

Title of Session: Action Research

Moderator: Diane Painter

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Room: Action Research Group

GailVR: Where are you located? I'm in Fairfax County, Virginia.

BJB2: I'm in Pennsylvania, nw of Harrisburg

GailVR: Should I admit that I mis-read Diane's message and logged on to chat at 5:00 p.m.? I was definitely talking to myself then!

BJB2 chuckles. Happens to us all!

BJB2: at least you had the time zone right ;-)

GailVR: What's your connection to Diane and this AR group?

BJB2: very tenuous! I'm on Tapped In helpdesk and will be moderating the discussion

GailVR: Thank you! I think I've already proven I'm in need of moderating.

BJB2 laughs...you've used the discussion board...that's pretty impressive!

DianeDP joined the room.

BJB2 waves hi to Diane

DianeDP: Hey there Gail. Thanks for joining me.

GailVR: That I learned how to do as part of online mentoring with University of Virginia's ENDAPT program.

GailVR: Hi, Diane!

DianeDP: Gail- notice what I have on the whiteboard from Mohr and MacLean's work?

DianneA joined the room.

DianeDP: Hi Dianne

DianneA: Hello Diane

DianneA waves to Gail and BJ

GailVR: Yes, I responded to the whiteboard on the discussion forum

DianeDP: While she is doing that- let's let everyone know who we are. I am a retired teacher from Fairfax Va now teaching special education courses at Shenandoah University. I have engaged in teacher research since 1980's through the Fairfax teacher-research network.

BJB2: I'm a retired communication and art teacher and Tapped In helpdesk volunteer located in Pennsylvania

DianeDP: BJ- want to tell folks how to detach their screen?

DianneA: I'm still marginally involved in professional development, based from home at Kiama, NSW

GailVR: I'm an Instructional Coach in Fairfax County, Virginia.

DianeDP: Ooh, so cool to have you join us from NSW- where is that? Australia?

BJB2: I already told Gail, Diane, and I think you and Dianne already know how ;-)

DianneA: Kiama is 200km south of Sydney, Australia

DianneA: it is a coastal resort

DianneA: I scored a teaching appointment here, for secondary science teaching in 1968

DianneA: and haven't moved since

DianeDP: I thought so. I did a teaching exchange through Hands Across the Water- the first time to NSW and the second in Melbourne, Vic

DianneA nods to Diane

BJB2: I've got a question, being only marginally familiar with AR...is Action Research something that would be applicable for a teacher portfolio?

DianneA: I would think so BJ

DianeDP: Many people do AR as evidence of growth- as a part of staff development- Gail can explain how that works in Fairfax

DianneA nods in agreement with Diane

GailVR: For conducting an AR study and participating actively with a school-based group, and sharing one's findings, FCPS teachers earn 60 recertification points (VA requires 180 every 5 years).

DianeDP: Dianne- how do teachers in NSW engage in AR? I have friends in Melbourne who have shared their work with Gail and me at the International Teacher Research Network conference, but never anyone from NSW has attended the conference- at least I do not believe so...

DianneA: In Australia, most formal AR work, that gets to the reporting stage is either part of a postgraduate qualification or a school-based, government grant program

DianneA: Melbourne has a very active AR community, based around Deakin University and PEEK folk ...

DianeDP: That seems to be what I am hearing from Canadian and UK teachers as well.

DianneA: Sydney/NSW's level of formal AR is not as strong ...

DianeDP: So you know Ian and Judie Mitchell then?

GailVR: Here in FCPS, AR is conducted by classroom teachers because they want to improve their practice, not necessarily as part of a course or a grant.

DianneA: I find that teachers who recognise that they work with AR tend to find themselves a bit isolated in progressing that research at the postgraduate level

DianneA: No I don't know Ian and Judie Mitchell

DianeDP: I was hoping that this AR group could be used to bridge that sense of isolation. What do you think, Gail?

BJB2: Bridging isolation is the primary function of Tapped In!

GailVR: Absolutely! In my reply on the discussion board, I spoke of my vision that teacher action research will be more widely disseminated.

DianeDP: I can see us using TI to openly collaborative, provide useful information and feedback in the process of engaging in AR.

DianeDP: Dianne, are you engaged in AR right now?

DianneA: Yes, my focus is with self-study, and action learning, and I have been using the processes to consider how I improve my peer reviewing for the Journal of Reserch Practice

DianneA: I am not as actively engaged with people in the workplace as I would like to be

BJB2 . o O (Dianne leads the Teaching Teachers and Teachers-in-Training discussions in Tapped In)

DianeDP: Gail did her doctoral work on teacher-researcher- want to share some of your findings, Gail?

DianneA: BJ and I also do some exchanges about how I conduct Tips and tricks Tours here at Tapped In, when a gap in my practice pops up

DianeDP: Glad to know that, Dianne, since I am a teacher-educator

DianneA: I have found it difficult to form a community of practice who are interested in sharing collaboratively around what their work is, and where AR of it is taking them ...

DianneA: It may be that they are too busy, with work, and with their own learning and doing of AR

DianeDP: While Gail is collecting her thoughts to share, I will tell you that I am interested in finding ways to co-collaborate and co-teach here at Shenandoah U and also study effective co-teaching in preK-12 schools between special ed and general ed

GailVR: That was the topic of my dissertation study--what motivates teachers to engage in AR, and then what keeps them engaged.

DianneA listens to Gail's findings

DianeDP: Where is the Journal of Research Practice published?

DianneA: check out <http://jrp.icaap.org/index.php/jrp/index>

DianeDP: Thank you, I will.

