Learning for Leadership

With deep admiration, respect for, and gratitude
to practicing and aspiring school leaders everywhere—and especially
those who courageously opened their hearts and minds to help us all to learn.

Learning for Leadership

Developmental Strategies for Building Capacity in Our Schools

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Contents

Acknowledgments **xiii**

About the Authors **xix**

Part I. Foundations

Chapter 1. New Imperatives for Change in Support of Building Teaching and Leading: The Promise of Supporting Adult Development—Capacity Building—in Today's Complex Educational World **3**

Orientation 3

Connecting This Book to Hopes and Urgent Needs in the Field 5

Beyond Plans and Aspirations: How Are Leaders Actually Using These Ideas and Practices? 8

More About the Leadership for Transformational Learning (LTL) Course: A Preview 10

Situating This Book in the Context of Education Today 13

Current Challenges: Technical and Adaptive 13

A Call for Change in Educational Leadership and Leadership Preparation 15

A Note About the Cover 16

Research Informing This Book 17

Organization of This Book 18

Our Hopes for *You*: Enhancing Your Learning and Noble Practice 21

Reflective Questions 22

Chapter 2. Leadership for Transformational Learning: A Developmental Model for Building Human Capacity in Diverse Contexts **23**

Introduction and Overview 24

Constructive-Developmental Theory: A Sneak Peek 26
Leadership for Transformational Learning (LTL):
Course Overview 28
Developmental Intentions of LTL 28
LTL Content: Knowledge Domains, Theory, Skills, and Promising Practices 29
Part 1: Connecting Theories of Adult Learning to One's Leadership Practice 30
Part 2: Understanding Adult Development 30
Part 3: Essential Elements for Creating Positive Learning Environments for Adults 31
Part 4: Learning About and Employing Practices That Support Adult Growth 31
Part 5: Practices That Support One's Own Renewal and Development 32
A Few Words About LTL Learners and Meeting Times 32
The Promise of Learning Oriented Leadership 34
Four Pillar Practices for Growth 34
Pillar Practice 1: Teaming 35
Pillar Practice 2: Providing Leadership Roles 36
Pillar Practice 3: Collegial Inquiry 37
Pillar Practice 4: Mentoring 39
Summary of Pillars 41
A Close-Up on LTL Practices and Strategies 41
Specific Pedagogic Strategies and Applications 42
Practice: Writing in LTL 42
Practice: Dialogue in LTL 46
Practice: Guest Speakers 48
Chapter Summary 48
Reflective Questions 49

Chapter 3. A Close-Up on Constructive-Developmental Theory: Using Theory to Guide Adult Learning in Schools, Districts, and University Preparation Programs 51
Introduction and Overview 51
Acknowledging Strengths and Limitations of This Theory 54
Informational and Transformational Learning: Why Might This Distinction Matter to *You*? 55
Foundational Principles of Constructive-Developmental Theory 57
Three Most Common Ways of Knowing in Adulthood 58
Growing From One Way of Knowing to Another—and the Demands of Leadership 59

The Instrumental Way of Knowing: "Rule-Bound Self" 62
The Socializing Way of Knowing: "Other-Focused Self" 64
The Self-Authoring Way of Knowing: "Reflective Self" 65
The Holding Environment: The Context in and Out of Which We Grow 66
Why Ways of Knowing and Holding Environments Matter 68
Revisiting the Pillar Practices: Developmental Supports and Challenges 70
Chapter Summary 72
Reflective Questions 72

Part II. Lessons and Examples From Leaders in the Field

Chapter 4. Learning About Leadership for Adult Development: LTL Ideas and Practices That Made a Difference for Leaders 77
Introduction and Overview 77
Chapter Context 79
New Understandings of Learning-Oriented Leadership and Supporting Adult Development 80
Leaders' Thinking and Hopes Prior to Enrolling in LTL: Meeting Students Where They Were 81
An Incoming Focus on Self-Direction 82
Leaders' Insights Just After LTL: Learning and Growing Together 83
Leaders' Reflections Years After Completing the Course: New Understandings of Supporting Adult Development 84
"It Becomes Part of You": Internalizing Developmental Ideas 85
Leadership With and for Others 86
New Understandings of Supporting Adult Development: Summary 87
Helpful and Meaningful Course Learnings 88
Constructive-Developmental Theory: The Promise of Experiencing This Theory in Action 89
Understanding and Embracing Developmental Diversity in Leadership 90
Reframing Resistance 91
Experiencing the Power of Learning-Oriented Leadership 92

Holding Environments: A Lasting Hope for Practice 92
The Importance of Safe and Respectful Environments 93
Support and Challenge as Developmental Support 93
Other LTL Learnings That Made a Difference for Leaders 94
Helpful and Meaningful Course Practices 95
Convening: Experiencing the Power of True Collaboration 96
"Real-World" Learning: Applying LTL Ideas to Personal Cases 97
Sharing in Safety: Trust and Norms in Convening Groups 97
There for Each Other: Experiencing Real Collaboration 98
Instructor Modeling: Seeing Is Believing 100
"Training the Trainers": Passing Developmental Intentionality Forward 101
Other LTL Practices That Made a Difference for Leaders 101
Chapter Summary 102
What Does This Mean for You, and What Might You Do With It? 105
Reflective Questions 107

Chapter 5. Transferring Powerful Learnings: Supporting Professional Growth From University Classrooms to Real-Life Practice 109
Introduction and Overview 109
Chapter Context 110
Hopes for Developmentally Oriented Leadership Practice 111
A Hope for Creating Structures That Would Bring Adults Together 112
A Hope for Building Safe Learning Contexts for Dialogue and Reflection 113
A Hope for Building Respectful and Trusting Relationships 114
A Hope for Differentiating Supports for Professional Development 114
Transfer to Practice 115
Preconditions for Supporting Development: Building Relationships Based on Understanding, Trust, and Respect 116
Listening Carefully and Caringly to Colleagues to Show Respect and Demonstrate Trust: An Essential First Step 117

