

THE DECISION MAKER'S ASSET ASSESSMENT AND JOURNEY BOOK

An On-Going, Goal-Directed, Computer-Supported Assessment
Of Supporting Networks, Assets, Personal Plans, and Progress

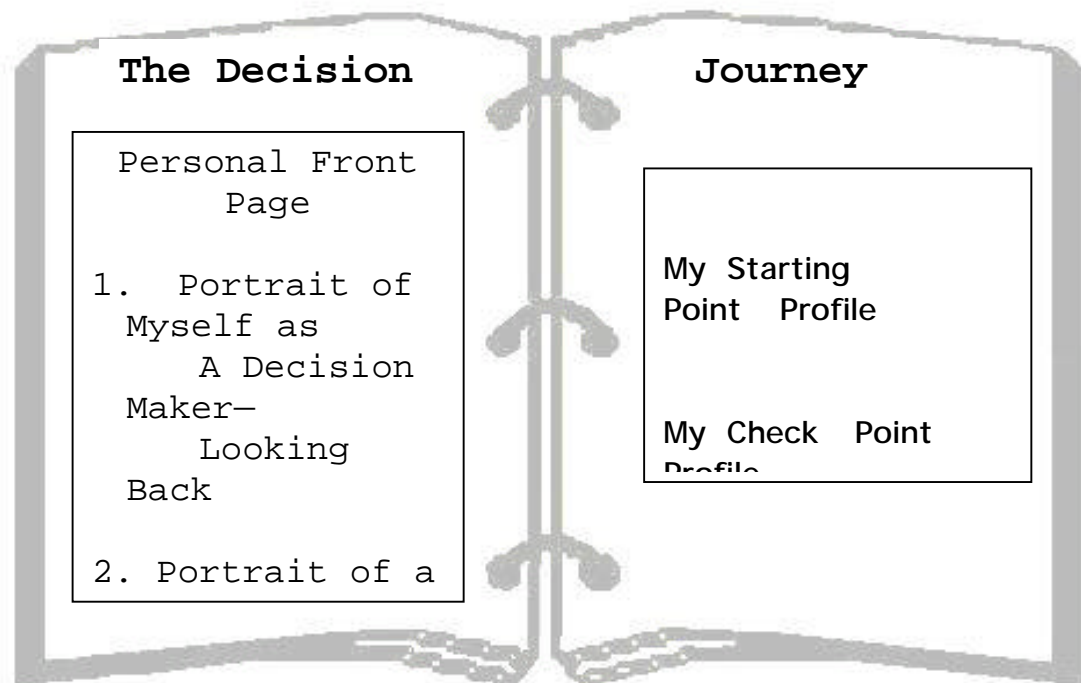
Carnegie Mellon Center for University Outreach

Why Should Adults Engage in Self-Assessment?

New employees are continually being assessed by trainers, managers, and peers, but they are rarely asked to engage in a reflective, goal-directed self-assessment of their own actions or assets. To build an *identity as a decision maker*, a person needs not only the opportunity to make meaningful decisions, but also the awareness that his or her own (sometimes unexamined) actions have reasons and consequences. To be a *reflective decision maker*, one needs, in addition, strategies for assessing one's assets and goals, for making plans, and for evaluating options and outcomes.

The Decision Maker's Journey Book

The Decision Maker's Journey Book provides a scaffold for building this identity and for developing problem-solving strategies for reflective self-assessment. Carnegie Mellon supports the Journey Book process with a seminar for teachers & mentors, a Writer's Guide, hands-on co-teaching, and a final formal analysis of growth and change.



How Is the Decision Maker's Journey Book Created?

The Journey Book Process	The Products
1. Writers create a computer-supported Profile describing their networks of support, assessing their asset base, reviewing values, and making plans for change.	Starting Point Profile Who Is Traveling with Me? What Are My Values and Commitments? How Big Is My Network? What Would I Like to Change?
2. Writers explore computer design tools	A Self-Designed Front Page Who Am I? Images of Identity.
3. Writers learn problem-solving strategies for bringing rival hypotheses to a problem, which they use to collaboratively analyze a past decision.	A Portrait of Myself as a Decision Maker—Looking Back Tells the story-behind-the-story of a hard decision, with the help of planning partners, to uncover “how I felt and what I learned.
4. Writers learn a decision making strategy for evaluating options and outcomes and building plans.	A Portrait of a Decision—Looking Forward Uses the Options and Outcomes strategy to think through (ahead of time) “a decision I am likely face down the road” and to plan a response
5. Writers complete their semester, curriculum unit, or community youth project.....	Indications of Achievement Career seminar completed Applied Learning Portfolio
6. Writers return to update their Profile in order to assess changes in their network and assets as well as progress on their personal plans	Check-Point Profile Who Are The New People Traveling With Me? How Has My Support Network Of People And Experiences Changed? How Has My Situation Changed? How Have My Values And Commitments Changed?

How Is the Asset Assessment Created?

