



On the Beam

An International Human Resource Network

Looking to the Future

In this issue, *On the Beam* focuses on the future of education. Great possibilities lie ahead when educators begin integrating the best of previous teaching/learning practices with current successful instructional innovations, with new 'understandings about learning and human development, and with new, multi-media technology.

As technology facilitates communication (from district-wide to global), facilitates teaching and learning, facilitates information management, and makes it possible to explore intelligence in new ways, the current educational reform movement differs markedly from previous ones.

As technology becomes more widely used, there is also increased emphasis on developing human capacities—those which Rexford G. Brown, senior policy analyst for the Education Commission of the States, calls a "literacy of thoughtfulness." He suggests in his new book, *Schools of Thought*, that we must develop not only thinking skills but caring skills as well.

You will find much to ponder as you read about what today's educational pioneers are thinking and doing.

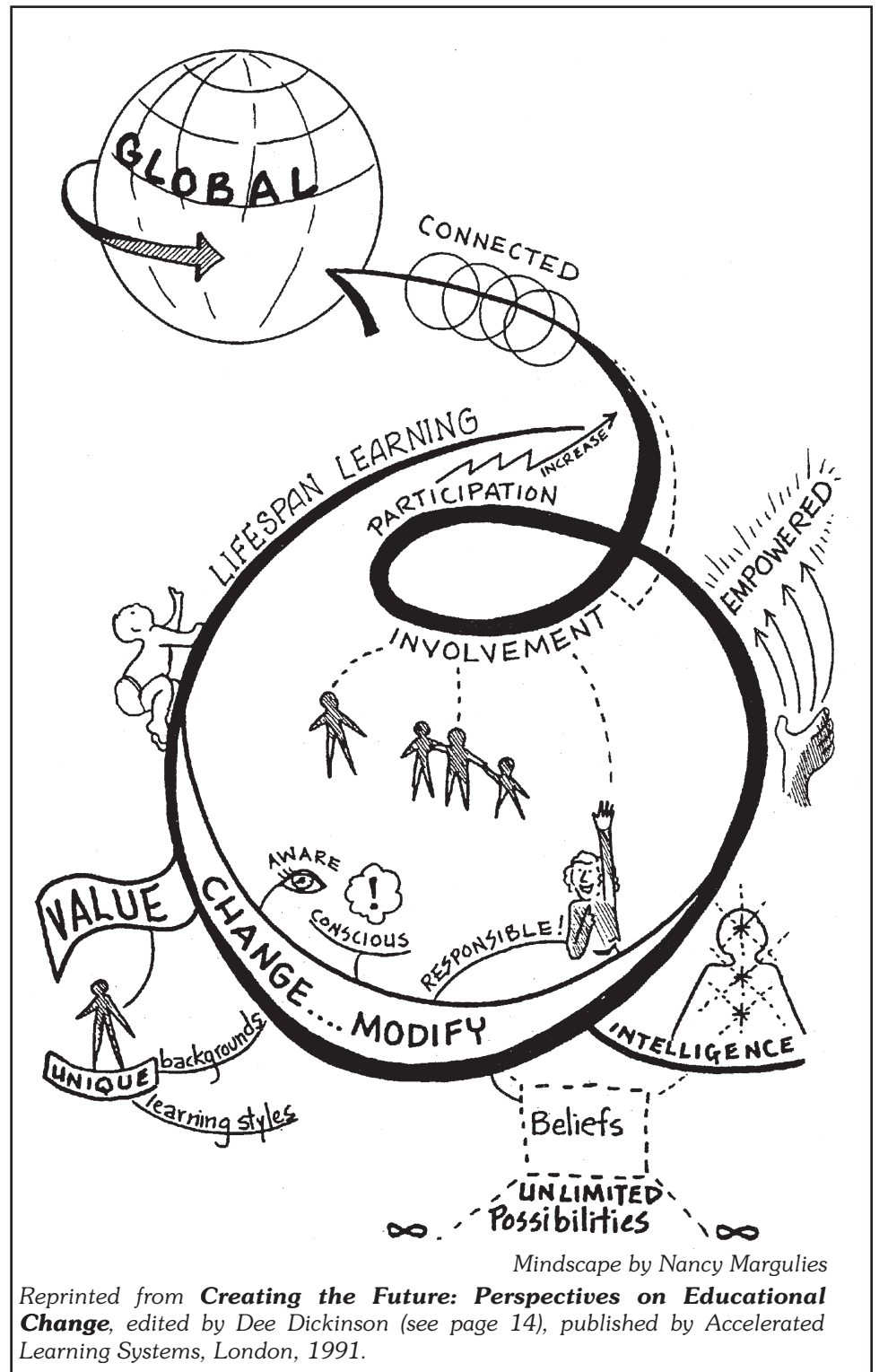
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Mindscape by Nancy Margulies