Avoiding Assumptions: Demonstrating Respect and Attention by Using Data to Guide Critical Conversations 118
Seeking Teachers' Input on School Policies and Programs: Building Trust and Respect by Modeling True Collaboration 120
Summary: Trusting, Respectful Relationships as Preconditions for Supporting Adult Growth 122
Creating Powerful Holding Environments Through the Learning-Oriented Pillar Practices 123
Teaming: Bringing Adults Together to Enhance Learning and Practice 127
Collegial Inquiry 132
Providing Leadership Roles 137
Mentoring 140
Summary: Creating Holding Environments for Growth by Employing Pillar Practices 143
Differentiating Supports and Challenges Within Pillar Practices to Support Adult Development 144
Assessing Individual Needs Through Informal Conversations 146
Offering Choice to Maximize "Fit" and Show Respect 147
Structuring Complex Tasks in Manageable Increments 147
Inviting Adults to Free-Write or Pair-Share Before Important Conversations 148
Summary: Differentiating Supports and Challenges Within Pillar Practices to Support Adult Development 150
Chapter Summary 151
Reflective Questions 153
What This Means for You, and What Might You Do With It? Takeaways for Practice 155

Chapter 6. Integrated Lessons From the Field: Three In-Depth Cases of Developmentally Oriented Leadership Practice 157
Introduction and Overview 157
Matt's Leadership Case: Nurturing the Preconditions and Collegial Inquiry Through Developmentally Oriented, Data-Driven Discussions of Practice 159
Data as a Demonstration of Care and Respect 161
Data as a Support to Collegial Inquiry 162
Learning From Matt's Case 164
Tara's Leadership Case: Building Teams for Collaboration and Collegial Inquiry 165

Establishing "Gleam" Meetings: Making Space for Teachers to Be Together 166
Starting From Scratch: First Steps for Implementing Gleam Meetings 166
Growing and Learning Together: Gleams 2.0 168
The Evolution of Gleams as Collegial Inquiry Groups: Embracing the Process 170
Learning From Tara's Case 172
Adrian's Leadership Case: Supporting Professional Learning Through Reciprocal Mentoring and Providing Leadership Roles 172
"High-Tech, High-Touch": Support and Challenge for Instructional Technology 174
Reciprocal Mentoring: Building Capacity Together Across Domains 175
Growing and Learning Through Leadership Roles 177
Learning From Adrian's Case 178
Chapter Summary 179
Reflective Questions 180

Chapter 7. Growing From, Through, and Beyond Obstacles: Leaders' Big Challenges and Their Strategies for Overcoming Them 183
Introduction and Overview 183
A Note About Obstacles . . . and Overcoming Them 184
Challenging Norms: Confronting "The Way It's Always Been" 186
Struggles With "Ingrained Traditions" 186
Strategies and Solutions for Challenging Ingrained Norms 188
Recognizing and Accepting Change as a Process 189
Starting Small, Starting With You 190
Adding to These Leaders' Wisdom: Additional Strategies for Reshaping Norms 191
Facing Resistance: Pushing Forward Despite "Pushback" From Colleagues and/or Supervisors 191
"One More Thing": Fitting in a Focus on Development 192
Recognizing the Developmental Underpinnings of Resistance 193
Managing Up: Helping Supervisors Understand the Importance of Developmental Intentionality 194
Strategies and Solutions for Combating Resistance 196

Maintaining Developmental Balance: Keeping the Personal in Perspective 196
Inviting Others to Share Feelings and Concerns: "Inquiry vs. Advocacy" 197
Staying in Place: The Gift of Time and Presence 199
Building Trust Through Authenticity 199
Learning From Others: Remaining Open to Different Perspectives 201
Adding to Leaders' Wisdom: Additional Strategies and Suggestions for Overcoming Resistance 202
The Urgency of Time: A Common Challenge 202
Strategies and Solutions for Managing Time 205
Allocating Time for Collaboration: Prioritizing Adult Development During the Day 205
Organizing Time, Organizing Oneself 206
Adding to Leaders' Wisdom: Additional Strategies for Addressing the Challenge of Time 207
Professional Isolation: The Loneliness of Leadership 208
Strategies and Solutions for Addressing Professional Isolation 209
Growing Oneself: A Fundamental Need and Responsibility of Leadership 211
Awareness of One's Own Way of Knowing as Leader 211
Contrast With Expectations of the "Expert Leader" 212
Strategies and Solutions for Addressing Self-Development as a Leader 213
Private Reflection: The Simple Power of Journaling 214
Thinking and Reflecting With Trusted Others 214
Requesting Feedback From Stakeholders 215
Chapter Summary 216
Reflective Questions 216

Part III. Implications for Practice and Policy

Chapter 8. In the Spirit of Closing Well: Implications for Leaders, Schools, Districts, and Systems 221
Looking Back and Ahead: Reflecting on Our Journey Together 221
Leaders' Requested Supports: Making Space for Renewal, Deep Connection, and Authentic Learning 223
Know Thyself: The Importance of Asking for Help When It's Needed 223

The Importance of Supporting Oneself: Finding Time for Renewal and Self-Development 224
Searching for Deep Connections: Hopes for Meaningful Collaborative Opportunities 226
Seeing Real-Life Success: Requests for On-the-Ground Examples 228
Implications: What Schools, Districts, and Systems Can Do . . . and What You Can, Too 229
Suggestions for Schools, Districts, and Systems 230
Suggestion 1: Teach About Ways of Knowing 231
Suggestion 2: Help Educators Understand and Employ the Pillar Practices 232
Suggestions for Educators: Getting Started and Next Steps 235
Implications for Policy 237
Understanding Competency as a Developmental Continuum and Connecting Policy to Demands of Work: Helping Educators and Leaders Grow in the Innovation Economy 237
Policies Supporting Developmentally Informed Professional Learning in Schools and Districts 239
Policies Supporting Reflection (Collegial Inquiry) and Ongoing Professional Development 239
Policies Supporting Mentoring/Developmental Coaching for Educational Leaders 240
Policies Supporting Adult Learning and Development Curricula in Education Leadership Preparation Programs 241
Implications for Policy: A Summary 241
New Beginnings 242

Resource A. Research Appendix **245**

Resource B. Leadership for Transformational Learning (LTL) Course Topics **259**

Resource C. Leadership for Transformational Learning (LTL) Citations for Course Readings **261**

Glossary **267**

References **275**

Index **289**

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PART I

Foundations

1

New Imperatives for Change in Support of Building Teaching and Leading

The Promise of Supporting Adult Development—Capacity Building—in Today's Complex Educational World

Orientation

Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere.

