or refer to pragmatism, but pragmatism is a system of knowledge which assumes that any individual with the appropriate skills for acquiring knowledge about a given subject will arrive at the same conclusions as other individuals with similar skill-sets; the process of peer-review as we know it is a pragmatic, socially engaged, and self-regulating system of knowledge that helps ensure that scientific studies are reliable and repeatable for the sake of objectivity. Constructivism is a like-minded system of creating systems of knowledge such as pragmatism and communally building upon the skill sets needed to create and maintain the epistemology for the communities of inquiry developing the knowledge base. Driver, Asoko, Leach, Scott

& Mortimer (1994), establish that classrooms can facilitate constructivist environments that are continuously engaged and intrinsically motivated as the classroom becomes a functional group that can develop and maintain the groups best-of-fit epistemology for discovering knowledge of a subject and communally seeking to develop the knowledge base of the class as a group. Shea & Bidjerano (2009; 2010), establish that the social aspect of communities of learning fosters what is termed *epistemic engagement* that from a literal standpoint is a self-regulating system of constructing knowledge in the context of the classroom as a group, the groups are termed *communities of inquiry* and that subject will be returned to later in this writing. Constructivism has been shown to be a theory of knowledge which can be engineered to better facilitate *intrinsically motivated* and *self-directed* learning (Conradie, 2014). In a comparison of whether natural circumstances and physiology influenced constructive epistemologies, constructivism was reliable and valid, but still could be further improved by making learning environments more socially inclusive knowledge-constructing communities (Phillips, 1995).

Learning is a group process and establishing meaningful learning, as previously written; depends on interpersonal skill sets among class members and individual self-transcendence into the group milieu, through the contributions of knowledge and achievement that become a part of the larger life context. Meaningful learning happens in the group context as individuals begin to self-identify with social groups in the classrooms, schools, places of employment, and shared social spaces in the larger community through contributions to shared experience and

learning in the classroom as a part of the larger community. Techniques for engaging the community and develop meaningful learning which are also accountable will be discussed as a part of the content of this text.

Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation

Cmar, Bektas & Aslan (2011), create a system for understanding motivational theories in the workplace which correlates intrinsic motivation with *interest, enjoyment, and inherent satisfaction*; while correlating extrinsic motivation with the salience of extrinsic *rewards, egocentrism, valence of activity, and a synthesis of organizational goals*. The study cites Deci & Ryan (2000), while establishing the differences between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation which contrasts the *perceived locus of causality* with intrinsic and extrinsic as well as amotivational states. Understanding the difference between internally motivated accomplishments and externally motivated accomplishments is very useful to educators, the self-directed student may have more intrinsic regulatory styles while individuals who are motivated by external factors may need guided instruction. Intrinsic motivation is sought after as a part of *meaningful learning* because the individual begins to experience accomplishment in the context of the larger society, and is influenced by internal desires to achieve. Another thing to consider is that it takes young students time to internalize cognitive skills for learning which are intrinsic from the larger community through socialization, and over time students begin to internalize the desire to learn and become more independently motivated. A meta-analysis of theories of

human motivation concluded that students may display affective patterns of behavior which are influenced mostly by the self-perception of competence or autonomy (Seifert, 2012). A unified approach to understanding motivation suggests that students seek to intrinsically learn in order to be competent and in control of the outcomes involved in their respective educational experiences.

MEANING

Defining Meaningful Learning

One of the things that should be said about meaningful learning is that ideally it cultivates a kind of peak experience where the individual discovers a connection with the larger community and life-context, as though it were intended to be that way. Abraham Maslow (1974), in his later work had studied the context of meaning and elaborated it as different kinds of actualized cognition which he characterized as a dynamic between deficiency-need cognition and being-cognition. Being cognition was something which was cultivated out of the awareness and openness to the peak experience which was by and large a mindful experience of connection with the larger ecology, this ecology can be the social space or the natural space, or the metaphysical spaces which people inhabit.

Learning as Rites

I was a lifelong student at a democratic public school in Jefferson County, Colorado USA called the Jefferson County Open School, and before that there were two schools the Tanglewood Open Living School and Mountain Open High School. Growing up in that system a student learns to be a functional part of the larger democratic community through student governance, but in better terms the student learns to self-evaluate and report learning in terms of the personal, social, intellectual, and spiritual domains that the student inhabits as a part of the larger ecology. The process of

bringing independent learning experience into the larger community is meant to foster the shift between extrinsically and intrinsically motivated learning, but it is also transpersonal and can be described as a way in which some students learn to transition from deficiency-need cognition described by Maslow, toward being-cognition which is an awareness that is fully mindful and present to being a part of the larger community and ecology as a whole. Daniel Goleman (2009), elaborates an epistemology for understanding human intelligence as a part of the awareness of the larger ecology, which he calls ecological intelligence. Social and cognitive presence is also described in later academic research as a part of the creation of *epistemically-engaged and self-regulating* learning groups called *communities of inquiry*, and in that perception of the shift between extrinsically and intrinsically motivated learning, the social and cognitive presence of the instructor to the group facilitates the social presence of the students who then begin creating their communities of inquiry environment through the social atmosphere of the classroom or e-learning program (Shea & Bidjerano, 2009; 2010). One thing to consider is as blended learning develops there are many blended learning computer systems being developed for use during classroom time, incorporating the social aspect of learning in these systems appears to be the goal of communities of inquiry research. Also another thing to keep in mind is the classroom environment itself sends signals to the students about the kinds of expectations there might be in the space, one web log article (<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/does-your-classroom-tell-story-stacey-goodman>) evaluates the importance of the

appearance of the classroom and the learning environment that may also influence the engagement of the students in the learning (Goodman, 2014). The social space created by the classroom and also the stakeholders and participants in the classroom can be a determining factor in whether students begin motivating themselves away from extrinsic factors and become intrinsically engaged and willing to actualize learning through being-cognition and the cultivation of peak experiences. The learning experienced from a place of being-cognition and the mindful and socially present peak experience is then relevant and meaningful in the larger personal, social, intellectual, and spiritual contexts of the learning community.

Passages

At Jefferson County Open School, a public democratic school in Colorado, USA; Passages are independent projects conducted by the student with community engagement and support as modelled after traditional rites of passage as shown by earlier aboriginal and tribal cultures previous to the advent of modern technology and futuristic ideals about education. These tribal approaches to modern technological systems are also taking place in criminal justice and public administration circles. Peacemaking for criminal justice systems and circle processes for conflict resolution, mediation, and victim-offender conferencing have been researched as a means of observing traditional approaches to these needs and then academically supporting the traditional methods with knowledge of their efficacy in social space (Schirch, 2004; Pranis, 2005). The reader should note that

these citations are to useful handbooks about the practical implementation of peacemaking methods and circle processes that can also be useful during conflicts in the classroom space. Qualitative analysis of rites and social meaning have been conducted in criminal justice circles where it has been found that Hispanic populations who have conflicts with the law create their own social rites and recognized behaviors as a part of dealing with acculturative stress and because the existing education system does not provide these meaningful experiences (Holleran & Jung, 2005). It seems that an awareness of meaningful experience has been found to be mutually benevolent in terms of education and also in terms of criminal justice systems. The learning system called *walkabout* at the Jefferson County Open School high school is based on applying traditional walkabout rites as interpreted in modern culture as an independent foray into society to discover the meaning of a purposefully described knowledge, that is arranged through a series of support meetings and essays generated by the student, with a group of educators and peers reviewing the proposal and wrap-up processes. Students decide on a subject of learning, propose the *walkabout* Passage into the discovery of the learning, and then report back to the supporting group of students and educators about the discoveries observed during the learning. This is analogous to the Aboriginal *walkabout* as observed as young people of a certain age are sent into the forests alone to walkabout and learn about the experience of living as a part of the natural environment. As a young person in a tribal culture might walk into the wilderness, a student conducting a Passage forays into the professional fields and communities needed

to discover the knowledge associated with the Passage during the proposal process. The areas required for study by the *walkabout* program at the school are rites that take place as an adventure, for the seeking of practical skills, the awareness of global culture and global issues in a globalized economy, for expressing creativity and developing the arts, for the logical inquiry of a scientific field of study, and for the relevant exploration of workplaces and the discovery of the student's career track in the global economy. The Jefferson County Open School (JCOS) also creates extended trip opportunities for learning about specific subjects, such as trips to Paris for students learning the French language, or more adventurous pursuits such as cooperation with the Boundary Waters program or for social learning experiences such as river rafting. The learning which students return with after a Passage or an extended trip finds meaning because it is connected to the larger community through social supports, and also because it creates social connection in the interpersonal spaces created by Passages, the democratic governance of the high school itself, and extended trips. JCOS is located in Lakewood, Colorado and is a part of the Jefferson County, Colorado public school system.

Culture and Cultural Frameworks

People talk a lot about extrinsic versus intrinsic motivation. Externally motivated people are motivated by external factors and externally imposed consequences, intrinsically motivated people tend to set their own goals and are motivated by meaningful experience. One thing that should be mentioned about the Jefferson County Open School is that it works best for intrinsically motivated students, and previous in this writing the text has discussed the facilitation of meaningful experience in the larger social context. Before the author moves much further with the ideas presented here about culture and cultural texts, a framework must be established for the author's perspective and how it can be related to a cultural framework. Academics aside, the origin of my writing is as a white male who grew up as a socially disadvantaged individual, in terms of my childhood I was a late bloomer as a boy and I was the recipient of a lot of negative perceptions and bullying throughout my education. I spent a large amount of my time being educated studying the eastern thought practices and religions from other cultures in order to understand my own from a point of contrast. I was never wealthy, I had always struggled with financial burdens and many of my goals were unreachable because of financial constraints. I do not consider myself otherwise disadvantaged socially but my value system and system for understanding society comes entirely from a herding *culture of honor* throughout my entire experience as an individual living in Lakewood, Colorado USA.

