**The ‘Possible’ Classroom: the New Physics of Teamwork in the Classroom (Energetic Principles and Baggage Disruptors)**

*This FIG is about a classroom design in which permanent teams function as energetic centers of learning and of accountability for learning, at both the individual and team levels. In other words, student teams of six to seven students in a team, power and feed the individual student at the same time that individual students learn to work collaboratively and to support and power their teams. This is a system that powerfully harnesses peer support for all students in the class.*

*The FIG will be hands – on; it is about how to set up “The ‘Possible’ Classroom.” It combines two maverick approaches to team learning: TBL (Team Based Learning) and Landmark Education’s TMLP (Team Management and Leadership Program). I have had intensive and extensive training in both. When I added Landmark team pedagogy to TBL, my pleasure in teaching and the pleasure and enthusiasm of my students shot up. So did academic performance. Student initiative and the ability to move through personal crises that can derail learning and retention, improved and surprised me. For any teacher planning to jump in and adopt the system, there will be an optional weekly conference call in addition to our FIG sessions for the purpose of support.*

*In our FIG we will look at a formalized language of “possibility” that is used to articulate the goals that individuals and teams set for themselves. We will explore the role and tasks of teams as the new infrastructure for learning and the critical framing of the job of group members and Team Leader as support. We will look at the use of social media (team chat groups) to support attendance and assignments, and as platforms for discussion of coursework and ideas outside the classroom. We will examine team dynamics and the connection between the quality of human relationship and trust within teams and academic performance outcomes. We will look at a grading system in which ia “teamwork” grade takes into account the evaluations by team members of their levels of contribution to their teams. We will look at the rotating role of Team Leader and how, in taking a leadership role and supporting others, the Team Leader role fosters both personal and academic growth – the two cannot be separated! We will discover ways to enhance the close bonding, social sensitivity, level of trust, and generosity of team members toward one another, attributes that feed directly into improved academic performance. This connection has been obvious in my classroom and it is the observation and conclusion of major corporations and academic research on teamwork and the maximizing of innovation, and performance.*

In this design, teams generate their *own energy and become their own planetary systems keeping each student / planet gravitationally on track. Here are some of the ways that my classroom has been affected:*

1. More timely and better levels of completion of work assigned. I am an English professor; there is a lot of assigned reading and writing.
2. Higher quiz scores.

3. Students take responsibility for everyone handing in assignments in a timely manner, and for attendance and lateness within the team, and more.

4. Students help members of their team understand the work of the course outside the classroom and regularly “chat” and “text” about the work of the course and more.

5. Students lake leadership seriously and I see the changes, especially for the types who are more shy. Alienated students, who often appear to hang back from the class, are fully engaged.

7. Students are more and better prepared for their classes and assignments

8. I rarely am told nowadays that a student didn’t know the assignment because t he or she was absent!

9. Students have written extensively about the ways that relatedness and support changes their experience of the class and helps them succeed.

10. There is a warm yet rigorous feeling in the classroom.

11. I can focus more on teaching and less on eliciting assignments, and controlling the class.

12. Students respond to the language of “possibility.”

13. Students rise to the challenge of being team leader and to the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of their teammates.