

# RESEARCH BASE FOR JOURNEY.DO

An Overview of the Research Supporting the Platform Design



# A NEW APPROACH TO LEARNING

## THE PROBLEM

While people long for growth and impact, they often fail to self-activate. The content isn't the problem; we have plenty of experts disseminating expert advice and numerous products, programs, and services designed to support growth.



The problem is that **content and desire are not enough to result in change.**

Despite advances in how people learn, and in the technology to support their growth, most online learning platforms remain focused on transmitting "expert" content. Yet, we can do more.

## OUR SOLUTION

Our design solutions bring together what we know about human **learning, motivation, relationship, and innovation.** Instead of reproducing traditional learning in a digital form, we harness innovations to power learning; supporting small group journeys, focused on relevant life tasks, where member stories matter.

For too long, **we have treated content** (a noun), **knowing** (a verb), **knowing how** (a skill), and **thriving in life** (an applied act) **as meaning the same thing.**

From this faulty premise, the growth industry has given rise to thousands of textbooks, learning platforms, and even institutions with the primary goal of efficiently transmitting content into learners. Research, however, has demonstrated that **knowledge is 'situated,'** with what you know being bound to the "how" and "why" you learned something.

If the goal is to support life change, we need to design new types of systems that enlist **life application**, leverage **social connection**, and inspire **personal transformation.**

We have the technologies and know how to offer more engaging and impactful platforms to support personal growth and life change. These platforms need to motivate human beings, and reward what they can do, not simply distribute content and assess what the learner understands.

## At Lifelab Studios, We Do Growth Differently.

We offer a patent-pending, research-based **social growth platform**, along with gap-filling services to power life change. We provide ...



1



**Small group journeys...**

in which members grow with relatable peers.

2



**Focused on authentic goals ...**

with a feed optimized to support growth.

3



**Where member stories matter...**

building connection and collective wisdom.

4



**Supported by invested champions.**

with powerful tools.





# THE ROLE OF SMALL GROUPS

Relationships catalyze growth.



**Have you noticed that small groups are everywhere that people want to grow?**

Think of Alcoholics Anonymous, group therapy, and Weight Watchers. They all use small groups, with numerous studies illustrating how small groups uniquely promote personal change (Borek & Abraham, 2018; Rosendahl et al. 2021; SAMHSA, 2015). Small groups promote **engaged participation** and **sense of belonging**, as well as the power of peers in emphasizing the **relatable, real-world struggles** of applying what one is learning (Barab & Duffy, 1998; Berg, Landreth, & Fall, 2018; Lave & Wenger, 1991).

The value of small groups and communities of practice on growth and learning has been demonstrated through hundreds of studies. (Hattie, 2010).

- Meta-analyses have also shown that small-group learning **increases academic achievement, improves attitudes towards learning, and increases persistence to completion**. (Springer, Stanne, & Donovan, 1999).
- Another compelling meta-analysis showed that small group learning **increases student's transfer performance – their ability to apply what is learning to another situation**. (Pai, Sears, Maeda, 2015).

**Small groups are unique in their ability to provide:**

- ✓ Social support
- ✓ Vicarious modeling
- ✓ Peer insights
- ✓ Personal validation
- ✓ Sense of belonging
- ✓ Group inspiration



In Journey.do, we provide a social growth platform and app where group leaders support community members in growing capacity to achieve meaningful goals as part of a safe and supportive group where they are seen, valued, and validated for their growth and impact stories.





# THE VALUE OF AUTHENTIC TASKS

Start with “why?”

- Research shows that our motivations for learning are central to what we learn.

People learn more when knowledge stays connected to what they can do with it (Barab & Duffy, 2012; Cobb & Bowers, 1999; Mclellan, 1996)

People are willing to work harder to learn content and skills they see as useful and connected to future goals (Yeager, Walton, & Cohen, 2013), and especially when they are invested in the outcome (Billett, 1996; Greeno, 1989; Hattie, 2009).

People learn better when they are interested, curious, passionate, engaged, pursuing goals that matter to their life (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2000; CTGV, 1991/1993; Immordino-Yang & Faeth, 2010).

When education starts with “why” content matters, learners have greater:

- ✓ Personal investment
- ✓ Knowledge application
- ✓ Skills development

(Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2002; Sawyer, 2022).

We need to reframe content around its real-world value.

If the goal of learning is to enable people to function in the world, then we need to engage them in those tasks as part of the learning process (Engle, 2006; Gresalfi & Barab, 2011).



In Journey.do, each Module is positioned as a goal, beginning with a statement of real-world importance, providing connection to real-world stories, and the expectation of applying what one is learning, with each achievement being a step along the journey.



# THE POWER OF PERSONAL STORY

Stories are subversive in spirit.