—Chinese Proverb

Today, educators' work is more complex and demanding than ever before. While the rewarding work of teaching and leading has *never* been simple or easy, mounting accountability pressures, increased public scrutiny, the rollout of new initiatives such as the Common Core State Standards, and evolving approaches to teacher and administrator

evaluation add to educators' already challenging mission to serve all students well. Indeed, for adults throughout the system—teachers, teacher leaders, assistant principals, principals, district leaders, professional developers, and professors of education—there exists a palpable call to do more, to do better. Yet no clear consensus guides us through these murky imperatives. Many agree, for instance, that effective and accurate measurement is essential for forward progress, but it is less clear *what*, exactly, we should measure, and *how*. And what of those essential intangibles that are harder to see, let alone quantify? For that matter, how can we better prepare our teachers and leaders to face challenges that are yet unforeseen—challenges like those that, today, will likely have no "right" or "wrong" answers?

With these burning questions in mind, we emphasize and illustrate in this book a promising approach to school improvement: caring for—and teaching others to care for—*adult development* in our schools and districts. How can we improve professional development (PD) programs and professional learning opportunities in our schools, districts, and leadership programs in districts and universities to help educators and leaders support adult growth and increase the internal capacities needed, given today's challenges?

While the spotlight of public opinion shines brightly on *students'* educational experiences and outcomes, it is a significant and often overlooked fact that intentionally supporting the learning and growth of *adults* throughout the system has a direct and positive influence on student achievement (Donaldson, 2008; Guskey, 1999, 2000). Put another way, it is becoming increasingly clear that coprioritizing and supporting *adult* development in schools and districts (as well as students') can help educators of all kinds grow the internal capacities needed to more effectively teach and lead in our current—and future—educational milieus.

In response, in this book we offer a *developmental model* that can help you better support adult learning, growth, and capacity building in your school, district, coaching, professional learning, or university classroom. You will, for instance, learn about adult developmental theory, the qualitatively different ways adults make sense of their teaching, learning, leadership, participation in professional learning communities (PLCs), and all other experiences, and why understanding this kind of **developmental diversity** is essential for effective leadership and generative collaboration. In line with this, you will also learn about research-based practices that support the learning and **development** of adults—practices that, in turn, also enhance the experiences and performance of students. In addition, you will learn about how a group of practicing leaders (we define leaders broadly to

include teachers, assistant principals, principals, district leaders, coaches, department chairs, university teachers, and others) who took a university course in 2003, 2004, or 2005 about adult developmental theory and related practices that support adult growth now employ their learning to support adult growth and capacity building in their own schools, districts, and workplaces.

The idea here is twofold. First, by laying bare the developmental design and theory behind a graduate course that focused on helping educators understand how to support adult learning and capacity building, called **Leadership for Transformational Learning (LTL)**, we offer promising strategies and practices *that you can use today* to enhance your own learning, teaching, and leadership, as well as to enhance the professional learning opportunities you offer to adults in your contexts.

While we zoom in closely and focus specifically on key components of the LTL course, it is important to note that these elements are *also* representative of a larger developmental approach to educational improvement that has been utilized and refined in schools, districts, and university programs for more than twenty-five years (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012)—and that we still use today.

Simultaneously, this book offers a detailed look at how leaders of all kinds are *currently using the developmental practices and ideas that they learned about in LTL in their actual on-the-ground leadership work*—as well as the obstacles they face and the supports they feel would help them do this work even better. In other words, in the chapters that follow, we present a model for developmental professional learning and leadership preparation *as well as close-up portraits of how these ideas and practices are working for educational leaders in diverse contexts*. Ultimately, we hope that each aspect of the book offers important ideas and takeaways that you can employ in your own practice to even more effectively build capacity, manage complexity, support leadership development, and care for the learning and growth of adults—both colleagues' and your own. In fact, in Figure 1.1, we offer an overview of how this book might be useful to you, regardless of your role or position.

Connecting This Book to Hopes and Urgent Needs in the Field

Recently, it was our honor to facilitate a full-day professional learning workshop that, like LTL, focused on adult developmental theories and practices that increase adults' internal capacities, build teacher

Figure 1.1 Potential Applications of This Book by Role

For Teachers

- Working collaboratively with colleagues and supervisors
- Building, facilitating, and/or participating in meaningful and safe reflective groups
- Mentoring or comentoring other teachers
- Developing goals, supports, and challenges to enhance your practice
- Leading professional learning opportunities in teams, departments, and beyond

For School Administrators

- Collaborating effectively with other administrators and supervisors
- Growing teacher leadership and capacity
- Providing more effective feedback-for-growth to teachers and colleagues
- Mentoring/coaching teachers and other professionals
- Leading staff meetings and feedback sessions
- Offering supports and challenges to teachers with different orientations to learning and teaching

For District Leaders

- Supporting principal and assistant principal leadership
- Creating and sustaining the conditions within schools and districts to support adult development—and student achievement
- Providing more effective feedback to school administrators and district level colleagues
- Working collaboratively with school leaders, school board members, and community partners

For University Professors/Teacher Educators

- Scaffolding learning opportunities for aspiring and practicing educators in university classes, workshops, and seminars
- Infusing traditional instruction with developmental intentions
- Structuring questions, discussions, protocols, and assignments to support learning and growth

For Everyone

- Growing oneself
- Working more effectively with colleagues and other adults
- Considering—and remembering—the importance of renewal

leadership, enhance PLCs, decrease isolation, and improve instruction and instructional leadership. At the start of the day, we invited the workshop participants—who held many different positions in schools and districts—to share their hopes for learning and help us

understand why they enrolled in the session. While all of the leaders worked in different roles and settings, what was powerful for them (and for us) was how much they had in common in terms of their work and the challenges they were facing. Many workshop participants, for instance, commented about the "intense pressure" they were managing in their workplaces and about how they and their colleagues often felt overwhelmed and overtaxed in what they described as an "initiative heavy" environment. Given the daunting demands of new evaluation systems, standards, and other pressures, most of them explained that they enrolled in our workshop because they were searching for more effective practices that they could take back to their schools and implement "right away." They were hungry for "practical ideas and takeaways" that could help them and the adults in their care grow and improve instruction, and they were hopeful that learning about a developmental approach could help.