Cross cultural dynamics are best understood by contrasting eastern and western thinking, and textbooks have been written which indicate that in a globalized economy the epistemology for understanding cross-cultural dynamics is better stated the collective (eastern) business philosophy contrasted with the independent achievement (western) context of motivation in the workplace (Shiraev & Levy, 2010). Cultural differences in the motivation to learn tend to contrast between collective viewpoints which value the larger ecology and the successes of the larger group, with individualist viewpoints which harbor the idea that nature must be controlled in order to maintain independent autonomy (Dimitrov, 2005). It is important for me as the author to declare that the framework which I operate from is primarily western, I grew up in an individualist culture, and the social groups I belong to are as I had mentioned. The United States maintains a cultural hegemony, that is to say that the modern cultural texts such as movies and television broadcasts define for the rest of the global population the shared values expressed through American media which is pervasive and received by virtually every nation in the world (Holtzman, 2000). My life changed considerably when I began to understand this cultural dynamic, and I began to evaluate culture as a part of understanding social identity theory and the examination of interpersonal stereotypes and prototypes as elaborated in the previous writing about social groups. In later writing I evaluated the escalation of attitudes in American media and modern culture, and I understood that the cultural experience was cyclical and had become very masculine and violent during the time of war experienced in The United States (Hixson, 2012a; Hixson

2012b). From the research I would suggest asking many young people to do such a cultural analysis because it provides a chance to critically evaluate the reciprocal influences which exist between individual attitudes and mass media. What is entirely necessary to understand about mass media and the shared values expressed through the movies, music, video games, television shows, and popular internet culture in the western cultural context; is that it *reciprocally influences a student's decisions about meaning and identity*. As people are educated they discover more about the social groups which they belong to and begin self-identifying with available stereotypes and also classifying others with the information available from those stereotypes, which is not necessarily a negative factor, stereotypes allow people to rapidly gain some information about one another and the social groups which individuals may inhabit. As people learn more about one another they tend to move away from stereotypical categorizations and start understanding a more salient identity that becomes known through shared experience. One of the things about understanding intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation much like the difference between independent and collective cultural values, is that people are typically seeking a salient social identity that can be expressed through the recognition of social group involvement as previously written; this motivation is internalized by the desire to belong as described in Abraham Maslow's work previous to his discoveries of being-cognition. Gestalt psychology best describes the use of analogy and storytelling as a part of the process of learning that is intrinsically motivated. Joseph Zinker (1977), describes a psychological theory about learning as it is

motivated by underlying needs for learning and the outwardly discovered information which satiates the needs for the learning, he describes it in a way that is not unlike human metabolism. Zinker (1977), is describing motivation as a series of contacts between the underlying need to resolve knowledge and the objective knowledge itself which solves the problem. Zinker (1977), also writes extensively about storytelling and the use of analogy as human beings experience learning through analogous representations of events and identity. Mass media in the context of The United States mainstreams cultural values and makes available stereotypes and systems of self-identification that are made aware to the larger culture and that individuals tend to use in order to understand social group status and identity through analogy (Holtzman, 2000). The internalized desire to learn therefore comes from the internalized desire to belong, and an understanding of the expectations of the larger community. *Meaningful learning* in many ways is a part of experience which comes from *communally-constructed* and *community-engaged* ideas about contributions to the *shared epistemology* that is demonstrated in the culture and within the modern cultural texts themselves.

Community Learning

Other than the analogous representations of identity through mass media and the recognition of communally held stereotypes and intragroup prototypes that demonstrate social identity, there is also the communally recognized role that individuals inhabit as a part of their work. Workplaces are social spaces where in The United States individual achievement is recognized. The author should also note that

in The United States the idea of not having knowledge about a skill or an area of expertise is considered tantamount to inability, and that as an American the overall sense of efficacy is reduced if an individual does not feel that she or he knows about a subject that is relevant to the work group (Shiraev & Levy, 2010). In the west, workplaces recognize independent achievement and accomplishment according to the same model of attribution theory described by Bernard Weiner (2010), as cited previously. In the west classrooms also function much the same way as our assessment systems and scores of achievement are focused primarily on the awareness of content knowledge and not necessarily the ecology of the knowledge. Bernard Weiner (2010), cites the fear of failure as the primary factor which regulates the decision to motivate resources to accomplish a task, and later elaborates that he had not thoroughly evaluated the idea of *meaning* according to failure-avoidant personalities who struggle in the modern workplace. Having the ability to cope with failure is an understated skill set in the west, and many education institutions are finding that internships provide students with opportunities to engage in the workplace that are more involved and demanding of skills than the classroom environment. Being trained in the workplace requires motivation toward belonging to the workforce and understanding the communally held goals about the work needed to accomplish. Sometimes experiences far outside the comfort-zones of individuals can cause individuals to facilitate peak experiences as the individual calculates whether or not the impending success had been probable, in very realistic terms this meant that veterans who had returned from armed conflict found connections with the

larger life context because survival was difficult and success was not likely, but the experience resolved successfully through some contact with unknown larger factors; veterans who are trained about transpersonal *meaning* in the larger life-context may have been given more than adequate means for coping with traumatic stress and post-traumatic stress disorder because of perceived greater-context influences in the personal dynamic (Osran, Smee, Weinberger & Sreenivisan, 2010). *Having the opportunity to perceive the risk of failure is imperative to success* in terms of discovering intrinsically motivated desires to achieve. Internships in the workplace for young people can be incredibly challenging, but they offer a chance to learn a different system of expectations and workplace skills that were previously unknown, without the fear of incompetence. The internship is an experience designed to bring young people into the workplace to learn practical skills but it also provides an opportunity to leave the classroom environment and engage in achievement where success is not always as probable. Internships are discussed extensively in some web log community activity and discussion entries online (<http://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2015/04/15/teens-try-out-real-life-with-internships-for-academic-credit/>) in a lot of current education trends, and provide real-life experience that contain value which is not easily measured with a standard (MindShift, 2015).

Spirituality

Spirituality is an often litigated and highly controversial issue in the classroom. The author's previous writings referred to the personal, social, intellectual, and spiritual domains. As an author it is important to consider the implications of reflecting on the aspects related to participatory spirituality in a text about methods of teaching.

A scientific epistemology has been established that had measured the beneficial aspects of participatory spirituality and found them to be congruent with ideas about creating mutually beneficial relationships in communities of diversely minded individuals, the epistemology concluded that participatory spirituality was most useful when it included ideas about freedom from egocentrism and the acceptance of the existence of beliefs which were not like-minded; a lifelong study of beliefs found the opportunities for egoic dissociation, freedom from egocentrism, and ethnic pluralism to be the most beneficial ideas resulting from participatory spirituality (Ferrer, 2011).

As an author, I can then say that the spiritual aspect of student learning comes from a place of acceptance of the larger group and the diversity of group members while pursuing the idea of group success. A student is largely seeking to establish identity that is communally recognized, and the recognition of beliefs which may result from the practice of participatory spirituality cannot be excluded, but must be considered fairly and pluralistically in the context of the larger social group and classroom. Participatory spirituality has also been evaluated in medical science and many researchers clamour to discover the utility of

participatory spirituality in healing spaces. Students can be encouraged to include aspects of participatory spirituality as they engage in their learning and the synthesis of that learning with larger community.

GROUP IDENTITY

Social Identity

Individuals motivate themselves as a function of social identity. Tasdemir (2011), relates the function of social identity by relating form of several theories of socially derived motivation according to a process of increasing self-esteem, intergroup differentiation, and self-enhancement behaviors that contribute to an individuals perceived positive social identity. As individuals begin to self-identify with groups, a cognitive social identity forms that an individual begins self-selecting as a part of maintaining an optimally distinctive social identity that balances social group needs with a personal sense of salience or notoriety, as the individual becomes a greater part of the group identity she or he tends to self-enhance the identification with the social group and experiences increased self-esteem. As an individual relies more on a work group as a part of social identity in a way that is optimally distinctive, and work is expected as a part of the group's shared interest, work motivation and performance tend to increase (Van Knippenberg, 2000). In the United States the sense of effectiveness and achievement tends to be more highly related to motivation than in more collective societies, and people in The United States tend to value a sense of efficacy in the larger group and the recognition of achievement whereas collective cultures tend to value the performance and identity of the larger social group in a way that does not allow individual achievement to stand out in the group context (Shiraev & Levy, 2010). Shared experience within

groups tends to facilitate the recognition and development of shared values that in turn facilitate group participation and membership, and develop a shared resource for motivating group activity and social change referred to as *social capital* (Loeb, 2010).

Efficacy

Individuals in the western model tend to be more capable of exercising independent volitional agency as an agent of change and innovation when the perception of self-efficacy within the group context is high (Bandura, 1989). As social groups form social capital is raised and intragroup motivation is increased, self-identification with the larger group is a social process, and the action of self-selection is motivating toward the goals of the larger group as the larger group maintains a salient identity in social space and demonstrates the salient traits of the social group. Some theories of intergroup differentiation rely on conflicting needs that groups may have as a part of the process of group identification (Tasdemir, 2011). As an instructor an awareness of group dynamics and an ability to process conflicting needs to facilitate learning is a much needed role in the classroom as learning is a social process and involves group identification and membership. Bernard Mayer (2010), evaluates conflict as a process of mutually resolving conflicting needs that can be addressed through conflict resolution and which helps balance the needs of conflicting groups based on the dynamics characterized in conflicts. Instructors who are both cognitively and socially engaged

and present in the classroom contribute to group motivation and group learning (Shea & Bidjerano, 2009).

An understanding of social identity and group dynamics helps to facilitate understanding of the motivation of *epistemic engagement* and *meaningful learning*. While this is central to the thesis presented in this work, it is also necessary to understand that the goal of the work is to facilitate the development of communities of inquiry that allow student learning groups a high degree of personal autonomy, in those cases there may be times that the learning group discovers knowledge not yet represented in the course material and that will add to future iterations of the same social group process for learning a subject. This perception may influence the instructor's sense of efficacy but so long as the learning in the course is relevant to the standards expected by the course the course instructor maintains social status as a facilitator of learning and not necessarily a strong authority figure.