Reprinted from *Creating the Future: Perspectives on Educational Change*, edited by Dee Dickinson (see page 14), published by Accelerated Learning Systems, London, 1991.

Dare to Imagine

by Marilyn King

What do astronauts, Olympic athletes, corporate executives and inner city high-risk youth have in common? They are all being taught a high performance technology called Olympian Thinking. The technology is based on the knowledge that (1) all successful people have three things in common and (2) ordinary people accomplish extraordinary things when they align these same three elements.

After experiencing this phenomenon myself in training for my third Olympic team in 1980, I spent eight years teaching Olympian Thinking to highly motivated entrepreneurs, corporate executives and other athletes. Through my association with New Horizons for Learning, I learned that, in fact, Olympian Thinking teaches critical thinking skills. Even more important is that instead of teaching them in isolation, the technology operationalizes these skills, which is the best way for everyone to learn them. After presenting at numerous international conferences addressing 21st century education design, I decided to see what would happen if I worked directly with young people.

In the winter of 1988-1989 I began working two hours once a week with fifteen kids at the Neighborhood Center. The center is located in a "war zone" called East Oakland. What follows is the story of my first attempt to teach the technology to children. It is the true story of J.B. and is designed to assist you in identifying and aligning the three essential elements. We know it works with adults, but what about kids? **The Dare to Imagine Project** is an exciting work in progress that answers that question.

J.B. was considered a "high risk" youth. He lived in East Oakland and in the fall of 1989 the house where J.B. and his mother were staying was raided as a crack house. Mom went to jail and J.B. would spend one night at his coach's house, another night with a friend or at "Nanny's." While staying at Nanny's he would tie knots in his new sneakers and wear them to bed so no one could steal them.

When J.B. became involved in **The Dare to Imagine Project**, he learned that all successful people have three things in common:

- They have something that really matters

to them; something they really want to do or be. We call it **Passion**.

- They can see a goal really clearly and the "how-to" images begin to appear like magic. While the goal may seem farfetched, they can imagine doing all these little steps on the road to that goal. We call it **Vision**.
- Finally, they are willing to do something each day, according to a plan, that will bring them one step closer to their dream. We call it **Action**.

Passion + Vision + Action is our equation for success.

J. B. said he already knew he wanted to be an NFL football player. We celebrated that he already had one of the three elements common to all high achievers: passion-something he would love to do or be. When you have something that really matters to you, you have more energy and you become a very creative problem solver. Next he needed to see his goal very clearly so the "how-to" images would appear. We took him through two exercises. The first one is called **Ideal Image**. He needed to know very precisely all the skills, traits and characteristics of a superstar football player. We assisted him with a drawing of a football player in the middle of a piece of paper, mind mapping the traits on lines radiating like spokes of a wheel from his central image. Reading it back, once completed, he could readily see that this was a complete picture of a superstar.

It became clear that because J. B. wanted to be a star in the NFL, he needed to have these same traits. So next we asked him to rate himself on a scale of 1-10 on each of these traits. (10 means very good, 4-5 average and 1-3 needs some attention.) While all these traits are important, J.B. was asked to select and circle the ones he felt were most important.

He noticed that his "bad attitude" (getting into fights) was his biggest drawback. We also recognized all the strengths (8-10) as reasons he was already good at football-things he could rely on in a pinch. Those rated 1-3 were discussed as important for him to work on if he wants to be an NFL player. We use all this information on the second exercise: **Success Map**™.

