

THE **INSPIRED** **LEARNING** **MODEL™** **HANDBOOK**

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FORWARD

THE INITIAL INSPIRATION

This came to us in early 1996.

*Only acknowledge the student
for his innate magnificence!*

That was it!

It was like the line in the movie, *Field of Dreams*, “Build it and they will come.” Similar to what was portrayed in the movie, we had plenty of doubts, questions and concerns on many aspects of just how this was possible.

We did not know how, or even if, this inspiration would work in a classroom where four hundred pages of materials, consisting of skills, processes and theories, had to be taught. We did not know how, or again if, this new principle of learning could be used in a formal and structured certification process attesting to a certification candidate’s real world accurate and effective use of the materials learned over the course of one year.

There was however, an unrelenting force inviting us to begin, even if we didn’t have all the answers to exactly how or if this was going to work. We were inspired to bring this new principle of learning to our training of professional life coaches. This handbook is the direct result of trusting that inspiration. We took the leap and what has transpired will forever change the underlying philosophy of the learning process in formal and informal education.

By 1996, we had a combined experience of eighty-five years as students and over fifty years teaching and training in the corporate and academic arenas. We had never had the experience of this new learning environment as a student, a teacher or even seen it modeled by a mentor in a class where hard skills and processes had to be taught and foundational theories had to be comprehended and integrated by the student.

THE CONUNDRUM

We initially struggled with trying to reconcile the old ingrained principle in teaching that says that when the student has incorrectly answered a question, the teacher must point it out to him so he will know where improvement or further study is required.

The new principle of learning was a direct challenge to this old underlying principle of focusing on and correcting mistakes. We found ourselves trying to figure out the answer to: How do we advance the learning process when Johnny answers the question, “How much is $2 + 2$?”, with something other than “4”?

The answer seems so straightforward now. But, even on the first day we were introducing these guidelines, we did not know how we were going to handle incorrect answers when they occurred. We do now. We gladly share what we have learned over the past seven years in this handbook and through the Foundation.

The simple answer, by the way, to the Johnny-conundrum is:

- a. You do not correct him when he answers 5 to the $2+2$ question.
- b. You acknowledge and celebrate his willingness to answer.
- c. Based on the competencies for arithmetic that you would have given Johnny at the beginning of the class, you would have had numerous opportunities to listen for, acknowledge and celebrate all the other answers he did get right.
- d. You repeat this process until Johnny has mastered arithmetic.

TRANSFORMATION

It has been our joyful experience to find that these steps transform the learning process. The new learning process moves to an open joyous journey of continuing mastery that focuses on what has been mastered. The exploration and adventure of learning are restored.

We had previously witnessed thousands of times where this love of learning had been squashed and shut down. We had experienced it ourselves. The great news is the innate love of learning cannot be completely extinguished.

We believe that each child is born with an innate love of learning. We have witnessed people who had previously shut down their natural curiosity of learning for decades, thrive in the learning environment described in this handbook as the Inspired Learning Model™.

The world now has a learning model that articulates how to clearly focus on the celebration of learning and replace the corrective mindset that is prevalent in learning today. The Foundation for Inspired Learning was established in January 2003 as a non-profit training, research, publishing and accrediting organization to support and advocate for educators of the world who practice the principles of this Model. To the millions of educators who have practiced these principles for so long with so little support, we celebrate your passion and perseverance.

We are here to share with you and the world what we have been inspired to create in our learning environment for the past seven years. We know the Inspired Learning Model can be utilized in every learning environment regardless of the subject matter being taught, the age of the student or the institution where learning is occurring. We continue to be inspired by the depth and applications of this Model, by the hundreds of students that have come to our trainings and, in turn, by the thousands they have touched with these learning principles and philosophy. Our lives and those of our students have forever been positively transformed as a direct result of this learning Model. We know yours will be too.