EPISTEMIC ENGAGEMENT AND MOTIVATION

Epistemic Engagement

Epistemic-engagement was the authors' Shea & Bidjerano (2009; 2010), way of synthesizing evidence about constructivist methods of building a shared group epistemology as a part of the social and cognitive engagement in the learning space provided by the classroom. Epistemically engaged students begin working in self-regulated groups, regulated because they are peer-review as a part of social activity in the classroom and also regulated because of the group's need to meet the academic standard; these social learning groups during academic inquiry begin developing their own shared epistemologies for acquiring knowledge about a standard, and share about how the information was obtained and brought to the group, during class discussion time. *Epistemic engagement* is another way of referring to the activity that students are collectively taking part in within learning groups as a part of a constructivist view of learning that knowledge is a shared discovery and a set of communally agreed upon statistics, research, and texts that present facts in the most commonly repeatable and valid way. From the perception of a pragmatist epistemology this idea that knowledge is socially constructed is valid in that all community members who are qualified to learn about a given standard and learning subject will eventually arrive at similar conclusions through the process of inquiry, and as a society people are more likely to find knowledge that is objective as the process of inquiry continues. Facilitating inquiry time as mentioned later in this

writing, creates a socially and cognitively engaged and inclusive discussion space for independent student group process and learning. This process can be brought online into the e-learning systems in a classroom by utilizing a discussion board or comment system such as those freely available on Google.com. *Epistemic engagement* also occurs among teachers who collaborate on the development of shared resources for teaching specifically established standards, and as discussed later in this writing, an example of these shared online resources can be found on an online web address (<http://www.dxed.org/for-teachers>) as of May, 2016 (Hixson, 2015a). Social presence was measured, as a part of the studies that are cited in this writing frequently, to understand online and blended learning on the part of the instructor as a measure of the instructor's willingness to participate directly with the class as a social group, and to be available in shared discussion spaces as a colleague or a facilitator in order to guide learning (Shea & Bidjerano, 2009; 2010). Shea & Bidjerano (2009), also refer to the cognitive availability of the instructor to present knowledge to the class as a part of cognitive engagement which was analogous to social presence. The articles create a dynamic for understanding that the instructor must maintain effective and positive rapport as a facilitator of learning, for the classroom groups which form around the learning, in order to participate in group inquiry about the standards established for the course. In e-learning systems, these measures can be calculated statistically with the measure of comments and discussion engagements that are posted or recorded from the classroom activity. In the most realistic sense, facilitating *epistemic-engagement* requires

technology, as each student ought to have a computer workstation and associated student login facilitated by the school for interacting with the learning materials autonomously; and through discussion posts, messages, and comments. Shea & Bidjerano (2009; 2010), had made most of their discoveries while discovering knowledge about online learning systems which were more effective than classroom systems, even though the studies were themselves a re-discovery of teaching methodologies as they are applied with technology.

Self-Actualization

Koltko-Rivera (2006), created a research article which reviewed the work of Abraham Maslow and the concept of *self-actualization*, which was found to have changed in later versions of Maslow's theory of human motivation. Maslow (1974), in a later work stipulated a different version of self-actualization in that it differed among individuals who had a cognition referred to as *deficiency-need* cognition when compared between individuals who were extrinsically motivated, or intrinsically motivated through connection with the larger life-context cognition, Maslow referred to this as *being-cognition*. Individuals with being-cognition tended to actualize through contributions to larger society, and the cultivation of service to and a co-relationship with the larger life context of the individual though peak experiences of connection with the larger life context as written in Chapter I. This theory of human motivation holds that of intrinsically motivated individuals who sought to self-actualize, those who were motivated by the seeking of some need that was

found to be deficient in social space differed from the actualization of individuals who sought to contribute to the larger community through connection with the larger life-context or society. Being –cognition was facilitated through the awareness of experiences which were mindful and also synchronistic in nature as described by Maslow (1974), and was something which was studied because people who practiced this kind of cognition appeared more creative. Mindfulness and peak experience were described in Maslow’s work as he sought to understand more highly motivated individuals, who seemed to value experience as a part of connection with the larger ecology. Maslow was also a founder of a scientific journal the *Journal of Transpersonal Psychology* in cooperation with Viktor Frankl, who developed research work on the understanding of meaning in challenging life-contexts. Transpersonal psychology has been examined recently in several therapeutic roles such as one of educational training and counseling for individuals who served in the military and suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (Osran, Smee, Weinberger & Sreenivisan, 2010). The benefits of mindfulness have also been examined in the education context on some popular website logs such as the web log created by the New York Times (http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/05/10/the-mindful-child/?_r=2) (Azarian, 2016 May 10). Mindfulness has a strong relationship with emotional coping skills and emotional regulation, reduces stress, improves overall mental health and recidivism rates, and causes neurophysiological changes in the default mode network of the brain which can be said to be beneficial (Fjorback, Arendt, Ornbol, Fink & Walach 2011; Hill & Updegraff, 2011; Holzel, et. Al., 2008).

Gestalt Cycle of Experience

Joseph Zinker (1977), created a theory for learning as an analogy of human metabolism, as individuals innately sought to achieve contact with knowledge that an individual became aware was needed as a part of human motivation in Gestalt psychology. Zinker (1977), established a series of cyclical states of awareness which facilitated learning: Sensation, awareness, mobilization, *contact* and resolution. Through these phases he illustrated an individual's innate sense of desire for knowledge and the engagement of psychological resources toward acquiring the knowledge and connecting it with the underlying motivation, which was described in the contact phase of awareness as a realization between the objective knowledge and the underlying meaning of the discovery.

Understanding meaning and the various representations of meaningful experience in the context of human motivation such as *epistemic-engagement*, *self-actualization* and *contact* allows the conclusion that meaningful experience is highly motivating and contributes to the larger social and cognitive contexts which people inhabit within a cultural ecology.

ACHIEVEMENT

Rubrics and Assessment

Rubrics are added to the classroom in order to correctly operationalize classroom performance. Goodwin & Hubbell (2013), best elaborate the system for measures of student outcomes as they are directly related to the expected standard of knowledge created within the context of the public school system. Goodwin & Hubbell (2013), also create a system which appears to value student achievement and the recognition of student achievement as the factor motivating learning; in the system of teaching described however there is flexibility for students who wish to engage in intrinsically motivated learning and for reigning in students who may be learning outside of the standards set in the scope of the course, the purpose of this is to carefully nurture intrinsically motivated students toward accomplishing tasks that are directly related to the rubrics and standards for the course, so that the student is not applying learning in a way that does not benefit the student. In a socially functional classroom the system described for operationalizing and assessing learning works best if measures of student participation in group learning and epistemic engagement are made a part of the rubrics for the course, and in many ways does represent a valuable system for maintaining standards accountability and motivating learning through social recognition. In addition to this the social dynamics of the classroom change because holding groups of students accountable to what is clearly stated in a mutually agreed upon rubric and set of expectations, allows the instructor to take on a facilitating

role in group performance, and the development of *epistemically engaged* activity toward meeting mutually agreed upon standardized outcomes. In academic research it has also been found useful to include non-academic outcomes measures when considering social and emotional behaviors, and characteristics that may contribute to academic success and the well-being of students, as these socio-emotional characteristics may become a better measure of success in longitudinal studies of the effectiveness of education (Moore, Lippman & Ryberg, 2015).

Acknowledgement of Achievement

Goodwin & Hubbell (2013), may not have made this a part of the initial system for the creation of agreed upon and shared expectations and rubrics, but the social recognition of achievement that is discussed in the text can become a part of meaningful learning experiences. In chapter one of this text there is a citation that shows how meaningful rites and recognized accomplishments in social space had been demonstrated to be a solution for social problems both in education and criminal justice contexts. Goodwin & Hubbell (2013), do not understate the need to recognize achievement as a part of motivation, but do not necessarily relate this to within the context of social identity theory. In social identity theory, establishing one's self as a functional part of a larger group results in increased motivation and self-esteem as the individual self-selects the characteristics of and contributes to the salience of the identity of the larger group; processes of self-identification and intergroup differentiation increase self-esteem and motivation (Tasdemir, 2011). As students

are members of a community of classroom learners, individual contributions toward the accomplishment of communally held goals or the accomplishments of valued tasks create additional motivation when the accomplishment is brought into the larger community and recognized socially. Instructors employing the system of rubrics and standards developed in The United States can then create rubrics which measure social presence and participation in the learning activities of the larger group.

Processing of Group Successes and Failures

Self-evaluation had been the most effective form of processing for students who were at Jefferson County Open School as mentioned in chapter I, students at JCOS present their own written self-analysis of learning which occurs during the student-developed independent projects. Groups also in a democratic process or governance role benefitted from self-reflection about performance. Conducting analysis or evaluations of learning is not useful if the ideas resulting from the evaluation are not implemented. Circle processes are a democratic process that allow for inquiries such as those for accountability and performance measures, where the democratic process may involve conflicting needs that are processed by the group (Pranis, 2005). As the learning group reflects the accomplishment of the learning in the larger group, suggestions may arise that can be incorporated into future learning and future development of course materials and accountability measures, this information then becomes a part of the course materials developed for future teaching of the same academic standard.

LESSON PLANS

Understanding by Design

Wiggins & McTighe (2005), designed a system for interpreting established standards in education and then operationalizing those *big ideas* into a set of essential questions which every student learning the established standard could answer by the end of the course, the system was called Understanding by Design and it contains a series of relevant skill sets for operationalizing common core standards. The system also allows for standards to be created in informal education environments and provides a measurable and effective way to teach to a learning standard. Understanding by Design (UbD) is hereafter referred to as the UbD system. Ideally, the UbD system can be employed collaboratively, as UbD templates can be created by teams of educators and the system of templates for a given course could be shared on an intranet website among educators at the school level. Each teacher who would have access to a peer-reviewed UbD template would then be capable of teaching the standards required for the course, because UbD standardized the methodology for operationalizing common core standards. As an educator having an understanding of the UbD system created by Wiggins & McTighe (2005), can help create reliable and measurable performance rubrics and statistics for measuring the performance of a course teaching template, and the efficacy of instruction statistically. As the author of this handbook I maintain a website which contains several resources for teaching and scoring courses online at (<http://www.dxed.org/for-teachers>) (Hixson, 2015a).

Rubrics, Assessments, Templates

The UbD system created by Wiggins & McTighe allows for the creation of essential questions derived from course standards. During my study of the UbD system I began making the requirement that each course would contain knowledge related to precisely five essential questions, one of these essential questions could be evaluated through group process and discussion time available during part of classroom activity in a socially functional classroom. In the UbD system essential questions are then derived into rubrics based on the level of understanding the student displays when answering each of the essential questions from the course material (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). The statistical validity of locally-developed performance measures is in question as the variables measured by standardized assessments appear to lack construct validity (Crehan, 2001). As an author I examined the Colorado statewide mean scores as a ratio between reading scores and writing scores, and found almost no relationship with a Pearson $r=0.0016$ and $r\text{-crit}=0.602$ $df=9$ $p<0.05$ (Hixson, 2015b). A better statistical measure of student learning outcomes is needed. As students demonstrate greater knowledge of an essential question posed by the courses developed with UbD, the student is awarded a given number of points for the demonstration of the proficiency in understanding the knowledge needed to answer the essential questions. The design of the rubric is also intended to place the conflicting needs that may exist in the classroom environment as a dynamic between student effort and course rubrics, and not

as one that relates conflicting needs between student learning environments or classroom teachers or administrators (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). The classroom structure then challenges students to meet the expectations of the rubrics for the course and not necessarily directly the expectations of the instructor. The statistics which are generated from rubrics is then used for grading and provides an available source of data for measuring classroom performance as a group. As part of preparation for this handbook the author has created a spreadsheet based scoring system which takes into account group participation factors as a statistical measure in the way that is operationalized by the UbD system, these examples are available online at (<http://www.dxed.org/eng-101-ubd-templates>) (Hixson, 2015c). Assessments themselves may consist of multiple choice or essay questions and answered throughout the course to check for understanding (Goodwin & Hubbell, 2013). Additional assessments of classroom performance are described in this text, and may also include classroom lab activities.