SUCCESS MAP

J. B. began his **Success Map**™ by placing himself at one end of the road with his name and the date, and placing an image of his goal at the finish line.

Next, from his **Ideal Image**, he filled in some of the key traits he will acquire/have as a superstar football player. He was sure to include some current strengths and some he hopes to acquire.

Working backwards from the goal, he answered the question. "Where do they recruit NFL players from?" He knew immediately that they recruit from colleges and he drew in a college on his road map.

"How does one get into college?" we asked. His responses included good grades in high school and junior college, and getting a scholarship. We had him include these in the appropriate places on his road.

It became clear that making a plan requires some real knowledge and expertise. We asked him to fill in someone he could go to who has been there or who knows more than he does.

All successful people have at least one person who believes in them, someone to cheer their victories and be with them when they stumble or feel discouraged. J.B. included "cheerleaders" on his map.

No one's road to success is unobstructed, everyone encounters hurdles and roadblocks. In the middle of this road he wrote the biggest obstacle or fears he faced.

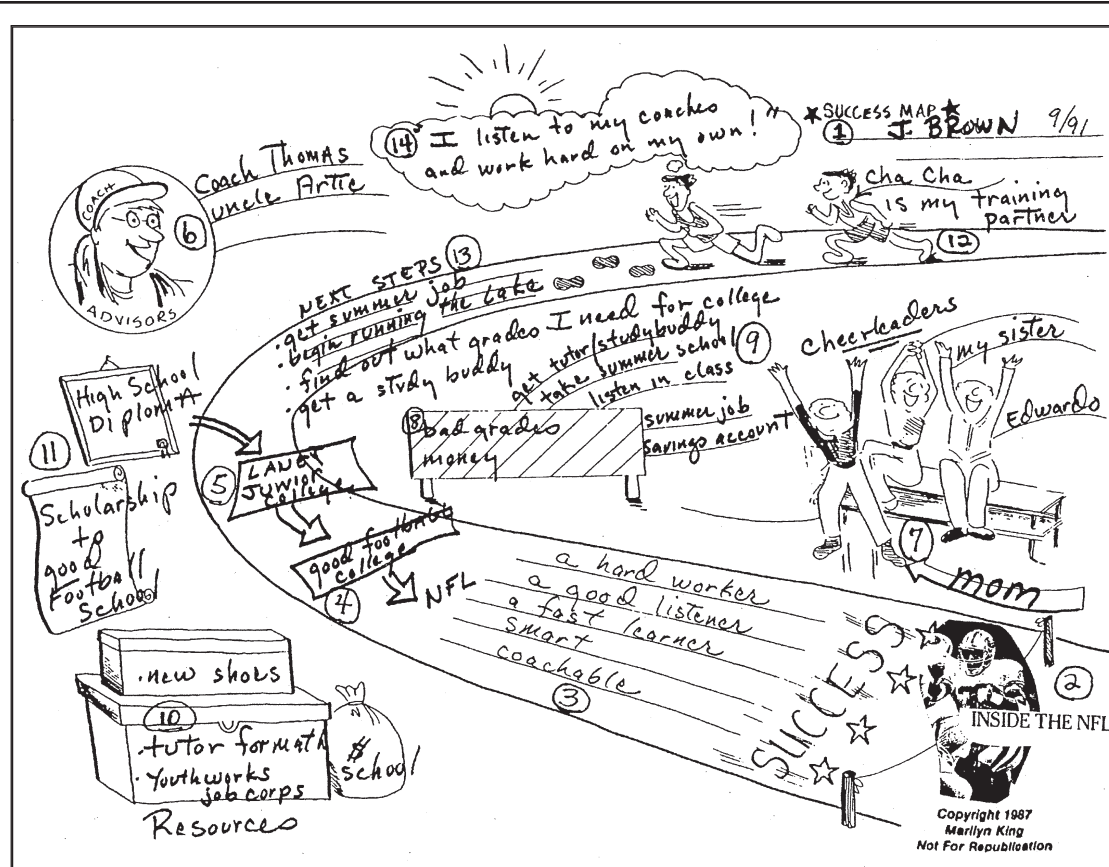
"What are three things you can do to insure that these obstacles will not stop you from reaching your goal? Include three insurance policies for each obstacle." On the lines provided he wrote in the three "insurance policies."

