

**Title of Session:** Teaching Teachers  
**Moderator:** Dianne Allen  
**Title of File:** 20061005teachingteachers  
**Date:** October 5, 2006

Room: Teaching Teachers Group

**DianneA:** I am hoping to provide an open platform for discussing Teaching Teachers today

**DianneA:** if anyone has some thing they wish to raise then let me know

**BJB2:** perhaps you can give a brief review of what you tried to accomplish over the past sessions, Dianne?

**KatieBe** joined the room.

**DianneA** nods to BJ

**BJB2:** hi, Katie. Welcome

**KatieBe:** Thanks!

**MaureenB** waves to Katie

**DianneA:** Over the past few sessions, I have taken advantage of the platform available in this group room to discuss the use of reflective work to improve teaching practice

**DianneA:** it is a form of self-study, or action research, about aspects of teaching practice

**DianneA:** and about the use of the person as a key element of that practice

**BJB2:** I'm thinking that there was also a conflict between intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for professional development

**KatieBe:** What kind of conflict?

**JeffC** thinks that most teachers are in the "extrinsic" mode for the most part... jumping through hoops rather than focusing (reflecting) on personal and professional growth.

**DianneA:** there was that aspect as well, Bj, as we were exploring how Tapped In, by using some formal reflective structures, might encourage some accreditation of such self-study, and such work on professional development

**DianneA:** For me, there is no conflict as such, just a question of who authorises and how, and how Tapped IN might function to assist self-authorisation as well as comply with accrediting criteria

**BJB2:** Katie, we were trying to find a happy medium to participation in professional development for purely intrinsic benefits...

**MaureenB:** Isn't that what National Certification is all about

**BJB2:** or should all prof development opportunities provide some kind of extrinsic reward

**DianneA** listens to Maureen develop that, since I am based in Australia

**KatieBe:** Interesting. I have always thought that becoming a teacher with a CA clear professional credential takes more busy work than any other profession.

**BJB2:** ahhhh...'busy work'! blech.

**KatieBe:** There are several occasions where I think that we would have opportunities to actually become better teachers if the professional development was more focused

**MaureenB:** we now have a National Certification program to qualify you need to reflect on your teaching practices and make a personal portfolio

**BJB2** listens to how Katie recommends that focus be done.

**BJB2:** does that mean that once you've achieved NBC you can stop all prof dev?

**KatieBe:** I have not heard of a National certification.

**BJB2:** Katie, there is a group here in Tapped In for NBC

**BJB2** . o O ( NBC = National Board Certification )

**KatieBe:** Thanks, I'll check it out tomorrow.

**BJB2:** very rigorous program

**KatieBe:** Does it qualify you to teach in any state?

**DianneA:** does it cover high school as well as elementary schooling BJ?

**BJB2:** I believe it qualifies you to teach in most states...

**MaureenB:** all areas and specialities

**DianneA** nods

**BJB2**: and it's very specialized...you get NBC in a specific area or specialty

**MaureenB**: most districts offer incentives to be NBC

**DianneA**: and what Tapped In offers, or seeks to offer, is opportunities to engage with others in what might be called peer-based professional development, by interchanges either in sessions like this, or in other specific group discussions, online or by threaded discussions

**KatieBe**: Thank you very much I will look into it

**DianneA**: and what Tapped In has been doing over the past few years, when it conducts its showcase Festival events in the summer break is offering certificates of participation that might contribute to a personal portfolio

**KatieBe**: Right, I am new here but I think I see the benefit already

**DianneA**: what I was then exploring was whether we enhance the application with some reflective evaluation structures, and extend the 'certifying' to 'regular' TappedIn engagements and interactions

**KatieBe**: Now I understand

**BJB2**: What we're also interested in as a group and as a community is why don't more educators participate in the forums and discussions?

**DianneA** nods to Bj

**SusanR** joined the room.

**DianneA**: and here is where the intrinsic/extrinsic aspect has implications for the sustainability of an online facility like Tapped In as an institution

**BJB2** nods

**SusanR** listens

**KatieBe**: Well, I don't because no one has ever showed me how to. I am not generally motivated to spend free time at the computer so I was scared to try.

