

## Whence Depth?

*by Jane Vella*

My newest passion about adult learning is depth. Whence depth? How can we be sure we are inviting and challenging learners to go deep? I want learners to not only learn the surface facts and figures, but to imagine implications, to reconstruct a concept to fit a context, to apply a skill and look at that application critically - to go deep.

I realize in my own life that depth has come over time, the long mulling over a concept sitting by the fire with a glass of wine; the quiet, searching conversation by the same fire with a good friend - and the same wine; the writing of another book about the same topic!

Often in a course or short session, such delicious time is rare. How about inviting and challenging learners to "go deep" by an intentional sequence of depth in the implementation or "applying" part of a learning task? Suppose we designed a movement from reviewing the input concepts and skills to questioning them to connecting them to other relevant concepts and skills to projecting an application in a demanding context, to naming implications with particular groups?

We do some of that in the four I's: inductive work, connecting, anchoring; Input: content, adding new facts and skills; Implementation, applying the content; and Integration, projecting the new knowledge away from the course or workshop. How can we go deeper in our designing, so learners get a chance to celebrate a depth of learning?

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