Including Inquiry Time

Inquiry time refers to the portion of the class time activity that is set aside for student engagement and participation in the learning materials and class discussion. In a classroom which has computer workstations, students can collaborate and study the course materials, and interactively find new materials to add to the learning. Group activity may also surround in class laboratory assignments and hands on activities. As the students contribute learning to the group process, the comment or post that records the learning is

recorded by a rubric in the course. In classrooms that are operating without technology available to all students, the students discuss the learning material and their participation in the discussion is measured in the course rubric. Online universities often operate with a discussion board, and the use of the discussion board to contribute learning is a requirement according to the rubrics in the course. A commenting system or a shared chat space is a good way for students to be able to post internet links, questions, or suggestions about the learning. In the classroom the teacher observes the activity and scores the level of engagement demonstrated by the student in the course rubric.

Planning Group Activities

Educators may ask about the role of the *Socratic Method* in a socially functional classroom that is designed to implement *meaningful learning*. Giving lectures is essential to facilitating the student's discovery of the course material and any additional related materials that are brought into the classroom. Assessments of content knowledge such as multiple-choice quizzes and open-ended questions are still a valid means of assessing cognitive engagement (Goodwin & Hubbell, 2013). When it comes to presentations, presentation materials can also be shared resources that are incorporated as a part of a shared lesson plan, infrastructure exists for creating and hosting online presentation content; one of these resources is as of this writing available online (<http://www.piktochart.com>) as accessed May 17, 2016. This allows for peer-review of instructor-led lecture content in the overall shared template created for the course, and that

allows pragmatism to be used as an epistemology for maintaining the objectivity of the shared presentation resources. Instructors simply then share packages of online content when teaching the expected standards such as in the example online at (<http://www.dxed.org/eng-101-ubd-templates>) (Hixson, 2015c). In this way the lecture materials, lab assignments, quizzes, and presentations gain credibility. The next phase of the daily activities in a socially functional classroom is to ask the students to discuss the lecture and the course material. As technology becomes more available in classrooms become more technologically blended learning environments, the statistics mentioned previously can be automatically scored according to each student's individual contribution and participation in discussion using computer workstations. In a classroom that has not been developed using blended learning, the discussion participation is scored by the instructor, but students are free during the following phase of class to access a computer if one is available in the space and bring relevant knowledge to the learning group. The concluding phase of each daily plan, which can take place two to three times per week, is the resolution phase which asks students to complete a self-report measure based on a Likert-scale. Likert-scales are primarily effective in measuring student confidence, and can effectively measure student confidence in a subject if not necessarily competence (Stangor, 2011). Several studies exist which measure the effectiveness of self-efficacy instruments based on scales (Silver, Smith & Greene, 2001). This is also an opportunity for the instructor to have time to interact with students individually, and students may also wish to continue the group discussion of the knowledge presented to meet the

standard of the course. As people work in groups through shared experience, self-esteem and self-identification in social groups increases, and shared values then propagate in a way that builds a shared resource called social capital; social capital is a measure of the potential of social groups to effectively accomplish a goal, it is the energy that drives group activity (Loeb, 2010). As students begin a process of *epistemic engagement* group performance increases in a way that can be benchmarked with the weekly assessment that is based on a scale.

EVALUATION

Self-report

The meaningful value of self-evaluation has been understudied in terms of statistical validity, self-report measures in general which use any kind of free –format data may be difficult to code statistically (Stangor, 2011). However, at the Jefferson County Open School in Jefferson County Colorado, evaluations and passages are written free-format self-report instruments. The student is asked to personally reflect on in writing a learning experience, and then present it to the community either through the instructor of the course, or the community supports which exist for passages, and the more complex meaningful learning experiences which happen there. Bringing the social identity and social interaction variables into context in the classroom can be accomplished by measuring participation as mentioned previously in chapter V, and then also by using a self-report instrument designed with an open-ended question and a Likert-scale inventory of student confidence according to each standard set for each course. Computer-generated evaluations of performance can be accomplished in schools which have the technological infrastructure to offer every student access to a blended learning platform such as those developed for The American Red Cross, and Colorado State University – Global Campus, and a unique login for the student to access the system and comment on or discuss electronically the materials presented by the instructor. In schools which do not have the technological infrastructure to offer each student a workstation or web browsing capable

device, the Likert scale system developed for the course template at (<http://www.dxed.org/eng-101-ubd-templates>) accessed May 19, 2016 can be tracked using a spreadsheet program on a single computer (Hixson, 2015c). Measuring student confidence can be considered along a ratio scale, and the qualitative self-report analysis contained in the student evaluations can be used to help make the course content more relevant to each student as the instructor also cognitively and cognizantly engages based on feedback from the formative weekly questionnaires. This is also a measure of student behavior however, and some problems with self-report measures exist when individuals are not cooperative and willing to self-report, or are anxious about which characteristics may be measured by the self-report; using Likert-scale inventories helps to reduce acquiescent responding however (Stangor, 2011). Students may also respond in the way that they feel is the most socially desirable (Stangor, 2011). However, even though students may be responding that they are confident about the essential questions in a course because it is socially desirable, social engagement in the classroom activity that results in this error would actually be a measure of student participation in the class group in the worst case. **Plate 1** shows the template version of the weekly formative assessment created. The weekly quiz as a formative assessment can then be coded into statistical data about the performance of the overall class and instruction materials, and includes and records student participation where the technology is available to do so, as well as measures of instructor interactivity for accountability purposes.

(Subject) Class Questionnaire

Name: _____ Term: _____ Date: _____

This sheet is designed to help and create a (Subject) class that teaches (Standard) by offering the right level of challenge to students. The instructor will read this form in order to best develop the class about (Subject). You can also write any feedback to the instructor about the development of the course in the questions listed here.

Please tell me whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

(When using the expected skill set,) I...	0-Strongly Disagree 1-Disagree 2-Slightly Disagree 3-Slightly Agree 4-Agree 5-Strongly Agree
--	--

1. (Essential Statement 1, Rubric 2)	0 1 2 3 4 5
2. (Essential Statement 1, Rubric 1)	0 1 2 3 4 5
3. (Reversed Essential Statement 2, Rubric 2)	0 1 2 3 4 5
4. (Essential Statement 1, Rubric 4)	0 1 2 3 4 5
5. (Essential Statement 1, Rubric 3)	0 1 2 3 4 5
6. (Essential Statement 2, Rubric 3)	0 1 2 3 4 5
7. (Essential Statement 1, Rubric 5)	0 1 2 3 4 5
8. (Essential Statement 2, Rubric 5)	0 1 2 3 4 5
9. (Essential Statement 2, Rubric 4)	0 1 2 3 4 5
10. (Reversed Essential Statement 2, Rubric 1)	0 1 2 3 4 5

Please, list here your goals for (Course Expectations) by answering the following questions:

Do you like (Answering Essential Question), why or why not?

The challenges that I feel I might work through according to the rubric (see back) are:

Performance Rubrics:

Plate 1. Formative Assessment Template (Hixson, 2015c).

Peer Evaluation

This idea that knowledge is a social construction is not a new one. John Dewey pioneered what he termed *instrumentalism* by removing the figure-ground relationships from the discussion of metaphysics concerning knowledge and experience while saying that knowledge was a socially arrived at awareness that included both the figure or object of knowledge and the concept describing the figure; knowledge was simultaneously discovered and grounded in agreement with other people discovering the same knowledge (Ghenea, 2015). Gestalt psychology refers to the process of learning to be something which was analogous to metabolism in which the human organism undergoes cyclical states of knowing and needing to know, the point of contact in the Gestalt Cycle of Experience could be said to be the moment in which the objective learning occurs and begins describing itself in human experience (Zinker, 1977). Human beings are largely social organisms which according to the modular theory of mind have adapted cognitive and metacognitive structures throughout the evolution of intelligence, which is now at this point in human evolution a meta-process that can create new functions and adapt older functions to meet the needs of the human organism throughout the course of experience (Mithen, 1996). In Mithen's (1996), accounting of the modular theory of mind social intelligence was an intuitive and physiological component of human thinking which facilitated survival through the process of evolution. Knowledge can be said to be a social process that is constructed through shared experience and epistemologies. Peer-review is one of the critical outcomes of pragmatism which grew from

instrumentalism, in which any individual qualified to investigate the subject of knowledge can arrive at or contribute to the same agreed upon conclusions about the knowledge. Learning is a socially functional activity that is then validated by peers and discussed among social groups who are either in agreement of or critical toward the outcomes of learning. *Triads* at Jefferson County Open School in Jefferson County, Colorado (JCOS); are groups of three students who consistently meet to discuss learning goals and the social experience of activity during the governance and learning which happens at the school. Students meet routinely to discuss the validity of their learning and the application of new learning experiences in the greater life-context. At JCOS, *Passages* are student-led inquiries as a rite of passage into a field of study, and the Passages themselves are met with critical peer-review during their proposal, activity, and wrap up phases through meetings with individuals who have agreed to support the independent learning project. By and large learning as a social process in a socially functional classroom takes the form of discussions and critical analysis of the cohorts' activity in social space. Instructors and administrators who are also socially active during the development and critical analysis of course materials, also describe a process of pragmatic peer-review and evaluation.

Instructor Evaluation

Is the course being taught effectively? This can become a subject of inquiry in a communities of inquiry environment. Instructors who are working on course materials can validate

the performance of the materials and also peer-review the materials for objectivity reasons. When the question is considered, instructors then self-evaluate the performance of their courses in a monthly meeting. Instructors can also ask the student population to report on whether or not they felt their learning was meaningful, relevant, and effective. Course discussions evaluating online university courses usually take place in the form of a survey, but a socially engaged system of review would require more input from the student population, in the form of a discussion post or a comment thread. Students, administrators and other instructors can socially evaluate the performance of the presenter as well as the course materials. Likewise, once per course term, the instructor can inquire: *Is our learning group working together well?* As the instructor opens a discussion about the performance of course instruction.

Cognitive Assessments

Current systems for assessing content knowledge tend to overburden students. However, the use of multiple-choice assessments that can include open-ended and essay questions is well researched (Goodwin & Hubbell, 2013). It is possible to assess content knowledge more frequently throughout coursework such as on a weekly basis, and also to include experiential exercises. These assessments then contribute to the course rubrics and can be counted as a part of overall performance of the class group. Quizzing also by repetition presents a suitable instrument for facilitating rote learning and memorization as a learning tool.