Reflective Moment: What do you see as some of the greatest challenges you face in your work? What kinds of professional learning opportunities exist for you in your workplace? How do they help you to better manage the complexity of your work and your greatest challenges?

Toward the end of the day, the leaders offered some reflections on what they had learned, why it was important to them, and the implications they felt it had for their work in schools, districts, and university classrooms. While there were, of course, unique features as to *how* they said they would go about employing the developmental model and practices for supporting adult growth and capacity building, common themes emerged despite the leaders' diverse perspectives and roles—teachers, assistant principals, principals, coaches, professional learning specialists, and district leaders. (We've found this to be true in other workshops and PD opportunities as well.)

They realized, for instance, that they naturally differentiate when working to support *student* growth and learning, but "rarely" consider the "different needs and orientations of adults when offering professional supports and challenges to colleagues," in general and more specifically in PD offerings. In their post-workshop evaluations, they emphasized how understanding adult developmental theory and related practices "will enable them to better

Reflective Moment: What are two practices you employ to support adult growth and learning? How do you think the practices are working? In what ways, if any, would you like to improve professional learning practices in your work context? What, if anything, do you wish could occur?

help the adults in their schools as they work together to meet the pressing demands of the Common Core State Standards, newer evaluation procedures, and rising accountability expectations." Similarly, many expressed that they could now be "better and more effective" leaders because of their new understandings about how and why it's vital to support adult capacity building—for its own sake and especially because of its link to student achievement.

Beyond Plans and Aspirations: How Are Leaders Actually Using These Ideas and Practices?

> *I hope you truly understand the impact your course has had on my life and my leadership. I see things from an entirely different lens.*
>
> —Safiyah, Practicing School Principal and Founder of a Charter High School, Aspiring Superintendent, December 2012

For many years, we (the three authors of this book) have had the honor of facilitating and learning from similar kinds of workshops and professional learning opportunities offered to educators and leaders in K–12 schools, districts, and PD initiatives, as well as in university leadership preparation and teacher education programs. As we described above, educators and leaders of all kinds share common challenges and needs in their different contexts—and, after learning about developmental theories and practices, many express powerful hopes for employing this new approach in their leadership and work.

When we began to reflect on and share these commonalities with leaders in subsequent workshops, seminars, and courses, educators were intrigued and found the connections meaningful. Earnestly wondering, many asked questions that went something like, "It's great that these learners found the content meaningful immediately after workshops and courses—*but what are they doing with what they learned? How is it impacting their practice, their efforts to support adult growth, the practices they currently use in their schools, districts, and workplaces to support adult development today? How are they transferring course ideas and practices? What difference is the course making to their actual work as leaders?"*

We thought, "Wow—those are really meaningful and *very* important questions!" We wondered, "How, if at all, *are* leaders who learned about these ideas using them in their current roles? In what ways—if any—are they transferring their learnings about theory and practice to their current work?"

After carefully considering how best to explore these questions, we thought back to a course that was designed and taught by the first author at Harvard's Graduate School of Education (HGSE)—LTL. The first and third authors cotaught a number of LTL offerings at HGSE, and the first and second authors still teach a version of this course—in its evolved form based on subsequent research and learning—at Teachers College, Columbia University, in New York City.

To begin our shared learning journey, we contacted LTL graduates from 2003, 2004, and 2005—who were aspiring and practicing leaders at the time of the course and who went on to work as educational leaders in the field. We surveyed those who responded (and volunteered) and then subsequently interviewed many of them about these very questions. The first author, though, who was lead instructor in the classes, did not conduct interviews so as not to bias leaders' responses. For more information about the research methodology guiding our investigation, please see Resource A, the Research Appendix.

Throughout this book, we present what these LTL graduates generously shared with us about how, if at all, they transferred LTL learnings to their real-life practices in support of adult development—as well as the challenges and creative strategies they have developed to overcome obstacles and do this work even better. This book is a tribute to *them,* their *courage,* and their *dedication*—as well as to others who engage in similar work. While we are the ones sharing their leadership experiences, it is truly a gift from them to you.

We think this book and the wisdom from these leaders will be helpful—a treasure chest of *practical learnings* and *takeaways* about how to build capacity and support adult growth—for anyone who is interested in supporting adult development in schools, districts, leadership preparation programs, or other contexts. We share their stories about how the concepts discussed and the practices employed in LTL made a difference to how they think about and practice building capacity in today's world. We offer their experience of what's going well for them, what's hard, and what different kinds of school, district, and systemic supports would enable them to do their work on behalf of supporting adult growth even more effectively. We offer all of this to be of help to you in your noble practice.

In addition, and importantly, this book highlights the promise of learning from practitioners' experiences and expertise in two ways. First, Drago-Severson's learning-oriented model (2004b, 2009, 2012)—which informed and infused the content and pedagogy of LTL—was derived from research with school leaders working to support adult

development in a variety of different contexts. Second, this book extends earlier work by exploring how leaders who learned about this developmental model went on to use and adapt learning-oriented practices to enhance professional learning for adults in the field. By bridging theory and practice and illuminating—in an iterative and exploratory way—the deep wisdom, insight, and promise dedicated educators bring to their work every day, this book presents a body of knowledge and practices that can be used to improve schools and districts by supporting capacity building.