DianneA: it is an open journal system, so available from the web

DianeDP: I like that

DianneA: it is broader than AR ...

GailVR: The two main reasons teachers first engage in AR are personal invitation by someone they respect and exposure in coursework that emphasizes inquiry and reflection.

GailVR: Teachers stick with AR when they have a supportive group of like-minded reflective practitioners, guided by a skilled facilitator, in a school context that supports inquiry and collaboration.

BJB2 . o O (same with any participation in Tapped In, Gail)

DianeDP: In Fairfax the support comes from the local school level as well as district support for giving teachers time during their work day to meet

DianeDP: Gail is one of the facilitators- I used to be before I retired.

GailVR: And at the individual school level, groups thrive (or fail to thrive) because of a supportive principal and a group leader who has organizational skills, content (about AR) knowledge, and good people skills.

DianeDP: I also found that teachers will continue AR beyond college requirements if they really have a positive teacher-research experience and see the personal benefits to their teaching and students' learning.

DianeDP: Gail- have you synthesized your dissertation into a journal article for publication?

GailVR: I'm no longer a district-wide facilitator, although I do lead a group at the school where I'm an instructional coach. As an additional support, the district hires consultants (retired teachers who were very active in AR during their teaching days) to guide the group leaders through the process of starting up a group in the fall, helping group members cast questions, collect and analyze data, and share their findings. They meet 6 times per year, then the group leaders can return to their schools, more knowledgeable about leading their groups.

GailVR: I haven't written any journal articles, but I have written a couple of book chapters.

DianneA: Gail, what would this group at Tapped In need to be doing for you to find it helpful for your practice

DianeDP: I asked the facilitator of AR at my university to join us, but she is teaching tonight. BJ has this again on the calendar for next week. Perhaps we will have some people starting or in the process of doing AR join us next Thurs if we get the word out

BJB2: posting to discussion boards to remind others of the Feb 12 meeting

BJB2 . o O (same time)

GailVR: This group seems to be geared more toward novice teacher researchers. I see my role here as a mentor who is still willing to learn from other researchers, no matter their experience level.

DianneA: I can understand that Gail

BJB2 thinks Gail should join the Teaching Teachers group!

DianneA: the role of helping others is important

GailVR: That is definitely what I do all day long, and as an adjunct instructor at George Mason University in the evenings.

BJB2 . o O (Teaching Teachers is scheduled after this discussion)

DianeDP: People who have joined us previously were mostly interested in knowing what it is all about, but not necessarily engaged in the process

DianneA: but my interest in the formation of an effective collaborative group will depend on people having things/problems/ questions that are real to them and are prepared to share it

DianeDP: agree with that

GailVR: It's been my experience that there are many problems and questions inherent in teaching and in seeking to improve one's practice.

DianeDP: On the whiteboard, do you see things listed that you would like to see part of that collaborative group's mission or purpose?

DianneA called away to the phone fir the moment

DianeDP: I think the 4th item down is very appropriate, what do you think?

BJB2: hold on a sec

BJB2: have a guest in reception who logged in for your session

DianeDP: terrific

MikeGst4 joined the room.

BJB2 . o O (kind of late, but might come next week if I can get him here....)

BJB2: and there he is! Good job, Mike

BJB2: this discussion is almost over, but there is another one on AR scheduled for next Thursday, February 12 at 7pm EST

MikeGst4: oh ok

MikeGst4: first time using this site

DianeDP: Hi Mike, I am Diane and I facilitate AR Group- welcome

MikeGst4: Hi Diane

BJB2: and perhaps you can get a free Tapped In membership by then...

BJB2: so you will have a transcript of the text chat when you log out

MikeGst4: I might have to do that if I find this site useful

DianeDP: What is your interest in action research?

MikeGst4: Well I did a little bit of it for a course required for my masters degree

MikeGst4: I was just curious what was being discussed

DianeDP: many people begin that way. Are you doing any teacher-research now? I take it you are in teaching?

MikeGst4: Yes I have been teaching for about 13 years

DianeDP: we were talking about how the process is used for staff development.

DianeDP: where are you from?

MikeGst4: I enjoyed action research. I thought it was interesting, especially since I am a science teacher

MikeGst4: I am from Wisconsin

MikeGst4: and you?

DianeDP: My whole family is from WI but I live in VA

DianeDP: Hello MJE

MikeGst4: interesting. Whereabouts in WI?

DianeDP: Lacross, Greenbay and Sun Prairie- my two nieces and nephew go to UW

DianeDP: Will you join us next Thurs at 6 PM your time, 7 PM EST?

BJB2: I'm going to head for the next discussion, Diane. Thanks for leading this discussion tonight. I'll see you next week!

MikeGst4: Yes, I will try to remember

BJB2 . o O (members who join a group are sent reminders of that groups discussions)

BJB2 . o O (hint, hint)

MikeGst4: ok What other discussions are there tonight ?

DianeDP: Hope to chat with you next week- meanwhile, take a look at the whiteboard and perhaps we can talk about some of the points and how we can support others in TR- yes, teaching teachers is next

DianeDP: I will log out of AR now- have a great week. Hi Jeff

BJB2: there is a Next Vista for Education discussion that will look at multimedia

DianneA: Sorry about that, I lost connection as well as the phone call ...

BJB2: and Dianne is leading a Teaching Teachers discussion

DianneA: I may see you next week Diane

DianeDP: Dianne- hope to chat with you then. Mike may join us, too. Bye

MikeGst4: Bye bye