Financial Accountability

A combination of regular peer-review of course performance and efficacy, and data resulting from the inquiry about the students' confidence in the knowledge presented as standards and essential questions in the course materials, can maintain a statistical measure of classroom participation and cognitive performance. In classrooms which are fully blended, the technology present in the classroom environment can record student participation as well as student confidence in the knowledge gained. These statistics can be computer generated from the weekly assessments of each course, and combined with the recorded activities that instructors undertake while contributing to and evaluating the efficacy of course materials. In classrooms which are not fully blended, performance reviews can include the statistics measured by the weekly assessments, and also the social aspect and performance review of the instructor as a member of the school community. Whether an automatically generated statistical system is used or one which is reported on by the instructor, a credible system for the accurate statistical measure of classroom performance is included in the system of assessment, which can be used to assess any need for professional development or further refinement. This statistic can also be expressed in a ratio in terms of cost-per-pupil to course efficacy measures.

CLASS ENVIRONMENT

Facilitating Electronic Epistemically-Engaged Discussion

Since classroom discussion and recording elements of classroom discussion are both important, it is necessary to design a means to do so. Since there is a variable in classroom environments with regard to the amount of technology available I will write first about the ideal setting with technology that is widely available. I will then make adaptations for classroom environments that do not have a lot of access to technology. As the author, I have also founded a non-profit organization whose United States Employer Identification Number (EIN) is 47-2297503 called the Alliance for Public School Technology Resources in order to support public education with technology that can be freely available from businesses. Using the Non-Government Organization (NGO) model, it is possible to allow businesses a tax-deduction for donations to public institutions, and this reduces the cost of the upgraded infrastructure; donated technology can be refit for use in public schools. The first element of the *epistemically engaged* classroom which is also *communally constructivist* and *community oriented* in a way that is statistically reliable, is a computer system that maintains and records discussion activity. Google.com is a company which provides several free tools for creating the software platform needed to host discussions and course materials. Using sites.google.com instructors can be given authorship access to websites on a school intranet, accessible only to students and instructors at the school, to build web sites for each course offered in a way that uses Google's

already existing user management and authentication system. Previously in chapter VI a reference was made to an example course which was created using these online tools (<http://www.dxed.org/eng-101-ubd-templates>) accessed May 19, 2016 (Hixson, 2015c). So the course content itself can be constructed and hosted online for all students at the classroom level for free using Google tools. Also available is a system for designing assignments and conducting assessment called classroom.google.com and sites.google.com is capable as of May 24, 2016 of hosting online content and exhibits, as well as course presentations, and content-knowledge assessments in a way that students can comment on and generate discussion about online. So the infrastructure exists to create a freely distributed classroom management system. This system when ideally installed allows each student in a class to have present a computer workstation or tablet pc which can access the online part of the course during class, and class participation can be measured by processing the learning activity generated and posted during inquiry time by each student with each student's unique login and identification. The instructor during lecture time can then present interactive lectures, exhibits, and course materials using the displays and workstations in the blended learning classroom. Shea & Bidjerano (2009; 2010), when creating their model for self-regulating communities of inquiry they were primarily referring to blended learning environments and online environments where the in-class infrastructure exists to host and facilitate presentation and discussion in this format. A number of school districts have sought in the past to provide each student with a personal tablet computer, and using this

infrastructure that is tenable, as the hardware requirements for the course materials consist mainly of access to a current HTML web browser. I had once created a brief report and web log entry about blended learning environments that is available online using the universal resource locator found at (<http://such411.blogspot.com/2014/11/post-34-classrooms.html>) (Hixson, 2014). In the computer based format for classroom presentation, the classroom system provides most of the structure for regulating learning and communicating expectations for participation in the course. Currently on some web logs there are a number of people discussing how rules are set in the classroom space, and whether or not they should be formally enforced, and finding that allowing students a sense of autonomy while engaging in learning tends to foster higher levels of creativity (<https://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2016/03/14/what-kind-of-group-work-encourages-the-most-original-thinking/>) accessed May 24, 2016 (MindShift, 2016b).

Facilitating Offline Circle Processes

Some classrooms may not have the technological resources to track epistemic engagement and discussion activity electronically, and in some cases this is a class-size tradeoff as reducing the cost of technology can also help reduce class sizes. In these cases, the instructor facilitates discussion during inquiry time after a formal presentation by creating a circle process among students, and asking the students a question related to the course. Circle processes, especially circles for understanding, are a traditional method for regulating group discussion and

affording each stakeholder the opportunity to speak fairly (Pranis, 2005). It is important to remember that some students may be socially avoidant or failure avoidant people who need to be asked to join the discussion in this format, there are some excellent discussions about this taking place online about this topic on May 24, 2016 at (<https://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2016/02/19/strategies-to-ensure-introverted-students-feel-valued-at-school/>) (MindShift, 2016b). In the computer-based format it may be easier for students to feel they have adequate social space and autonomy through the computer to engage in the group discussion, but in classrooms without this feature it is necessary for the instructor to be socially present and cognitively engaged in facilitating the discussion. In this format the instructor is also a participant in the discussion and can answer questions relevant to the course material, as well as guide the path of learning so that the discussion stays relevant to the standards set by the course materials. Some students may have experienced stress and traumatic stress outside of the classroom and may be reluctant to engage socially, some interventions for this have been discussed and are thought to involve a sense of group belonging and salient autonomy much as written previously in this work regarding social group membership, online at (<https://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2016/05/20/when-schools-help-students-transcend-chronic-stress-to-tap-motivation/>) as of May 24, 2016 (MindShift, 2016c). Belonging to the class group and participating in class circle processes may facilitate the sense of belonging and autonomy which is sought after in at-risk populations. As

the instructor facilitates discussion, she or he keeps track of student participation as a part of the grading rubric for the course.

Access to Technology and Research

Peer-review is built into the self-regulating system for facilitating meaningful learning, the course materials are peer-reviewed by other instructors and administrators, and students peer-review one another's contributions to the class group. It is necessary to express some concern however about the level of awareness that post-secondary students demonstrate of the subject of academic research. As a part of the process of teaching at the secondary level, it would be ideal if classrooms had access to a scholarly journal database, this would allow students to search during inquiry time for academic research as well as available online materials that are on the otherwise free community internet at scholar.google.com. Some students may choose to use the school library services to locate scholarly research to contribute to the learning of the class group, and a means to post citations is built into the electronic infrastructure of the course, in the absence of a blended learning environment a student could be selected from the class group to locate relevant research using a computer. Instructors may need to engage to assist students in maintaining the relevance of their research according to course standards (Goodwin & Hubbell, 2013). Otherwise epistemic engagement relies on student autonomy in terms of selecting and reviewing scholarly research. Students who are familiar with the processes of peer-review and scholarly research may find the transition to postsecondary education to be much smoother in terms of achievement.

Demonstrating Peer-Review Academics

A great observation about observational learning is that it seemed simple but it was also incredibly accurate. Observational learning occurs as students observe the completion of a task and tend to imitate the behavior when completing a similar task, in turn completing the tasks more effectively (Hoover, Giambatista & Belkin, 2012). Observational learning is characterized in a book on the subject by Albert Bandura who was recently awarded the United States National Medal of Science (<http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/observer/obsonline/albert-bandura-receives-national-medal-of-science.html>) (APS, 2016 May 19). Bandura's (1986) work described the process of social learning in detail. Often times the needed genuineness that ought to be in presentation spaces is only found in crisis intervention circles and the criminal justice systems where the teaching approaches apply to fundamental principles first discovered in the field of psychology. The Roberts' Seven-Stage Crisis Intervention Model (R-SSCIM), was introduced in the form of a short handbook which explained a few microskills related to rapport (Roberts & Yeager, 2009). Maintaining a positive and beneficial rapport with the population of a classroom is essential as a teacher, and one of the things that students may do in an environment of mutual respect, is to observe the behavior of the instructor of the class. When creating classroom presentations, handouts, and online reference materials strict adherence to academic standards and guidelines is assumed. Demonstrating the use of proper academic citations and disciplines related to the research developed collaboratively for use as course presentations is

important as students may learn from the instructing environment and the reference materials themselves. Maintaining positive rapport creates a way for instructors to be socially present in the classroom and demonstrate effectively the proper academic integrity expected by higher learning institutions in the west, and in a format that is accepting of cross-cultural awareness which arises from adequate experience while conducting research. Students sometimes learn by example, and in the social role as a teacher in the classroom, it is important to facilitate the understanding of knowledge according to existing academic standards for credibility and objectively in an unbiased manner. As teachers create course materials, the chosen academic standard ought to apply to the formatting of all presentation materials, in order to develop readiness for higher learning among the secondary student populations. Strict adherence to academic guidelines can be effective for populations of elementary and middle school students as well, while understanding that the students themselves may not adhere to the same guidelines as instructors. The familiarity with academic integrity then inspires students to conduct research with some of the same schemas as demonstrated by instructors in previous grades.

Flipped Assignments

In the modern culture of education and on many web logs there is the discussion of a *flipped* assignment (<http://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/tag/flipped-classroom/>) retrieved May 27, 2016 (MindShift, 2016d). That is work that would be conducted in the classroom except either the

student or the instructor agrees to take the assignment out of the classroom to be completed as homework. In teaching environments which have blended learning technology there are teleconferencing options which would allow students to be in attendance even if they cannot be physically and socially present at the course lecture that day. In environments which do not have access to teleconferencing infrastructure the instructor would agree to allow the student to submit a reflection on classroom progress for the days which were missed or at times when it is known that the student cannot be socially present in the classroom. *Social presence* is a part of classrooms which foster *epistemic engagement*, whether they are online or blended environments, or both (Shea & Bidjerano, 2010). The student understands the necessity to be present for classroom inquiry time, but presence can be facilitated using teleconferencing systems much like those available at Colorado State University – Global Campus in Greenwood Village, Colorado. At CSU Global, as well as for public disaster preparedness education conducted by The American Red Cross, classroom participants can connect electronically to learning spaces and participate in the social aspect of learning from any location that is connected through minimal network infrastructure that provides teleconferencing. *Flipped* assignments then refer to participation in class that is either retroactively evaluated by the student, or participated with electronically during inquiry time from another location than the learning environment. Instructors and their students mutually agree upon which parts of expected coursework can be *flipped* while adhering to the expected standards for the course.