When reaching for success, we always find we are in need of more time, money equipment, expertise, etc. J.B. used these boxes to identify what things he needed to help him on his way.

Awards are ways to measure our progress. J.B. identified a high school diploma and scholarship as his measuring sticks.

It is always easier to work hard if these is someone beside you who is also reaching for success. We asked J.B. to identify someone he would like to be his training partner.

Having identified the need for physical skills, better grades and money, we asked, "What are some of the next steps you could take in the next few weeks?" This completed our **Vision** component.



Write your statement on your Success Map" and take your statement and look in the mirror while you repeat it ten times each morning and ten times each evening for ten days.

While the exercise is simple and requires very little time, it is very powerful. Ask your training partner to check with you each day to assure you have done it. At the end of ten days, I assure you that, like J.B., you will have made a big step on your road to success.

"We knew theoretically we could help kids discover what they really wanted to be, make accessible the necessary thinking skills, and support them in an action plan. The kids went on to complete many individual contracts and then proceeded to set a "team goal" of going to Disneyland if they completed a ten-week public speaking course which they did. JB went on to play

Action Steps

After completing the map, we asked J.B. to look at his **Ideal Image** and his **Success Map™** and to choose one thing that he needed to work on. He said his coaches told him he had a bad attitude. He was getting into fights two to three times a day-in the school yard, in the halls, on the way to and from school. He recognized that even if he had a "10" on everything else, no NFL team would want someone who was always fighting.

Our action step was to have him make a six-week contract about a next step on his road. While other students chose interviewing experts or reading books, J.B. said he was going to "not fight" for six weeks.

All of my efforts to persuade him to choose some smaller first step were futile. Given his daily life, his history and the taunts of other children, I was convinced he would fail. Plus, I knew to envision "not fighting" was a poor strategy, but he was gone. Tiring of my exercises, he wanted to play.

When J.B. came back to our next weekly meeting, he had not had a fight. We celebrated and held our breath. Two weeks... no fight. Three weeks, four, five six weeks without a fight. In accordance with his contract he brought a note form his teacher attesting to his accomplishment.

When we celebrated and questioned

how he had been able to pull off such a difficult task, his answers were crisp and clear. "I want to be an NFL football player. No one will want me if I fight all the time."

When asked about the school yard, he said he always fights with the same kid, Tony. So when the recess bell rang he asked Tony if he wanted to play football with him. When someone taunts him or hits him in the hallway, he imagines turning around with the NFL team hat on and he is a role model coming back to school.

J.B. had defied the odds. If he could do this under these conditions, what would happen if we produced materials incorporating state-of-the-art teaching technologies and we put them in the hands of good teachers? That is our intention.

Now, as part of our **Success Map™**, we have students write an affirmation. It is to make firm in their mind a picture of who they want to be. This is how it works:

Complete your map by going back to your **Ideal Image** and choose one trait you would really like to improve. Write an "I wish" statement about it, for example, "I wish I were a good listener."

Now, change it to "I want to be..." want to be a good listener").

Now, change it to "I will be..." ("I will be a good listener").

Now, make a true affirmation which is a statement you will grow into. Begin your statement with "I am..." am a good listener").

football and graduate from San Diego State. The director of the Neighborhood Center where we met said that no one from this rough area had ever made it through the 10th grade so we celebrate the success of JB and others who have gone on to create successful lives.

There is a way in which Olympian Thinking is not "new." We have all experienced this process when we "set our minds" to something that mattered to us. We aligned Passion, Vision and Action. While good teachers have always intuitively taught this way, this technology is one way we can more consciously do it and teach it by design.

"Based on our learning in the original Dare to Imagine Project, the Northern California Olympians have committed to team up and focus on Oakland. Our intention is to create a replicable model that will be made available to all Olympians for implementation in their communities.

Marilyn King, Beyond Sports
484-149 Lake Park Ave.
Oakland, CA 94610
(510) 568-7417