

Acknowledgments

From Richard

Dedicated to my family, Rosemary, Ronald, Alyse, Malia & Karyn, plus, Cyrus, Maya and Asha. Thanks for serving as my learning laboratory and thanks for your love. [Ron—thanks for the edits. They limited our embarrassment.]

Acknowledgments to Vic Schmidt, the Bobs—Lepper and Samples, the Freds Fox and Achberger, Jake Nice, the Cheryls—Charles and Lemke, Dave Kennedy, Dennis Kuhn and all the learners—thanks. And Andy.

From Andy

Acknowledgments to my wife of over 50 years you have great endurance, thank you. In addition I am a composite of family (parents, relatives, children, grandchildren), friends, teachers, mentors, students, employers, employees, fellow authors and even spiritual and civic associations leaders and members; to list all or choose a few would be near impossible so my acknowledgment is to all, while the vast majority shared positive notions, I think I even learned a bit from those who presented a model that is one that I hope to never follow. Thank you to all, and I hope to continue to learn until the end. My co-author's friendship extends over 55 years; you are bright, talented, compassionate and many more wonderful adjectives apply, thank you!

My acknowledgments are my dedication, to all of you many thanks.

TO LEARN

ANDY CARUSO
RICHARD BARNHART

FATHOM YOUR
LEARNING
PRINCIPLES
TO BECOME A
BETTER LEADER

Do you teach? Do you manage? Do you inspire? Do you sell? If the answer is yes to any of these or similar duties, then at least part of your job description or self-chosen pathway will likely include encouraging learning by your students, workers, followers, customers. This book can serve as a resource guide, providing you insight into the processes and barriers involved when those in your charge attempt to improve their understanding. This in turn can provide you with tools for improving your own learning, the key to growth and improvement in your relationships with those you have come to guide. Not only will you gain empathy for those you lead, you will also become a better learner.

We believe that we never break the habit of learning until death, or, perhaps death occurs when we break the habit. *To Learn* aims multiple lenses at learning, each returning an image of the complex human endeavor that represents our reason for being here.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Andy Caruso Teacher, instructional supervisor, reading consultant, principal, soccer player and coach, founder of Kwik Goal™ and author of multiple books and articles on soccer coaching. Instrumental in guiding quality of sports equipment and promoting sports safety, especially in soccer. Proponent of youth soccer and the game!



Dr. Richard Barnhart A champion for the learner, a counselor and mentor for the guide, a disruptor in service to change that enhances learning opportunity. Described by his peers as either a gadfly or a visionary, he has invented and influenced the development of instructional tools and approaches which invite learner agency, including those exploiting technology. He celebrates any effort to empower the learner, while crusading against quietude discounting that goal.

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from the rest of the class. I don't remember if I responded; more than likely, I ignored it. Or did I?

This time I left the building with the words echoing in my brain. I spent a good deal of time trying to manufacture a rational response I might use in a future repeat of the question, but none materialized that day or, for that matter, for years to come.

In the time since the “So What?!” incident, my mind has returned to that phrase regularly. As I built a career assisting others to gain competence with teaching I slowly began to see in their classrooms what it was that had long ago triggered that learner's reaction in mine. Observing learner—teachers, I began to utter silently “So what?” as I watched the newbies exhibit expertise that had little to do with their learners' lives, and I began to search for a better answer. Later in my career, while providing professional development opportunities for active teachers (ones who I hoped had avoided the dreaded back-of-the-classroom assault), I wondered to myself, “So what?” as I observed their efforts to appear expert and convey prepackaged knowledge.

Over time I have come to realize that I was working on the wrong end of the issue. Instead of a retort that would either quell the questioner or answer with logic, what I and the colleagues I was training needed to do was revisit the purpose of the presentation. Reflecting on goals provides me (and others I work with) not with an answer to the question “So what?” but rather a way forward to constructing meaningful interactions that include not only the content, but also the learner, a heretofore unknown, or at least unattended to, part of this equation.

In learning it is easy to lose track of whose education it is we are working on. There are many entities at play in the educational enterprise and each has its own set of goals. Each of those disparate goals impinges

GOALS

REFLECTING ON “SO WHAT?!”

[The following is a first-person account by one of the authors, a reflection on a comment made by one of his students in a long-ago but not forgotten classroom. This experience had a profound effect on how the author approached learning. He hears the comment in his reflections and asks it himself as he prepares learning situations for others.]

It was a brilliant presentation. I had fully prepared for it, researching the topic with my full array of resources, adding color to the overhead transparencies, devising examples for each point, and timing the overheads so as to maintain attention throughout. As the last slide summarized the message and the lights came up I anticipated insightful questions from the learners, questions that would lead us to a deeper exploration of the topic and open the door to tomorrow’s topic, which I was already organizing in my mind.

As I placed the projector on cool-down mode, I casually commented to the class that the topic was currently of great interest to scientists and was the basis for research studies in many government agencies and universities.

“So what?!”

The question came from the back of the room. I knew who said it. It wasn’t the first time and, as usual, the comment elicited a few chuckles

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