Electronic Teacher Collaboration

Wrapping up the format and best practices for communities of inquiry classrooms, the reader should be aware that these systems of teaching work best when working together with other stakeholders and educators. As technology provides newer forms of asynchronous communication, instructors can find time throughout the day to communicate with other stakeholders in the community asynchronously. In a popular web log discussion, the idea that teachers work best together through consultation is well represented, as collaboration can render new ideas and perspectives that increase the efficacy of course presentations in general as well as for specific standards (<http://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2016/05/25/lesson-study-when-teachers-team-up-to-improve-teaching/>) (MindShift, 2016e). Moreover, teachers who collaborate are then socially constructing epistemologies for the practice of education, and while fostering epistemic engagement are also likewise engaged in the development of the profession and in terms of the continued development of personal skills and methods of instruction. Asynchronous communication platforms such as email and also the web based system for the development of course instruction plans and shared templates, allows instructors to have more time for development as shared resources provide a pre-existing means to approach course presentations that had been previously developed by educators through the process of peer-review. Since course presentation materials are online and accessible to all instructors at a given school, there is considerably less workload for individual teachers who seek to instruct students about meeting the expectations of a given standard. Asynchronous communication creates time for the

continued development of coursework, course materials, and best practices for instruction. Synchronous teleconferencing systems also make in-person meetings more effective as they can then include stakeholders who may not be able to be physically present at a given meeting location, but can still be electronically present through the use of teleconferencing systems.

CONCLUSION

Communities of Inquiry

I surmise that the best way to discuss the process of discussion and storytelling as represented in this handbook would be to begin by telling a story. In 2013 I was working as a part of an NGO organization designed to support a public democratic school, the Jefferson County Open School, at the International Democratic Education Conference in Boulder, Colorado USA. There was a workshop which was designed to host most of the participants at the international conference, and at the workshop the master of ceremonies collected a handwritten notecard from each participant at the conference, and then listed aloud the questions which were posed by the community of educators from Colorado attending the conference; when the microphone was passed to me I presented the thesis which closes this work, that a combination of self-regulating democratic group learning process, and accountable self-report and self-evaluation measures would solve most of the concerns which educators have about teaching.

As I continued my academic scholarship after the experience I described in 2013, and into my career in the study of education at Colorado State University – Global Campus, I sought ways to make self-report measures accurate and helpful to the classroom teacher. I did this by drawing on my experience in the study of human motivation and social psychology, the result was the use of a psychological instrument. The first point of this work was to demonstrate that there is an assessment which could be easily

administered and would solve any concerns over accountability which stakeholders may have in the efficacy of their education institutions. The once a week quiz generates statistics that are accurate enough to judge most of the performance of each community of inquiry class formed, and still retain feedback about how to improve the social learning process. Communities of inquiry are also self-regulating and highly intrinsically motivated groups as measured by the study of this format in online and blended learning settings.

As my confidence in this work grew, I maintained my academic scholarship and I am now working as the President of a new chapter of the Kappa Delta Pi Honor's Society for service in education. As a part of maintaining an honor's society at a mostly online school, it was necessary to use technology to create the social space that our community inhabits. The initiation ceremony for the new chapter, the Alpha Theta Iota chapter, was held in a board room that was capable of teleconferencing and of generating recordings and transcripts of verbal communication in the workspace. I was able to give a speech as the leader of the new chapter to a teleconferencing system to the entire population of the chapter during the ceremony. The ceremony itself is an academic rite of passage in social space and it was one which was conducted in a high-end meeting room for business people. This brings me to the second point of this handbook, the meeting room was equipped with exactly the technology that a functioning blended learning classroom is ideally equipped with. *Classrooms can operate exactly the same way as board rooms*, and this relationship is reciprocal.

The third point of this work was to discuss the social functioning of the classroom, and the school within the larger communities that they inhabit. Meaningful, engaged, intrinsic learning comes mostly from social factors either due to recognition in the attribution theory of human motivation or the motivation to belong and to succeed in social space as evidenced by the other theories presented. As students find that they belong to the school as a social group they are motivated to achieve higher learning, so long as there is a nurturing learning space which provides some sense of autonomy and efficacy for the student. Largely the difficult part of including social learning in the modern classroom is resultant from the need to record the performance of the social group, which had been addressed previously. As students succeed and a record of their successes or participation in the learning group as a whole is kept, students can reflect on learning outcomes and be motivated to contribute to the learning of the larger group. The class groups can then be motivated by going forward into social space and the larger communities surrounding the school through community learning experiences and other contributions to the larger neighborhoods, towns, cities, and rural areas they inhabit. The shared experience of learning in the community then also develops social capital that allows the school to be a major contributor to the functioning of the larger community and into the global workforce and economy. As these primarily social spaces also function much like workspaces in the global workforce and also spaces in higher education the community benefits reciprocally as the students become more a part of business.

Assessment Versus Peer Review

Researchers in education have determined that measures other than achievement such as well-being, socio-emotional health, and connection with the community are needed in future academic research concerning education assessment (Moore, Lippman & Ryberg, 2015). The use of psychological instruments for the measure of work and classroom motivation as well as performance is opportunistic, and may present a more effective means of assessment than previously generated academic instruments for use in measuring achievement. Psychology as a science moves in a direction that promotes human welfare so long as applied psychological practices are relevant and peer-reviewed through the process of academic scholarship (Miller, 1969). Optimal well-being and motivation can be achieved by facilitating happiness and autonomy among intrinsically motivated individuals (Deci & Ryan, 2008). Happiness and positive affect are related to physiological health and beneficial lifelong health outcomes (Steptoe, O'Donnell, Marmot & Wardle, 2008). The subjective sense of belonging and of connection, with society and also with nature, increases happiness (Zelenski & Nisbet, 2014). The discussion of improving outcomes measures other than achievement is one of increasing health and happiness among students. Academic assessments as mentioned previously are not capturing valid data, and measures of other life outcomes is possible with systems of assessment that were designed for understanding human experience.

This work creates a call to action. The research findings explain demonstrate a way to create highly functional,

democratically active schools where people are intrinsically motivated to learn and seek to learn as a part of achievement in the larger social community. The issue presented in the work is that the construct validity of assessments currently measuring classroom performance demonstrate a severe lack of integrity that has not been addressed properly by the researchers developing the assessments (Hixson, 2015b). My experience in the education community had rendered a lot of questions and very serious concerns that came from other educators in the international context, even questions about the use of the *Socratic Method* in schools, and whether our systems for fostering the acquisition of knowledge were functional or being measured accurately at all. The conclusion of this work is to provide an evidence based example of an instrument which could be developed to accurately measure classroom experience and participation in learning. It becomes necessary to call into question the monetization of assessment systems and classroom learning materials, mostly because the quality of the materials has become very poor, and the statistical validity of assessments has not become measurable in over a decade. It is possible to achieve consistently meaningful learning experiences for students as technology becomes more widely available in a way that costs very little for the supporting software systems and templates created for education. The idea is quite simply put to the reader, that education be open-sourced and developed by educators seeking to create optimally performing and epistemically engaged learning groups. This peer-reviewed democratic system created is based on constructivism and social learning principles, which can be easily maintained in public education institutions, with all of

the required measures of performance needed. Since the academic process is employed for the development of teaching materials in a collaborative environment, the work that is generated for presentation to audiences seeking education is peer-reviewed and considered credible among societies of educators at a given school. Because teaching materials are developed democratically, they represent the teacher's best effort to create high-quality lessons as well as the school community investment in the accuracy and credibility of the work. Students also are brought into functioning social groups that are tolerant of peer-review academics and pragmatic policies, in a way that allows for the autonomous engagement in learning that is sought by young people who are earning an education. Because the learning experiences are based on peer-review research, and the students themselves create a system of peer-review for inquiring about a subject of knowledge, the findings of both groups represented in the classroom can be said to be more pragmatic than multiple-choice assessment systems.

There is a way to bring meaningful learning experiences to the classroom and foster intrinsically motivated deep learning. This solution includes in the school environment social groups and social process. Schools that are community hubs and demonstrate communally held values generate social capital and contribute to the larger community (Boone, 2011). Social capital creates a shared atmosphere of social change and beneficial social action for the larger communities that we as people inhabit (Loeb, 2010). It is necessary for educators to be the empowered parties in the development of learning and school communities. It is necessary to invest in teaching.

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- In the context of the attribution theory of human motivation, a state of amotivation known as learned helplessness exists and is analyzed in this study. The study concludes that there is a difference between personalities who assume there will be failure even when environmental situations differ, and people who only assume failure will occur in situations which are similar. An unknown variable is described that differentiates the groups.
- APS (2016, May 19). *Albert Bandura receives national medal of science*. [Web Log]. Retrieved from: <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/publications/observer/obsonline/albert-bandura-receives-national-medal-of-science.html>
- The web log article celebrates the Presidential award given to Albert Bandura, the researcher behind social learning theory, on May 19, 2016.
- AZARIAN, B. (2016, May 10). The mindful child. *The New York Times Online*. Retrieved June 2, 2016 from: http://well.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/05/10/the-mindful-child/?_r=4

The author examines studies of mindfulness as a practice for children and presents an argument supporting mindfulness practice.

BANDURA, A. (1971). *Social learning theory*. New York, NY: General Learning Press.

The author describes his initial thesis regarding the mutual and reciprocal relationships which exist between individual human experience and society as a group. The work is available freely online.

BANDURA, A. (1989). Human agency in social cognitive theory. *American Psychologist*, 44(9), 1175-1184.

Albert Bandura elaborates his theory of human motivation, referred to as social cognitive theory, and describes the way in which autonomy exerts an influence over human motivation.

BOONE, M. (2011). Communities, schools and social capital. *Journal of Philosophy and History of Education*, 61(1), 19-28.

In this work the concept of social capital is presented and evaluated through the integration of schools as the centers of community and commerce within the social group milieu and social learning context as characterized by John Dewey.

CBS Local. (2014, March 3). *Students hold 'State of the Student' address for education reform*. [Web Log].

Retrieved June 2, 2016 from:

<http://denver.cbslocal.com/2014/03/03/students-hold->

state-of-the-student-address-at-capitol-for-education-reform/

The news agency presents a web log article that discusses an event which occurred in Denver, Colorado as students began demonstrating for better education reforms.

CHIU, M. & CHOW, B. (2010). Culture, motivation, and reading achievement: High school students in 41 countries. *Learning and Individual Differences, 20*, 579-592.

The authors conduct a cross-cultural analysis of reading achievement among students in secondary settings and describe the different influences between social groups according to gender roles and determinants of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. The authors concluded that collective cultures were influenced by extrinsic factors and family affiliation factors greater than individualist cultures.

CONRADIE, P. (2014). Supporting self-directed learning by connectivism and personal learning environments. *International Journal of Information and Education Technology, 4*(3), 254-259. Doi: 10.7763/IJET.2014.V4.408

The article represents a synthesis between the use of personal learning environments and socially established epistemologies for the acquisition of knowledge and finds that connectivism, which is also

termed constructivism, as a theoretical framework can be used to foster self-directed learning.