We are dedicated to returning the innate love of learning to this life-long passion to learn. As parents, managers, formal educators, mentors, trainers and facilitators we are all responsible for creating learning environments. Please join us in creating an Inspired Learning environment for all those you parent, manage and teach.

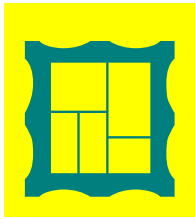
Do this for yourself. Do this for the Inspired Learners in your charge. Do this for the world!

Love & Respect,

Peter Reding & Marcia Collins

The World's Leading Advocates for Inspired Learning

July 4, 2003
San Diego, CA



THE SUBJECT MATTER

The Subject Matter is a clear body of work. It can be any topic, process or skill. It is organized in a way that is demonstrable, observable and acknowledgeable.

THE FOCUS OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

Any body of knowledge can be placed into the context of the Inspired Learning Environment. Think of the Inspired Learning Environment as the frame around the picture. The Subject Matter is the picture or the content.

The class or workshop is then the process of demonstrating the Subject Matter. The Facilitator creates exercises for the Inspired Learners to try the new skill or behavior, then notices and acknowledges what the Inspired Learners did that was consistent with one or more components of the Subject Matter. It is that simple!

The only thing standing between the first novice attempt and mastery of a subject is continued practice and reinforcement. This is the Integration element. (See Chapter 6).

This process is so simple. Yet when we only acknowledge the Inspired Learner's demonstration of a particular component of the Subject Matter and release correcting him for what he did not do, we have just turned traditional "wisdom" – and many teaching techniques in education – upside-down!

It takes a skilled and conscious Facilitator to maintain the positive focus and not slip back into the what-you-did-wrong or "missed" feedback that has been considered constructive feedback in the traditional education model.

The competencies that are created in relation to the Subject Matter become the filter through which the Inspired Learner's magnificence and knowledge of the Subject Matter is witnessed. The magnitude of support and empowerment provided by this type of witnessing propels the Inspired Learner's growth, confidence and understanding of the Subject Matter in an easy and honoring manner.

HOW TO RECEIVE THE SUBJECT MATTER OF A COURSE

So how does one find and choose the subject for a seminar, class or even a life-long pursuit? The traditional answer directs us to look outside of ourselves. We can research, read a lot, pull together different ideas and create our unique synthesis of the material to be presented. We call this the "Internet approach" because it can start with gathering information off the Internet, assessing and evaluating all the ideas, then further using our intellect to organize what we have gathered. This approach definitely works and there have been many teachings *given* utilizing this process. Our focus, however, is on exploring how to *receive* the Subject Matter via the Infin-Net, the infinite source of inspiration.

THIS SUBJECT MATTER IS FOR YOU

So with this new focus, the ultimate answer to, "How do we find and choose the subject for a class or a lifetime focus?" is, "We don't! We let the Subject Matter find and choose us!"

*You cannot teach art.
Art must find you.
Pablo Picasso*

Here are some inquiries that may give you clues into what subject you are already teaching:

- What do you love spending time reading about?
- What do you do in your spare time?
- When you have an opportunity to join a discussion that most interests you, what are they likely to be discussing?
- Where are you currently teaching, mentoring, facilitating for free? What subject matter is it?

Sometimes we just know that *this* is what we are here to "teach" and so we set about teaching it. Another way to choose Subject Matter is to look at all we have already received that is ready to be more fully expressed in the form of a seminar, workshop, etc. We may not have realized it, but we have been receiving the Subject Matter or the material for a class everyday. The question is, have we been conscious in hearing the Subject Matter and how have we been accumulating this information?

Again, looking within ourselves at our own experience, there is an endless amount of Subject Matter. The truth is, for every hour of "teaching," we only need about fifteen minutes of material. The amount of material that it is necessary for us to supply diminishes drastically when we create a learning environment instead of a teaching environment. In a learning environment we will have as many sources for material as there are Inspired Learners.