Ultimately, the goals of this book are to (1) raise understanding of the kinds of promising practices that support adult growth and capacity (and why this is important), (2) describe how a group of school leaders translate and implement learning from one university course to their practice, and (3) illuminate the developmental underpinnings of these efforts. In doing so, we offer practicing and aspiring leaders in schools and districts, as well as education leadership faculty and other teacher/leader educators and coaches, practical, effective takeaways for improving professional learning initiatives, supporting teacher and leadership development, and infusing teams, PLCs, and other PD opportunities with developmental supports and challenges.

We have the deepest respect for the hard and essential work you do every day and hope with all our hearts that you find the ideas in this book and these leaders' practices and experiences helpful and useful in your noble practice.

More About the Leadership for Transformational Learning (LTL) Course: A Preview

As we have explained, this book offers a close-up look at how leaders are employing theory and practice to improve their on-the-ground leadership to support adult growth in schools, districts, and university classrooms. You will see what they are doing to build capacity in individuals, schools, and organizations. Also, as we noted earlier, the LTL course that these leaders took many years ago is representative of *a developmental model that can be used to enhance professional learning initiatives, build more effective learning communities, and support adult development and capacity building in your own context.*

In the following chapters, you will learn more about the content, theory, and practices discussed in the course (LTL). For now though, it might be helpful to know that in 2003, 2004, and 2005, LTL was a

fifteen-week spring semester course offered to graduate students—most of whom were practicing and aspiring leaders and educators from Harvard's Graduate School of Education—although every semester we welcomed graduate students from other professional schools (e.g., Divinity, Government, and Business) who were interested in learning about supporting adult growth and leading with a developmental approach in their work contexts.

LTL focused, in many ways, on addressing the kinds of questions and challenges we've noted above—in particular, how an understanding of adult development and practices proven to support it—might help us to better support growth in our schools, districts, teams, and practice. In case helpful, when we use the term "growth" we mean increases in our cognitive, affective (emotional), intrapersonal (self-to-self), and interpersonal (self-to-other) capacities that enable us to better manage the complexities of leading, learning, teaching, and living (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012). (We use the terms *growth*, *internal capacity building*, and *transformational learning* interchangeably, and we have also included a glossary of terms at the end of this book to be of support as you read. We hope this is helpful.)

In terms of specific content, LTL introduced the first author's learning-oriented model for school leadership (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009), which is derived from her research with practitioners (Drago-Severson, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2004a, 2004b, 2012) and informed by Harvard psychologist Robert Kegan's (1982, 1994, 2000) **constructive-developmental theory**. The model, composed of four pillar practices—that is, **teaming**, **providing leadership roles,** engaging in **collegial inquiry (CI)**, and **mentoring**—helped leaders learn about and experience the kinds of practices that actually support adult growth, and *why*.

The course, and other professional learning opportunities offered to school and district leaders domestically and around the globe since then, invited learners to explore important questions such as: How can leaders support adults' transformational learning (other people's and their own)? What practices support adult learning and development? What developmental principles inform these practices? More specifically, through lectures, readings, group discussions, case analyses, and interactive exercises, all participants learned about developmentally oriented leadership. In particular, we explored the following:

1. Conceptions of leadership in support of adult learning and development
2. Constructive-developmental theory (Kegan, 1982, 1994, 2000)

3. Essential elements for enhancing schools, systems, and workplaces to be even healthier learning environments for adults
4. Practices that support adults' transformational learning (e.g., teaming, assuming leadership roles, collegial inquiry, and mentoring), as well as the developmental principles informing them
5. The importance of caring for one's own development and learning while caring for the learning of others

It is important to note that in addition to *teaching* about developmental theory and practices that can be employed to support adult growth, we sought in LTL to *establish and model* the conditions for supporting adult learning and development so that the learners could *experience the practices that support growth while they were learning about them.*

We invite learners to do this in any learning context or PD initiative we are privileged to facilitate because we have found that when leaders experience the practices that support growth, two big things happen. One, they can make an informed decision about whether or not they find the practices and big ideas effective and useful, and—two—they can walk away with firsthand knowledge of the practices and theory—an experience that we've discovered enables them to better implement the practices in their schools, districts, PLCs, coaching practices, teams, PD initiatives, and university contexts to support adult learning, growth, and capacity building. In this way, LTL activities and structures encouraged practicing and aspiring leaders to explore an expanded notion of leadership that included supporting adult development—and also provided learners with the building blocks of a developmentally oriented leadership preparation model that was developed, implemented, tested, and refined by the first author with educators of all kinds since 1996.

*One of the promises of this book, we hope, is that it will offer you the tools to improve learning opportunities for adults in your context.*As you'll see, we share many specific applications/takeaways for enhancing PD and implementing effective professional learning initiatives in schools and districts (e.g., workshops, PLCs, mentoring, and/or coaching) and for enhancing university leadership preparation courses. Ultimately, this model and all of the strategies contained in this book are developmentally oriented leadership initiatives that you and others can employ to support adult learning and growth in your own contexts.

Situating This Book in the Context of Education Today

When living in and surveying the current educational landscape, we know a few things for sure. We know, for instance, that supporting adult development makes schools better places of learning for both children and adults (Donaldson, 2008; Fullan, 2005; Kegan & Lahey, 2009). In fact, research indicates that students benefit *and that their academic achievement increases* when adults learn and grow in schools (Donaldson, 2008; Guskey, 1999; Mizell, 2007). Moreover, we know that effective school leadership is one key to school improvement (Barth, 1990; Howe, 1993; Moller & Pankake, 2006), and that teachers as well as principals, assistant principals, and district leaders play key roles (Ackerman & Mackenzie, 2007; Drago-Severson, 2009, 2012; Wagner et al., 2006).

Yet as leaders and educators, we encounter many implicit and explicit challenges every day as we dedicate ourselves to serving children and youth. As we have learned and as we discuss throughout this book, these challenges demand that we—as both people and professionals—demonstrate *new* kinds of internal capacities to help us navigate the complex terrain of contemporary education. And this has implications systemwide. *We need each other to lead and teach most effectively, and we need each other to grow.* Employing a collaborative, developmental approach to school and district leadership—as well as leadership development, preparation, and PD—is one promising way to help improve experiences and outcomes for *all* school participants and is, as we will discuss further, an approach that can be adopted and adapted by leaders of all kinds in schools, districts, universities, and beyond.