**KatieBe**: Even now I am in a Master's class totally online and it took a good amount of time to get orientated

**DianneA:** Katie, how do you engage in reflecting on your classroom practice, then?

**DianneA:** . o O ( there are a number of ways of actively and systematically and persistently reflecting on practice )

**KatieBe:** I reflect on it almost daily. I always talk to the other teachers on site and we share experiences and techniques

**DianneA:** . o O ( engaging in masters studies is one such way )

**DianneA:** and it, fortunately is accredited

**DianneA** nods to Katie

**DianneA:** how about others?

**BJB2:** not everyone has that opportunity, Katie.

**DianneA:** my process is by writing

**DianneA:** and includes description as well as evaluative analysis, and free form as well as structured

**KatieBe:** I totally understand that most teachers don't have that opportunity, I just work at a small school

**DianneA:** so something like TappedIn 'suits' my style, and in the absence of close association with peers Tapped IN is an important outlet for me

**DianneA** listens for Maureen and others' responses

**MaureenB:** we have daily grade level meetings where we discuss good practice

**DianneA** nods to Maureen

**DianneA:** is that recorded, or is the 'meeting' sufficient?

**DianneA:** and is engagement in the grade level meetings 'accredited' in any way?

**MaureenB:** we have to record at least one meeting a week but we became good at keeping notes and so record all

**MaureenB:** no mandated

**MaureenB:** if we begin before the school day on something special we get credit

**DianneA** wonders about the difference between 'mandated' and 'accredited' and typos

**DianneA** nods

**DianneA**: what sort of time is spent in the before school sessions, and is there a designated 'leader'?

**KatieBe**: What kind of credit are you getting? Professional development?

**MaureenB**: yes for new teachers it can be used for the 175 hours

**DianneA**: That sounds like a very pro-active school Maureen

**DianneA**: and what is a 'small school' for you Katie, for high school teaching?

**KatieBe**: 400 students in the high school

**DianneA** nods, thanks

**DianneA** appreciates the size and the subject specialisation might mean some sense of professional isolation

**DianneA**: that makes some peer-reflection less likely to occur in specific discipline practice issues

**KatieBe**: It does and I know people who rarely talk to their co-workers even in the same department

**DianneA**: Maureen was it you who mentioned about pd sessions being more focused, earlier?

**KatieBe**: No it was me

**DianneA**: so Katie, how would you describe the peer group you reflect with?

**DianneA**: thanks Katie, I didn't quite catch that

**KatieBe**: I reflect with about 1-5 people a day, either in another math teachers room or he comes into mine and we discuss what they know and notation we need to focus on or at lunch

**KatieBe**: we talk about the general feel for the students and discipline that has worked or embarrassing slips of the tongue

**DianneA**: so you have a relatively clear and 'functional' focus to your discussions

**KatieBe:** most of the time, not always at lunch

**DianneA** nods

**MaureenB** waves must leave daughter just home from college

**DianneA:** bye Maureen, thanks for dropping by

**BJB2:** thanks for joining us, Maureen

**MaureenB** left the room (signed off).

**KatieBe:** Bye Maureen

**DianneA** remembers lunch discussions about more general teaching issues

**DianneA:** One of the things I have noticed about my more recent and structured and systematic reflective work

**DianneA:** is how that helps me move beyond the basics of the technicality of a practice into the more subtle

**DianneA:** and the elements of teaching that are harder to notice

**BJB2:** interesting, Dianne.

**BJB2:** I can see your development in your tours

**DianneA:** and where my 'patterns' of response come under question

**DianneA** nods to BJ

**DianneA:** that's the value of sharing observing others' practice

**DianneA:** and it is particularly interesting and 'easier' to do in some respects here in Tapped In than in other contexts

**DianneA:** the transcripts help enormously

**BJB2** agrees

**DianneA:** the capacity to review the interactions after the event

**BJB2:** I also think there is a huge difference in text chat vs f2f chat/voice

**DianneA** agrees

**DianneA:** the slower pace and limitations of the text chat are significant

**DianneA:** and help discipline an approach

**DianneA:** but as Katie has noted, it takes significant time to become acclimated

**BJB2:** communication is distilled to a careful use of vocabulary

**DianneA:** . o O ( wonders whether Susan or Jeff have anything to offer here about the difference of their practice in TI and face to face )