- Stories connect and persuade us, affecting us in deeply emotional ways.

[Immordino-Yang & Gotlieb, 2017]

Stories provide a means of sharing history, tacit knowledge, critical thinking, important details, and even specific skills for succeeding in real-world situations.

[Bruner, 2002; Gray, 2009; Gottschall, 2012]

Stories are personal, contextual, and relational, affirming possibility, reinforcing identity, and validating transformation.

[Barab, Dodge, Ingram-Goble, Pettyjohn, Peppler, & Solomou, 2010]

Even anonymous storytelling among peers showed mental health benefits [Collins, Arbour, et al., 2022]

Stories create an opportunity to rewrite those narratives of self.

[Kenyon & Randall, 1997; Mclean, Pasupathi, & Pals, 2007]

Stories connect us to other people, affirming our personal struggle and recognizing our successes.

[Sackstein, 2017]

Sharing personal stories reinforces and gives value to diverse voices and unique identities, which when valued creates a sense of "rightful presence, central for people to feel like they belong, that they matter, and their voice counts [Barton and Tan, 2020]

- Recent neuroscience research has found that when someone reflects on key lessons to be learned from stories, they can form new neuronal connections; thereby, expanding connections in their brains.

[Immordino-Yang & Knecht, 2020]

In Journey.do, stories are a key value-proposition, providing a useful means of articulating growth, an impetus for engaging in learning (as members connect with each other's story while aspiring to create their own), and are considered part of the knowledge the platform provides.







# THE IMPACT OF A CARING CHAMPION

Every learner deserves a champion.

## Champions propel learning in unique ways by:

- ✓ Setting up conditions to maximize learning by building a safe community with successful cohorts (Borders, 1991; Frei & Morris, 2020)
- ✓ Creating a sense of group culture and mood (Sy, Côté, & Saavedra, 2005)
- ✓ Providing personalized direction and setting relevant goals (Cloud & Townsend, 2010; Roth, 1986)
- ✓ Offering rich feedback in a personal and supportive manner (Hattie, 2009)
- ✓ Introducing relevant knowledge (Kivlighan & Dennis, 2010)
- ✓ Facilitating conversations and useful member connections (Morrison, 2002)

In a synthesis of over 900 meta-analyses, **supportive feedback was found to be one of the most powerful influences on learning and achievement**, especially when targeted towards personally-valued goals, was delivered in a manner that is strength-based and was designed to improve performance—rather than simply stating that they got it right or wrong. (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Hattie, 2009)

Trauma-informed and strength-based feedback is essential for personal growth, especially in areas that one feels pain, shame, and in which they are frequently judged (Bent-Goodley, 2019; Rashid, 2015).

## The Potential of Peers

Peers can become champions over time. They are:

- ✓ Often perceived as less judgmental than experts
  - ✓ Can provide insights about the struggles in practice that facilitators might not
  - ✓ “Speak the same language”
- (Borders, 1991; Ladyshevsky 2006; Secomb 2008).



In Journey.do, we offer a range of services to ensure that every member is supported by a strong champion, who dynamically engages learners, provides rich feedback, personalizes trajectories, and facilitates asset-based conversations and impact across the small group journeys.

# LIFELAB STUDIOS

a spinout from **ASU**

## WHO WE ARE



Lifelab Studios is led by a team of learning scientists, platform engineers, and successful entrepreneurs.

Our design solutions bring together what we know about human learning, relationship, and innovation.



We offer platform, design, integration, and research services to our partners to **unlock the potential** of those they serve.

## WHAT WE OFFER

We power people, organizations, and communities to thrive.



### GROWTH PLATFORM

Designed from the ground up to motivate positive change within supportive communities, providing a research-based, next-gen platform.



### DESIGN SERVICES

We partner with you to identify needs, build or adapt content, and create applied growth opportunities as part of personal journeys.



### ECOSYSTEM SUPPORT

Partners utilize the services that are needed by you, allowing organizations and individuals to power your community using our platform.



### RESEARCH ANALYTICS

We use data analytics to examine your community engagement, and work with you to iterate to maximize community impact.

## HOW OUR CUSTOMERS HAVE SUCCEEDED



50,000+  
User  
Accounts



225,000+  
Grows  
Completed



75,000+  
Stories  
Published



250,000+  
Story  
Connections



45,000+  
MicroCerts  
Earned

**INTERESTED? CONTACT US AT [SUPPORT@LIFELABSTUDIOS.ORG](mailto:support@lifelabstudios.org)**

Lifelab Studios, Inc | Rancho Del Juego – 27500 N 115<sup>th</sup> St, Scottsdale AZ, 85262

Email: [support@lifelabstudios.org](mailto:support@lifelabstudios.org) | [info.journey.do](mailto:info.journey.do)