Given these truths, we thought it might be useful to even more explicitly situate this work and its importance within the current, complex context of education today. In the sections that follow we do just that. We hope you find it helpful.

Current Challenges: Technical and Adaptive

As we've emphasized above, today's educational challenges place new, multifaceted demands on practicing and aspiring leaders within schools and districts who dedicate themselves to educating children and youth (Bogotch, 2002a; 2002b; Childress, Elmore, Grossman, & Johnson, 2007; Elmore, 2004; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Richardson, 2008; Wagner, 2007). This calls for changes in how we

work and learn together—and it calls for more effective ways to support adult growth and development in our schools, districts, and university classrooms.

Indeed, the challenges that teachers and educational leaders encounter today require more than the managerial approaches we've had in hand (Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Olson, 2007). Scholars and practitioners agree, for instance, that twenty-first-century educational leaders must be well prepared to support adult development in schools, school systems, and other educational organizations (Ackerman & Maslin-Ostrowski, 2004; City, Elmore, Fairman, & Teitel, 2009; Donaldson, 2008; Elmore, 2004; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Mizell, 2006, 2007; Murphy, 2002, 2006; Peterson, 2002; Wagner et al., 2006). Similarly, all educators will need the **developmental capacities** to manage more than what leadership scholar Ronald Heifetz (1994) describes as **technical challenges**—or those challenges and problems of practice that we can identify and those for which *someone* (if not us) has a solution.

Indeed, leaders must tackle many pressing challenges in education that are emergent, evolving, and undefined. Undeniably, we are facing profound **adaptive challenges,** which Heifetz (1994) defines as problems that are murky and hard to identify, and for which no one has a solution—not even experts. To meet these challenges, he and others maintain that new approaches, new internal capacities, and new tools are needed. We must have the internal capacities to manage tremendous amounts of complexity and ambiguity and be able to solve problems *in the act of working on them* (Wagner et al., 2006). In other words, educators of all experience levels need the developmental capacities to live and learn their way through the ambiguity and complexity these kinds of challenges create.

As we've learned from practicing and aspiring leaders in schools, districts, and university education leadership preparation programs, building growth-enhancing cultures and implementing practices that support adult growth to help leaders and all adults develop, build human capacity, and increase student achievement is of utmost concern, every single day—especially in light of these mounting challenges. Indeed, *all of us*—regardless of our positions—can play a direct and essential role in improving school conditions and student outcomes by helping each other grow to best serve our students and each other. We all want to—and must—increase student achievement, make a difference as we care for the growthand development of youth and adults, and help leaders grow. Doing this will help us to better manage the mounting explicit and implicit demands of leading, teaching, learning, and living—each and every day.

A Call for Change in Educational Leadership and Leadership Preparation

As you know, there are urgent calls in K–12 schools and districts and in university education leadership preparation programs that emphasize the importance of better supporting adult growth in schools, school systems, and leadership development programs (Donaldson, 2008; Fullan, 2005; Hoff, Yoder, & Hoff, 2006; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Silverberg & Kottkamp, 2006; Young, Mountford, & Skrla, 2006). Across contexts, educators share a deep commitment to strengthening education for *all* and for making contributions that will make the world a better place.

While new approaches to PD and to leadership development are emerging (Byrne-Jiménez & Orr, 2007, Donaldson, 2008; Stoll & Seashore-Louis, 2007), the field currently recognizes the need to teach aspiring and practicing leaders about relational learning, collaborative leadership, and reflective practice (Donaldson, 2008; Moller & Pankake, 2006; Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). In addition, programs are learning that it is essential to help leaders understand how to support their own and others' adult growth and leadership development (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Donaldson, 2008; Kegan & Lahey, 2009; Mizell, 2006; Lugg & Shoho, 2006; Wagner et al., 2006). In other words, education leadership programs have become acutely aware of the long-standing knowledge gap and lack of preparation when it comes to how school leaders support adult learning and growth in schools (Capper, Theoharis, & Sebastian, 2006; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Silverberg & Kottkamp, 2006). While we know that deep learning depends on good teaching in a safe space that enables risk taking, it is unclear how to achieve such learning among skilled professionals in university classrooms (Browne-Ferrigno, 2007; Pallas, 2001). It is also unclear how the study of adult learning and development might cultivate the leadership capacities of aspiring leaders. The model informing the LTL course is one promising pathway to addressing some of these important questions. And we hope that this book, which focuses on how leaders who successfully completed this course are actually using their learnings to support adult growth, is helpful to educators in the field as well as teachers in universities.

For example, throughout this book, we detail specific applications for implementing effective professional learning initiatives in schools and districts (e.g., workshops, PLCs, and/or coaching) and for enhancing university leadership preparation courses. In particular, we describe how writing, dialogue, shared reflection, pair work, triad work, teaming, mentoring (developmental coaching), leadership roles, and case-based discussion can support adult development and

offer examples of protocols so that leaders can implement these ideas immediately. In addition, we outline strategies for applying theoretical concepts to real-life experiences (i.e., personal leadership cases) and how to help adults with different developmental orientations reflect on practice. Moreover, we describe how to purposefully and frequently invite adults to engage in private and collaborative reflection as a way of identifying, assessing, challenging, and altering the fundamental beliefs and **assumptions** that influence behaviors.

Ultimately, all of the strategies contained in this book invite educators across experience levels to consider developmentally oriented leadership practices that can translate to their own work contexts. We know that within and across the system we need to embrace new ways of leading *together* to improve conditions in schools and to support adult growth. This, as we all know, is not easy—and we also know that it is a critical challenge we must tackle together.

A Note About the Cover

We would like to share a little bit about why we selected the images we did for the cover of this book. We hope that this brief sharing is useful and that it resonates with you in some way.