**KatieBe:** that's true, but I think there's still something to be said for face to face

**DianneA:** there is a lot that must be said for face-to-face

**BJB2:** we're not arguing that, Katie...it's not an either or situation

**DianneA:** and one critique of Tapped IN moving into PD accreditation might be its difference and ecological irrelevance to face-to-face work

**DianneA:** Katie, what was prompting you to do the masters work online, rather than face to face?

**KatieBe:** I am really enjoying it and it does make the conversation more pointed because you have time to choose your words carefully

**BJB2** thinks Jeff and Susan are multitasking

**DianneA** grins and nods to BJ

**SusanR:** I like not having to worry about physical appearances. I can concentrate on the text

**KatieBe:** I am in a face to face program but it's the technology class and it's online

**DianneA:** thanks Susan

**DianneA** nods to Katie, that is a useful distinction

**DianneA:** and is the technology class making high level claims about its capacity to replace face to face for instance?

**KatieBe:** You have a point Susan, I am in my sweats playing with my dog.

**DianneA:** or where does the class suggest technology's role is?

**BJB2** bets that there is not the geographical diversity in Katie's f2f class!

**SusanR:** I suffer from shyness

**KatieBe:** It's supposed to create a virtual community but I don't know anyone in the class and so far, I do not feel like part of the community

**DianneA:** geographical diversity and time for travel and location is one of the main justifications for 'distance learning', and technology has allowed for great strides in interactivity and sense of having peer travelers in the studying

**DianneA** . o O ( Susan's shyness surprises me )

**DianneA:** I am shy too, that is I do not readily initiate social engagement

**SusanR:** aha

**KatieBe:** There's not a lot of geographical diversity. But Duke has a part-time MBA program where in a 10 week quarter the class meets 3 times and the rest is all online and they have people from all over. I think it's just nice to put it all together a couple times.

**DianneA:** and yet in the classroom situation, the formality and authority help me to break across those reservations

**DianneA:** interesting

**DianneA:** does that mean I prefer 'distanced' engagement?

**DianneA:** and also I have recently become more aware of how much I rely on the relationship I have been able to establish with the individuals in the group

**DianneA:** fascinating conundrums?

**BJB2:** Pepperdine does a similar thing as Duke with their MAET course

**KatieBe:** No, I think the online just takes some getting used to

**KatieBe:** I hear the programs are a lot of fun.

**BJB2:** it's also like choosing between two flavors of ice cream....again, it's not an either/or situation

**KatieBe:** excellent analogy

**DianneA:** there is an interesting article in today's SMH about the quality of virtual community (or team work)

**DianneA:** and how it takes up to four times longer to establish workable trust in the group, virtually

**DianneA:** because of the absence of the non-verbal communication modes

**KatieBe:** interesting

**SusanR:** do you have the URL for that article, Dianne

**DianneA:** that makes continued engagement in Tapped In questionable, and may explain why we are grappling with sustainability in the community

**DianneA:** try [www.smh.com.au](http://www.smh.com.au)

**DianneA:** the article is in the Insight section, called Why interface is not face-to-face

**SusanR:** Thanks Dianne

**BJB2:** Our time is about up, Dianne.

**KatieBe:** Yes, thanks

**DianneA:** and it was sourced from the Guardian (British?)

**DianneA:** yes thanks BJ, thanks all for the discussion

**DianneA:** Katie, I was wondering ...

**KatieBe:** sure

**DianneA:** what was your 'hopes' for this session?

**BJB2:** The next Teaching Teachers discussion will be November 2

**DianneA:** thanks BJ

**JeffC:** That's about when I start teaching teachers!

**SusanR:** Thanks Dianne

**BJB2** cheers for Jeff

**KatieBe:** Well, as soon as I clear my credential, my school wants me to be the new teacher mentor for the new science and math teachers so I thought this would be about mentoring

**BJB2** waits for Katie to answer and then runs to the Teachers in Training discussion.

**DianneA** nods, that is Mary Thompson's focus

**JeffC:** Basically these meetings can cover a wide scope of discussions.