CMAR, O., BEKTAS, C. & ASLAN, I. (2011). A motivation study on the effectiveness of intrinsic and extrinsic factors. *Economics and Management*, 2011(16), 690-695.

An effective literature review describes the difference between intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation and finds that intrinsically motivated people were caused to work more than extrinsically motivated people. The study concludes that individuals are influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, but that intrinsic factors were the most effective.

CREHAN, K. (2001). An investigation of the validity of scores on locally developed performance measures in a school assessment program. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 61(5), 841-848.

Crehan outlines the factors which may influence the measure of performance when the measures of performance are locally developed from within the system that is being measured. A multitrait-multimethod meta-analysis was used to determine the validity of assessments used for measuring school performance, and raises questions about the validity of systems created for such a purpose.

DECI, E. & RYAN, R. (2008). Facilitating optimal motivation and psychological well-being across life's

domains. *Canadian Psychology*, 49(1), 14-23. doi: 10.1037/07085591.49.1.14

Self-determination theory is addressed in an honorary President's address presented to the readers of the scholarly journal. The statements create a relationship between autonomous behavior with well-being according to self-determination theory.

DELANEY, C. (1995). Rites of passage in adolescence. *Adolescence*, 30(120), 891.

The work represents a review of the existing rites of passage which are available to young adults in the western cultural context. The author presents social rites reflected from a variety of social groups.

DIMITROV, D. (2005). Cultural differences in motivation for organizational learning and training. *International Journal of the Diversity*, 5(4), 37-48.

The work demonstrates an accurate literature review of cross-cultural psychology and determines that human motivation for learning and training differs cross-culturally. The work demonstrates that motivation in the educational context differs, along the collective mindset versus individual mindset dynamic, which exists when describing psychology and psychological characteristics between cultural groups.

DRIVER, R., ASOKO, H., LEACH, J., SCOTT, P. &

MORTIMER, E. (1994). Constructing scientific knowledge in the classroom. *Educational Researcher*, 23(7), 5-12. doi: 10.3102/0013189X023007005

The authors survey the constructivist system of knowledge as a social system of learning and determine that it is suitable and effective as a theory of knowledge which applies to classroom environments.

FERRER, J. (2011). Participatory spirituality and transpersonal theory: A ten-year retrospective. *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 43(1), 1-34.

In a ten-year capstone review, the author describes the research of participatory spirituality and describes an epistemology for examining the utility of participatory spirituality in social space, as a part of the scholarly research presented.

FJORBACK, M., ARENDT, M., ORNBOL, E., FINK, P. & WALACH, H. (2011). Mindfulness-based stress reduction and mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, a systematic review of randomized controlled trials. *Acta Psychiatrica Scandinavica*, 124, 102-119. doi: 0.1111/j.1600-0447.2011.01704.x

The selection contains a meta-analysis of clinical trials investigating the practice of mindfulness in therapeutic roles, concluding that cognitive therapy was more effective than stress-reduction techniques,

but that both techniques were enhanced by mindfulness practice.

GHENEA, S. (2015). John Dewey: Pragmatism and realism. *The Scientific Journal of Humanistic Studies*, 7(12), 15-19.

The author contributes to the understanding of John Dewey's approach to epistemology and evaluates thoroughly the metaphysical mind-body problem as discussed in Dewey's work.

GOODMAN, S. (2014, November 11). *Does your classroom tell a story?* [Web Log]. Retrieved June 2, 2016 from:
<http://www.edutopia.org/blog/does-your-classroom-tell-story-stacey-goodman>

The author makes an argument that the visual and aesthetic elements of the classroom can influence student expectations of the learning which occurs in the space.

GOLEMAN, D. (2009). *Ecological Intelligence*. New York, NY: Broadway.

Goleman elaborates a new development in terms of understanding human intelligence, and in it he describes the process of becoming aware of and adapting to ecology as a factor which could be said to demonstrate intelligence as an intuitive process.

GOODWIN, B. & HUBBELL, E. (2013). *The 12 touchstones of good teaching: A checklist for staying*

focused every day. Denver, CO: McREL

The checklist format for teachers also presents an accurate formula and technique for teaching class to a mutually agreed upon standard. The text formalizes the process of breaking down agreed upon education standards and presenting them to students through the use of rubrics for grading that are objective and are not influenced by factors other than the academic performance of the student, according to clearly defined mutual expectations. The checklist objectifies the teaching process in a way that is more accurately operationalized for accountability measures.

HILL, C. & UPDEGRAFF, J. (2012). Mindfulness and its relationship to emotional regulation. *Emotion, 12*(1), 81-90.

The authors create a definition for mindfulness practice in the research context while concluding that mindfulness may increase effective emotional regulation through the understanding of emotional experience.

HIXSON, S. (2012a, October 22). *Theories of motivation: Changing over time*. [Course application for a course on human motivation PSYC-5240]. School of Psychology, Walden University. Retrieved June 2, 2016 from: <http://such411.blogspot.com/2012/12/post-6.html>

In the work, the author synthesizes the thesis that mindfulness and human motivation are related in the

transpersonal context. The author also discusses the reciprocal relationships between modern cultural texts and values, skills, and motives.

HIXSON, S. (2012b, November 18). *Theories of motivation: Social change processes*. [Course application for a course on human motivation PSYC-5240]. School of Psychology, Walden University. Retrieved June 2, 2016 from: <http://such411.blogspot.com/2012/12/post-9.html>

The author discusses the role of culture in the context of escalating cultural masculinity and violence in the western cultural context, and describes ways in which the social groups and cultural influences may change over time. The author describes a connection between individual motivation and social group processes.

HIXSON, S. (2014, November 17). *Community of inquiry: Facilitating social presence*. [Assignment for a course on adult education]. School of Education, University of Phoenix. [Web Log]. Retrieved June 2, 2016 from: <http://such411.blogspot.com/2014/11/post-34-classrooms.html>

The author presents a theoretical framework and best practices option for developing blended learning classrooms which support communities of inquiry learning.

HIXSON, S. (2015a). *For teachers*. [Web Log]. Retrieved June 2, 2016 from: <http://www.dxed.org/for-teachers>

The author presents a well-designed series of templates for teaching and classroom management, including lesson plans and examples, that are easy to access from the internet using a web browser.

HIXSON, S. (2015b, October 11). *Critical thinking application II: Standardized assessment report card*. [Course application for a course on Education assessment OTL-541]. School of Education, Colorado State University – Global Campus. Retrieved June 2, 2016 from: <http://such411.blogspot.com/2015/10/post-40-what-its-all-really-like.html>

The author describes the relationships between skills of reading and writing among students, and then demonstrates that standardized assessments in Colorado lack construct validity by utilizing a Pearson correlation, which shows no relationships between mean scores of reading and writing in Colorado secondary school assessment programs.

HIXSON, S. (2015c). *Eng-101-ubd-templates*. [Web Log]. Retrieved June 2, 2016 from: <http://www.dxed.org/eng-101-ubd-templates>

The author presents a series of well formatted and freely available online course templates for the instruction and assessment of secondary English courses in a communities of inquiry format.

HOLLERAN, L. & JUNG, S. (2005). Acculturative stress, violence, and resilience in the lives of Mexican-

American youth. *Stress, Trauma and Crisis*, 8(2-3), 107-130.

The work contains a qualitative analysis and discussion for the further investigation of social rites and social group membership as a mediating factor in the behavior of youth.

HOLTZMAN, L. (2000). *Media messages: What film, television, and popular music teach us about race, class, gender and sexual orientation*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.

In a nonfiction text, a strong narrative argument is made for the understanding of mass media as a part of a reciprocal relationship between social groups and the larger social milieu they inhabit, mass media then functions as a means of communicating the shared values of mainstream social groups in the western cultural context.

HOLZEL, B., OTT, U., GARD, T., HEMPEL, H., WEYGANDT, M., MORGEN, K. & VAITL, D. (2008). Investigation of mindfulness meditation practitioners with voxel-based morphometry. *SCAN*, 2008(3), 55-61.

The authors use new computer-aided imaging techniques to examine the physiological and neurological differences between brains of individuals who practice mindfulness behavior and individuals who do not. They conclude by

elaborating precisely which areas of the brain are strengthened through mindfulness practice.

HOOVER, J., GIAMBATISTA, R. & BELKIN, L. (2012).

Eyes on, hands on: Vicarious observational learning as an enhancement of direct experience. *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 11(4), 591-608.

The authors conduct a concise literature review concerning observational learning by imitation and add that it is a factor which adds to the knowledge gained through direct experience.

KERSCHREITER, R., SCHULZ-HARDT, S., MOJZISCH,

A. & FREY, D. (2008). Biased information search in homogenous groups: Confidence as a moderator for the effect of anticipated task requirements. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 34(5), 679-691.

The authors conclude that the sense of confidence in accomplishing a task was related to confirmation bias demonstrated by highly confident groups when searching for information related to a learning task. Groups which displayed high confidence demonstrated more confirmation bias than groups which anticipated the possibility of counterargument in the academic setting.

KOLTKO-RIVERA, M. (2006). Rediscovering the later

version of Maslow's hierarchy of needs: Self-transcendence and opportunities for theory, research, and unification. *Review of General Psychology*, 10(4),

302-317.

The author conducts a concise literature review of the work of Abraham Maslow, and then contrasts perceptions of Maslow's earlier work as represented in mainstream textbooks, with work that was concluded by Maslow himself through the research of transpersonal theory.

LOEB, P. R. (2010). *Soul of a citizen: Living with conviction in challenging times* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

A system for understanding processes of social change and social action are presented in the work, which details a concept referred to as social capital, which becomes a shared resource among social groups and represents the potential for social change. The work is written from a voice of experience in the area of social change and contains many examples of successful social change innovations throughout the course of the material.

MASLOW, A. (1974). Cognition of being in the peak experiences. In Covin, T. (Ed.) *Readings in human development: A humanistic approach*. New York, NY: MSS Information Corporation.

Maslow's original work as republished in anthology of works about humanistic development, describes peak experiences in detail as a measure of individual transcendence into the larger transpersonal life-

context. Maslow iterates experiences which transition personalities from deficiency-need cognition to being-cognition, which are not unlike mindfulness practice.

MAYER, B. (2012). *The dynamics of conflict: A guide to engagement and intervention* (2nd ed). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

In this work all interpersonal conflict is operationalized according to a series of conflicting mutual needs that can be represented in each type of conflict. Conflict resolution then becomes a series of strategies for resolving the dialectics present in the dynamics presented as mutually conflicting needs in social groups.

MCCLELLAND, D. (1985). How motives, skills, and values determine what people do. *American Psychologist*, 40(7), 812-825.