First, in our experience, we have found that very few people describe their intentions in aligning their book cover designs with the messages of their books. In our case, after thinking long and hard about the kinds of images that might best symbolize the gifts of trust, care, and hope offered by the leaders who participated in this research, we decided that the Pōhutukawa tree would be a meaningful choice. Why, you might wonder?

Well, we find it such a fitting representation of this work. More commonly known as "New Zealand Christmas trees," Pōhutukawa trees—like those growing so magnificently on the cover—are *evergreen* trees that, much like leaders today, can grow and thrive in the most precarious situations. We learned, for instance, that the Pōhutukawa can flourish on the sides of steep cliffs or even lava plains. Perhaps most striking, however, were the trees' vibrant blooms. These flowering bursts of red suggested to us the promise of a growth-oriented approach to learning and leadership. And they reminded us of the great beauty and power of being cared for and nurtured in ways that support our development.

As for the particular Pōhutukawa on the cover, we couldn't help but notice how the intricacy of their multiple trunks paralleled the complex and multifaceted roots of effective contemporary leadership,

and how the majestic network of the two trees' intertwined branches spoke to the important truth that leadership, today, cannot be accomplished alone. Even the picnic table, we thought, was a vivid reminder that—from our view—leadership is not a "throne." Rather, it is something like a picnic—with the meal better served and better tasted when trusted others are invited to the table.

Of course, and in addition to all of this, you may have noticed the birds. Like the leaders we learned from in this study, these many different birds have taken flight from a common perch, and are heading—in different directions and at different altitudes—to find their own paths and destinations. It is our hope that you, too, can find something of value in this book to incorporate into your own noble practice, and that you—like the Pōhutukawa—will continue with strength, courage, and heart to share your gifts with the world.

Research Informing This Book

The research informing this book stems from earlier research conducted by the first author (Drago-Severson, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2004a, 2004b, 2009, 2012), which we describe briefly in the opening of the Research Appendix (i.e., Resource A). This research, which began in 1991, has been refined, expanded, and tested in the field ever since, and it undergirds the learning-oriented model for school leadership at the center of this book and the LTL course.

This book is also largely informed by longitudinal research that focused on how learners who successfully completed LTL experienced the course in terms of its content and pedagogy and how, if at all, learners transferred learnings, practices, and theory to their actual work as leaders. More specifically, the research questions that guided our study investigated (1) the LTL structures, practices, and content that supported leaders' leadership development; (2) the ways LTL content and modeling shaped their work as practicing leaders in support of adult development; (3) the challenges they face in their leadership practice, including the structures and conditions they need to do this work even more effectively; and (4) the leaders' strategies for personal growth and renewal. This research was conducted in multiple phases, which included iterative rounds of surveys and interviews. In the final phase, we conducted qualitative interviews with twenty diverse educational leaders from the 2003, 2004, and 2005 cohorts years after they completed the course (interviews ranged from 90 to 150 minutes), for a total of approximately forty hours of in-depth interviews. Many of the stories and examples that we share throughout this book are drawn from

this phase of the study. Additional methodological details are included in the Research Appendix (Resource A).

Organization of This Book

We divide this book into three main sections: (1) Part I, Foundations; (2) Part II, Lessons and Examples From Leaders in the Field; and (3) Part III, Implications for Practice and Policy. In the first section, which includes Chapters 1, 2, and 3, we focus on the underlying purposes, theory, and developmental practices that serve as the foundation for the learnings and strategies that follow. We hope that outlining the intentional design and theoretical underpinnings of the learning-oriented model employed in LTL will help make clear and transparent the applicability of these ideas and practices for your own work and leadership.

For example, in this first chapter, we emphasized the need to better support adult growth and leadership in schools, districts, and universities as educators of all kinds strive to meet the mounting demands of our current high-stakes climate. We also described the urgent need for leadership preparation programs of all kinds to adjust content and pedagogy in order to equip practicing and aspiring leaders to better meet and manage the *adaptive* challenges they encounter in their work. In other words, we discuss why teachers, school and district leaders, as well as professional development leaders and university professors need to focus on more than managerial skills, since these—while important and essential—will not adequately help leaders meet the complex demands they face (such as increasing accountability requirements, the introduction of the Common Core State Standards, and new approaches to teacher and principal evaluation).

In Chapter 2, Leadership for Transformational Learning: A Developmental Model for Building Human Capacity in Diverse Contexts, we provide a detailed overview of the LTL course content, as well as key structures, practices, and assignments that were employed to support students' learning during the course. In particular, we discuss the four pillar practices for growth (i.e., teaming, providing leadership roles, mentoring, and collegial inquiry) that comprise the first author's learning-oriented model of school leadership (Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009), since these practices were both discussed and modeled in LTL. This chapter is intended to offer rich descriptions that situate LTL leaders' stories in the chapters that follow and also illuminate concrete strategies and applications that you can employ right away in your own context with developmental intentions.

In Chapter 3, A Close-Up on Constructive-Developmental Theory: Using Theory to Guide Adult Learning in Schools, Districts, and University Preparation Programs, we outline essential principles from Robert Kegan's constructive-developmental theory (1982, 1994, 2000), since it informed the design of LTL (and related professional learning opportunities) and because it helps shed light on the qualitatively different ways adults make meaning of learning, teaching, leadership, and life. As we will share, deliberately and transparently infusing principles of adult learning (Mezirow, 2000) and constructive-developmental theory (e.g., Kegan, 1982, 1994, 2000; Kegan & Lahey, 2001, 2009; Drago-Severson, 2004b, 2009, 2012) into the course design, teaching practices, feedback (written and verbal), and interactions with individual learners helped make visible the principles and conditions for supporting adult growth so LTL participants could experience these practices as they were learning about them.

The second big section of the book, Part II, Lessons and Examples From Leaders in the Field, which is composed of Chapters 4 through 7, focuses on the learnings, practices, challenges, and supports that the LTL graduates in our research described as most important years after completing the course.

