


**Dialogue
Education
at Work**
CASE STUDIES

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and Associates

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Dialogue Education at Work: Case Studies

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This book is dedicated to the memory of Darryl Burrows of New Orleans, a great friend of dialogue education.

Preface

What is dialogue education? It is a finely structured system of learning-focused teaching rooted in a research-based set of principles and practices. I have been doing dialogue education since meeting Paulo Freire in 1968. I have been writing about it since 1986. In 2002 I read a request from one of the professional readers of the manuscript of the revised edition of *Learning to Listen Learning to Teach*: “I would love to see a set of data telling how dialogue education is being used in diverse settings.” That was my dream too! I presented a proposal to Jossey Bass who had in 1984, published a casebook prepared by Malcolm Knowles: *Andragogy in Action: Applying Modern Principles of Adult Learning*. That casebook has been a useful model for the construction of this one.

Why A Casebook?

A casebook is a presentation of action research. Each story tells what happened in a learning event, the preparation and design of it, a sample of the learning tasks, indicators of learning, transfer and impact. The model of dialogue education presented in this casebook is highly structured, with a rigorous design tool and explicit principles and practices. That structure looks different in diverse situations and each author brings her unique perspective to the description. Our purpose in designing and constructing this casebook is to give readers examples of dialogue education in practice. Reading twenty-three cases showing how your peers designed and led and evaluated adult learning can be useful to you, especially if you use the guidelines for analysis accompanying each story.

What’s Here for You

After an introduction which describes dialogue education today, the casebook is organized into three parts. In Part One -University and College Education - Jane Connor, an experienced psychology professor, shows how she redesigned her undergraduate Multicultural Psychology course at State University of New York Binghamton. Elena Carbone, a nutritionist, describes her efforts at designing and leading an undergraduate nutrition course for young professionals at another state university. Meredith Pearson, with long experience in the Cooperative Extension Service of land grant universities shows how she used dialogue education to design a training program for extension workers in the Extended Food and Nutrition Program. Marianne Reiff, professor of education, describes her

work in not only using dialogue education in a weekend college setting, but also teaching it there. Steve Schrapp tells the story of a college-based video-conference undergraduate course teaching prospective child care providers in Vermont. A team of educators, Jay Ekleberry, Mary Hoddy and Tara Cordes, describe the gradual transformation of all the education programs and systems at The Wisconsin Union of the University of Wisconsin at Madison to effective adult learning via dialogue. Sarah Gravett offers the story of her efforts at teaching dialogue education principles and practices to educators at three colleges in Johannesburg, South Africa.

In Part Two—THE PUBLIC SECTOR AND NOT FOR PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS—we hear from educators designing community education and training. Cindy Bizzell shows how the training of volunteers in the Court Appointed Special Advocate program around the nation was enhanced by the use of dialogue. A team of adult educators, Valerie Uccellani, Jyaphia Christos–Rodgers, and Mack Slan, describe the genesis, design and daily operation of the New Orleans Jobs Initiative that uses dialogue education for instructor training. Greg Walker-Wilson and Joye Norris share the story of revitalizing a flagging adult education program for new entrepreneurs in the mountains of North Carolina by the use of dialogue. Darlene Goetzman shows how dialogue education and appreciative inquiry enhanced a strategic planning session for a Literacy Volunteers of America Board in New York State. Barbara Gassner tells the story of a group of welfare mothers who learned how to work together to form a bakery via dialogue and friendship. Michael Culliton describes a national workshop series of NETWORK, the social justice lobby, aimed at moving citizens to work for reauthorization in Congress of legislation to serve welfare mothers. Jean Anliker shows how the training curriculum for a national federally-funded nutrition program was re-shaped through dialogue education. Kathy Johnson, Peter Perkins, and Nicole Saginor, a team from The Vermont Institute for Mathematics and Science Teaching (VISMT) demonstrate the use of dialogue education in their state-wide program. Karen Ridout shows how dialogue informs strategic planning for Boards of Directors of not for profit groups. Valerie Uccellani describes the use of dialogue education to train professional staff in the California WOMEN AND INFANT CHILDREN (WIC) program.

Part Three – International Education – introduces Linda Gershuny, who describes how dialogue education informed teacher training in Haiti. Robb Davis, Ellen Vor der Bruegge and Jeanette Treiber, a team from *Freedom From Hunger*, show how their adult education program on micro-financing for small entrepreneurs has been designed with dialogue. Gail von Hahmann describes the use of dialogue in a *World Education* program in

Cambodia. Peter Perkins and Michaela Stickney show how dialogue education worked in Russia with teams of professionals at the Volgograd Center for Environmental Training. Klaus Puschel, a physician at the Medical School of the Catholic University of Chile, tells the story of the transformation of primary health care in Santiago, Chile when dialogue education was introduced in a new Residency for Community Medicine. Peter Noteboom describes the use of dialogue in the design of an anti-racism program for churches in Canada.

We have a wide stream of evidence for you! Each case offers a set of open questions for analysis and synthesis, inviting the reader to identify the design principles used, and exploring cross-case connection. A concluding chapter looks at lessons learned from all the stories and the issues raised for dialogue education. There is an appendix with an updated description of the principles and practices of dialogue education.

Who Will Find This Casebook Useful?

Adult educators, graduate and undergraduate students of adult education, trainers, program and curriculum designers, health educators, board members of not for profit groups and university and college professors may be moved by these stories to examine their work in terms of dialogue education. While this is a practical casebook, it is also meant to invite reflection on the philosophical and epistemological questions raised in every case. Readers will no doubt go to the stories that most readily relate to their work.

I assume that many readers will have met dialogue education through my other Jossey Bass books and know of the courses offered through Global Learning Partners, Inc. (www.globalearning.com). I welcome your response to these stories at jane@janevella.com. The poet Rumi captures the heart of dialogue education for me: “You think because you understand one you understand two, because one and one are two. But you must understand *and*.” (Wheatley, 1999). We work through dialogue, as Paulo Freire put it, (Freire, 1968, p.24) to create a world where it is easier to love.

Jane Vella
Raleigh, North Carolina

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THE AUTHORS

Jane Vella is an educator who began teaching fifty years ago. After meeting Paulo Freire in Tanzania in 1970, Vella began her exploration of dialogue as a new way of designing and offering adult education. In 1981 she founded The Jubilee Popular Education Center, which is now Global Learning Partners, Inc.

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