In the 1985 article by David McClelland, McClelland's hypothesis that the relationship between achievement and the motivation to achieve was influenced by an individual's available skills and values is described in the original thesis.

MILLER, G. (1969). Psychology as a means of promoting human welfare. *American Psychologist*, 24(12), 1063-1075.

In an opening article of a special issue of *American Psychologist*, Miller appeals to the readers of the

scholarly journal and describes the ways in which psychology as a science can be viewed as the study of promoting human welfare. Miller establishes that professionals in the field of psychology ought to establish a commitment to promoting human welfare through scholarly work.

MINDSHIFT. (2015, April 15). *Teens try out “real life” with internships for academic credit.* [Web Log].

Retrieved June 2, 2016 from:

<https://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2015/04/15/teens-try-out-real-life-with-internships-for-academic-credit/>

An online article describes the success of hands-on community learning activities for young people. Internships are examined as beneficial learning activities for students in the larger community, that engage students in real life work experiences.

MINDSHIFT. (2016a, March 14). *What kind of group work encourages the most original thinking?* [Web Log].

Retrieved June 2, 2016 from:

<https://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2016/03/14/what-kind-of-group-work-encourages-the-most-original-thinking/>

The web log article and book review examines learning in student groups for the purpose of stimulating original thinking in classrooms. The article examines classroom rules and their influence on creative adaptations.

MINDSHIFT. (2016b, February 19). *Strategies to ensure*

introverted students feel valued at school [Web Log].

Retrieved June 2, 2016 from:

<https://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2016/02/19/strategies-to-ensure-introverted-students-feel-valued-at-school/>

The web log article discusses the think/pair/share technique for bringing introverted students into group learning environments.

MINDSHIFT. (2016c, May 20). *When schools help students transcend chronic stress to tapo motivation* [Web Log]. Retrieved June 2, 2016 from:

<https://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/2016/05/20/when-schools-help-students-transcend-chronic-stress-to-tap-motivation/>

The online article discusses students who may be at risk, and considers the school community an advantage to these students who then bring their experiences into the learning environment through the careful development of student autonomy.

MINDSHIFT. (2016d). *Flipped classroom*. [Web Log].

Retrieved June 2, 2016 from:

<http://ww2.kqed.org/mindshift/tag/flipped-classroom/>

The tag system on the web log presents a series of article and web log entries which discuss the concepts of flipped assignments and flipped classrooms

MINDSHIFT. (2016e). *Lesson study: When teachers team up to improve teaching*. [Web Log]. Retrieved June 2,

2016 from:

<https://www.kqed.org/mindshift/2016/05/25/lesson-study-when-teachers-team-up-to-improve-teaching/>

The article describes the benefits discovered in a study examining teacher collaboration and finds that the contributions from other teachers benefit individual teachers as they formulate the instruction of their classes. The article supports teacher collaboration.

MITHEN, S. (1996). *The prehistory of the mind: The cognitive origins of art, religion and science*.

Mithen describes a framework for understanding psychological anthropology by stipulating that the human species primarily evolved through adaptation to the environment and ecology, which resulted in the intuitive development of cognitive skills, referred to as intelligence modules according to the modular theory of mind. The text describes the way in which human intelligence formed and has developed throughout the history of the human species.

MOORE, K., LIPPMAN, L. & RYBERG, R. (2015).

Improving outcome measures other than achievement.

AERA (Open), 1(2), 1-25. doi:

10.1177/2332858415579676

In the discussion of education assessment, the value of non-academic traits and measures other than those based on the attribution theory of human motivation

is discussed, the authors conclude that correctly operationalized measures other than academic achievement were necessary to facilitate education.

OSRAN, H., SMEE, D., SREENIVISAN, S. & WEINBERGER, L. (2010). Living outside the wire: Toward a transpersonal resilience approach for oif/oef veterans transitioning to civilian life. *The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology*, 42(2), 209-235.

The authors examine the therapeutic potential of transpersonal psychology in the treatment of veterans who experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The authors conclude that individuals who suffer from PTSD benefit from the experience of connection with the larger life-context and community.

PHILLIPS, D. C. (1995). The good, the bad, and the ugly: The many faces of constructivism. *Educational Researcher*, 24(5), 5-12. doi: 10.3102/0013189X024007005

Phillips discusses constructivism as a theoretical framework for learning and describes many ways in which the framework can be compared and contrasted in learning environments. The literature review seeks to resolve the mind-body problem present in metaphysics and epistemology.

POPP, J. (2014). John Dewey's theory of growth and the ontological view of society. *Studies in Philosophy and Education*. 34(45).

The author elaborates concisely the work of John Dewey that democratic societies collectively inspire growth through social learning, a theory that was later reconstructed to include the roles and actions upon individuals that societal institutions exert, which became a reciprocal dynamic between social institutions and individuals.

PRANIS, K. (2005). *The little book of circle processes: A new/old approach to peacemaking*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

In handbook format Pranis describes a system for regulating group processing and intragroup conflict mediation in order to facilitate group discussion. The text contains best practices for forming discussion talking circles based on traditional methods for peacemaking. The less than 100 page text accurately describes a set of microskills and techniques for managing group discussion processes.

ROBERTS, A. & YEAGER, K. (2009). *Pocket guide to crisis intervention*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

This work is a handbook that details a number of essential microskills for counseling and crisis intervention, the handbook discusses approaches that individuals can take to successfully assess a crisis and rapidly establish rapport with individuals dealing with difficult circumstances. The work is concise and

ideal for understanding communication with individuals in a variety of stressful or critical conditions.

SCHIRCH, L. (2004). *The little book of strategic peacebuilding: A vision and framework for peace with justice*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

A handbook of conflict management and mediation practices, that are based on traditional methods from historical culture, and inclusive of human needs and human rights during the resolution of conflict. The system referred to as peacebuilding is explained concisely in a less than 100 page book.

SHEA, P. & BIDJERANO, T. (2009). Community of inquiry as a theoretical framework to foster “epistemic engagement” and “cognitive presence” in online education. *Computers & Education*, 52, 543-553.

In the introductory article the authors present the thesis that online learning environments function as self-regulating communities of inquiry, which then foster epistemic engagement as described by the authors’ synthesis of research.

SHEA, P. & BIDJERANO, T. (2010). Learning presence: Towards a theory of self-efficacy, self-regulation, and the development of a communities of inquiry in online and blended learning environments. *Computers & Education*, 55, 1721-1731.

In continuing research the authors include blended learning formats on instruction in the communities of inquiry classroom instruction model, and further develop the idea of community epistemic engagement.

SHIRAEV, E. & LEVY, D. (2010). *Cross-cultural psychology: Critical thinking and contemporary applications* (4th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

In a 4th edition textbook, the studies of cross cultural psychology and processes of intergroup differentiation and workplace motivation are examined; in a way that adapts traditional western contrasting with eastern dynamics describing the subject, toward an individual contrasting with collective dynamic respectively, when describing cultural differences between global societies.

SIEFERT, T. (2004). Understanding student motivation. *Educational Research*, 46(2), 137-149.

In a balanced literature review of motivational theories related to student achievement, the author asserts that the sense of autonomy and competence that students experience was a factor which was congruent and positively associated with motivation among the presented theories of human motivation.

SILVER, B., SMITH, E. & GREENE, B. (2001). A study strategies self-efficacy instrument for use with community college students. *Education and*

Psychological Measurement, 61(5), 849-865.

A capstone article was written describing a self-report measure that accurately reflected student self-efficacy among a population of college students. Self-efficacy could then be operationalized objectively through the use of the scale developed for the study of education assessment.

STANGOR, C. (2011). *Research methods for the behavioral sciences* (4th ed). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

In the fourth edition textbook, statistical measures and techniques for operationalizing statistical data for the measure of performance and behavior are presented. The work also contains new developments in statistical calculation such as effect sizes and confidence intervals, and accurately describes the objective statistical analysis of data collected from populations commonly inquired about in the study of human behavior and learning.

STEPTOE, A., O'DONNELL, K., MARMOT, M. & WARDLE, J. (2008). Positive affect and psychosocial processes related to health, *British Journal of Psychology*, 99, 211-227.

An analysis of positive affective states concluded statistically that being in a positive mood reduced depressive states, and increased the ability to adapt to the environment. Positive affect was said to be beneficial to health outcomes.

TASDEMIR, N. (2011). The relationship between motivations of intergroup differentiation as a function of different dimensions of social identity. *Review of General Psychology, 15*(2), 125-137.

The author examines several disciplines of the study of social identity theory and social cognitive theory, and concludes that self-esteem and self-enhancement are factors that are a part of the process of human motivation that are congruent among theories of social identity.

WEINER, B. (2010). The development of an attribution-based theory of motivation: A history of ideas. *Educational Psychologist, 45*(1), 28-36. Doi: 10.1080/00461520903433596

In a capstone work, ten years of research concerning the attribution theory of human motivation are examined, and new research directions for the understanding of human motivation are stipulated.

VAN KNIPPENBERG, D. (2000). Work motivation and performance: A social identity perspective. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*.

The author surveys the social identity theory of human motivation and concludes that the sense of efficacy within groups and the sense of belonging to work groups were the most motivating factors among workers in the organizational context.

WIGGINS, G. & MCTIGHE, J. (2005). *Understanding by*

design. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.

Understanding by design represents a system for developing lesson plans and classroom materials that have been developed by professional educator Grant Wiggins in order to better facilitate effective classroom instruction. The text contains templates and best practices for the design of instructional activities. The system described increases accountability in instruction by ensuring that coursework is developed toward a unified standard that is agreed upon by the education community. The series of templates created improves an instructor's ability to clearly meet mutually defined standards for the learning which occurs in the classroom system presented.

ZELENSKI, J. & NISBET, E. (2014). Happiness and feeling connected: The distinct role of nature relatedness. *Environment and Behavior*, 46(1), 3-23.
doi: 10.1177/0013916512451901

The authors conclude in a statistical analysis that there is a relationship between the perception of nature relatedness within the larger ecology, and happiness or the sense of well-being. The thesis supports the notion of ecological intelligence or that acting in a nature related role in connection with the larger ecology promotes well-being.

ZINKER, J. (1977). *Creative process in Gestalt therapy*.

New York, NY: Vintage.

In the popularized version of Joseph Zinker's epistemology for human experience, he presents learning as a process of human metabolism that brings together simultaneously the need for knowledge and the experience which meets the human need. Zinker also describes the meta-cognitive process of analogy and creativity in the theory of human experience and motivation which presumes that human beings consistently flux between not objectively knowing, learning, and then resolving what is known; which is a cyclical human experience termed the Gestalt cycle of experience.

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