In Chapter 4, for instance, Learning About Leadership for Adult Development: LTL Ideas and Practices That Made a Difference for Leaders, we present educational leaders' thinking about the LTL learnings and practices that informed their understanding of leadership during, immediately after, and years after enrolling in and successfully completing the course. First, we share leaders' descriptions of the changes in their thinking about leadership and supporting adult development both immediately following the course and years afterward, including the importance of their new ideas about how to help adults grow. We next highlight key LTL learnings and ideas that these leaders reported as helpful to their leadership development and understanding. We then raise up educational leaders' descriptions of practices employed in the context of LTL that made a difference for their understandings of leadership for supporting adult development. Finally, we offer key takeaways and an opportunity for you to apply these ideas to your own practice.

In Chapter 5, Transferring Powerful Learnings: Supporting Professional Growth From University Classrooms to Real-Life Practice, we describe the innovative ways these leaders are transferring their insightful learnings about developmentally oriented leadership practice from LTL to their actual leadership practice. We begin by sharing the hopes and ideas for developmentally oriented leadership

that LTL graduates expressed immediately after completing the course years ago and then focus on how they are actually using and adapting the growth-enhancing practices and strategies that they learned about and experienced in LTL. Finally, we conclude this chapter by sharing larger takeaways—ideas and strategies for practice—and questions for reflection.

Chapter 6, Integrated Lessons From the Field: Three In-Depth Cases of Developmentally Oriented Leadership Practice, offers three holistic portraits of LTL-graduates' efforts to support adult development in their current school settings to help illustrate how the ideas and structures of learning-oriented leadership *actually work together in practice* to shape schools as true **learning centers** (also **mentoring communities**) that support the learning and growth of all educators. These real-life, case-based accounts show how school leaders are currently employing and intertwining practices that support adult growth and internal capacity building in their schools. We again offer important and practical takeaways for leaders of all kinds.

Chapter 7, Growing From, Through, and Beyond Obstacles: Leaders' Big Challenges and Their Strategies for Overcoming Them, presents the obstacles and challenges most frequently named by these leaders (e.g., changing and challenging norms in their schools and organizations, understanding and managing the resistance of colleagues, "managing up," or working with supervisors who are reluctant to adopt or appreciate developmental ideas, the hectic pace of and limited time in a busy school day, professional isolation and the need to renew and grow oneself as a leader) and their creative, on-the-ground strategies for overcoming them. This chapter offers additional tips and takeaways for addressing these important issues in your school and school systems.

The third and final section of this book, Part III, Implications for Practice and Policy, focuses on the implications of LTL leaders' sharings at both the micro and macro levels. Consisting entirely of Chapter 8, In the Spirit of Closing Well: Implications for Leaders, Schools, Districts, and Systems, this concluding section considers the kinds of supports LTL leaders feel would help them support adult growth in their unique contexts even better, and it offers implications for educational leaders, university faculty, schools, districts, and other educational organizations that can help educators of all kinds support adult development and build capacity across the system. From policy decisions to personal practice, we hope that the ideas and suggestions offered in this chapter help pave the way toward schools that support the learning and development of *all* participants—and an even brighter future for all of us.

Our Hopes for *You*: Enhancing Your Learning and Noble Practice

> *What all transformations have in common is that they begin in the imagination, in hope.*
>
> —Rebecca Solnit

As Rebecca Solnit wisely notes above, transformations—and real change—so often begin with sparks of imagination and with enduring hopes for something different, something better. It is our great hope that the practices and insights that the LTL leaders in this study generously shared with us and you prove helpful to your own important work and transformational journeys. We also hope that this book serves as a practical, field-tested portrait of promising practices for building human capacity in K–12 schools, professional learning initiatives, and university leadership preparation programs and classrooms.

In the chapters that follow, we will dive deeply into the ways leaders translated their LTL learnings to on-the-ground practices for supporting internal capacity building in their unique work contexts. This book also draws on other learnings to be of support to educational leaders of all kinds. More specifically, in this book we offer (1) practices and evidenced-based strategies that school leaders employ to support adult development in their schools and districts; (2) a close-up view of the challenges and obstacles practicing leaders encounter when devoting themselves to supporting adult growth in schools and the structures and conditions still needed to better help them in this work; (3) leaders' strategies for personal growth and renewal; and (4) a wealth of immediately applicable, evidence-based strategies from the course, employed by LTL leaders and implemented by the authors in university classrooms and many professional learning initiatives in schools, districts, universities, and professional and personal learning initiatives over the past twenty-five years.

In essence, you will learn how our learnings from leaders recognize, address, and help us to tackle the urgent call in schools, school systems, and university leadership preparation programs. This book offers practicing and aspiring leaders in schools and districts, as well as education leadership faculty and other teacher/leader educators, practical, effective strategies for foregrounding a developmental orientation and supporting the growth of adults in our schools. Ultimately, the goals of this book are to raise understanding of the kinds of promising practices that support leaders' growth, to describe

how school leaders translate and implement this learning in their practice and to illuminate the developmental underpinnings of these efforts. This work and this book—we hope—will be of help to all of us as we work with care and conviction to create learning contexts that truly support authentic growth for all school participants—both children and adults—and as we find our way together through current challenges and those still on the horizon.

Reflective Questions

We offer these questions as an opportunity for you to reflect on learnings from reading this chapter, to connect them with your practice, and to offer a cherished space for reflection. Please take a moment to consider these prompts. You might want to respond to them privately first and then engage in collegial inquiry with a partner or group of colleagues.

1. What are two challenges that you currently face in your practice of helping adults grow? Do you think and feel that these are technical or adaptive? How so? What kinds of supports would be helpful to you in terms of better managing these?
2. In your view, what do you think and feel are the ingredients needed to help adults grow? And what would help *you* to grow in ways that would be useful to you, as leader?
3. Before reading Chapter 2, please take a moment to consider what your largest challenges are in offering meaningful PD. What do you consider to be the vital features of engaging educators in learning from PD? Why? What challenges have you experienced?
4. In what ways, if any, does this chapter help you think about the challenges you face as an educator caring for adult growth? What, if anything, resonates with your own experience?
5. What is one practice you engage in on a regular basis by yourself or with colleagues to support your growth? How is it working?
6. What is one practice you employ to support other people's growth? How well do you think this practice is working?