The Starting Point Asset Assessment	
At the beginning of the Journey Book process, writers complete the computer-based Starting Point Profile (which provides the basis for the Assessment). The Carnegie Mellon Center for University Outreach provides an analysis of the Profile data for the group and scores it for the level of reflective decision making.	The Asset Assessment Report Size and diversity of personal network Level of assets and support Ability to make operational, reasoned, and reflective self-assessments
The Check Point Asset Assessment	
At the of a program or semester, writers return to complete a Check Point Profile. The Carnegie Mellon report assesses quantitative changes in the asset base of the group and qualitative growth in reflective decision making based on the Profiles.	The Asset Assessment Report Changes in size and diversity of personal network Changes in assets and support Growth in ability to make operational, reasoned, and reflective self-assessments of change

Outcomes for “Decision Makers”

Writers develop their identity as decision makers, grounded in strategies for analyzing problems and evaluating options.

The process of writing, rivaling, and collaborating brings the problems employees face into the light of reflection and negotiation (for themselves and mentors).

At the end of this creative, analytical, and technological experience, writers (and their supporters) possess a personal up-datable Journey Book which offers a scaffold for on-going planning, reflective assessment, and dialogue.

Outcomes for Agencies, Community Organizations, and Schools

The user-initiated, computer-supported Journey Book record gives trainers, counselors, and community mentors a unique entry point to work as collaborator on employee-initiated projects and to support life planning, decision making, and development.

As a tool for quantitative and qualitative assessment, the Journey Book complements a content-based assessment of learning. It allows agencies and community organizations to assess a critical aspect of personal growth in problem solving, and to document supported perceptions of change.

How Was the Journey Book Developed?

The philosophy and educational strategies of the Journey Book grow out of a 10-year collaboration between Carnegie Mellon and the Community Literacy Center of the Community House, on Pittsburgh's Northside. Dr. Linda Flower, as Co-Director of the National Center for the Study of Writing and Literacy at Berkeley and Carnegie Mellon, and Dr. Wayne C. Peck, Executive Director of the Community House, created a research-based, community-savvy, and wired-to-technology practice of community literacy that has helped urban teenagers become writers and problem-solvers in their own lives.

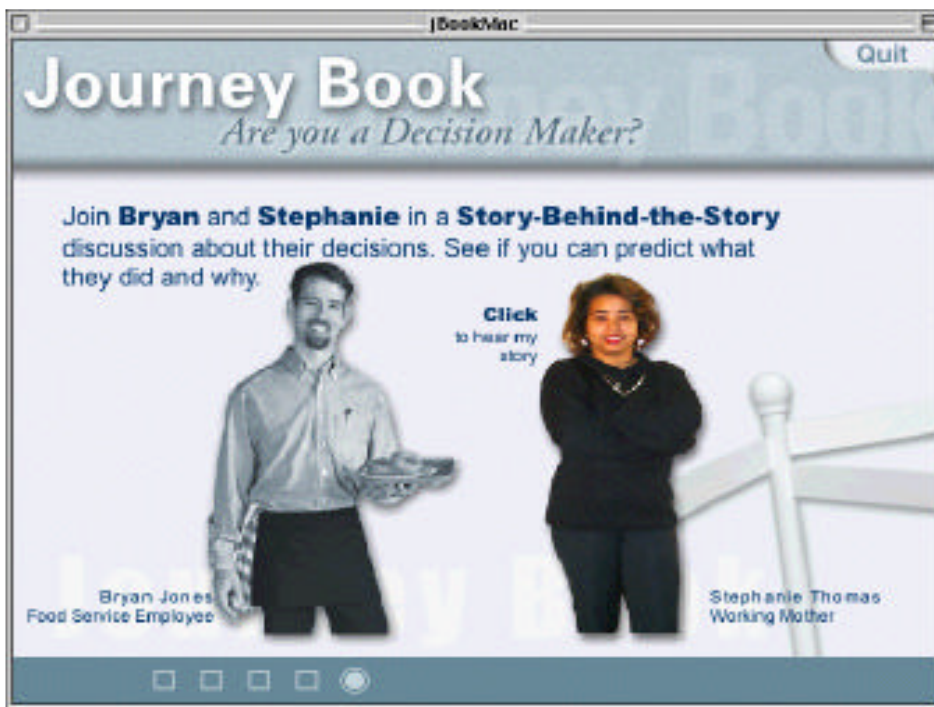
A new book, *Learning To Rival: A Literate Practice for Intercultural Inquiry* by Flower with Dr. Elenore Long and Dr. Lorraine Higgins (past CLC directors), documents how this community/university approach to decision making through writing helped urban teenagers confront issues such as drugs, risk and respect as reflective problem solvers.

In 1998, Dr. Flower as Director of the Carnegie Mellon Center for University Outreach, with Dr. Joe Mertz, Associate Director, and Mr. Wayne Cobb, Community Education Director, initiated a program for community groups and schools around Pittsburgh. Called ROADS TO LEARNING / ROADS TO WORK, this mini- curriculum used the community literacy problem-solving strategies to help young adults enter the world of work.

The schools and community groups using ROADS helped shape our thinking about self-directed assessment. Schenley High School wanted to help students make the transition to the new responsibility of high school. Langley High School's ambitious restructuring around an applied learning program needed an on-line, over-time portrait of progress that could be used by students and teachers over four years. Workforce developers wanted to encourage initiative and long range decisions. And community groups needed a way to document the personal growth they were seeing in the people they served.

The Decision Makers' Journey Book was designed in response to these needs as a concise introduction to decision making and a tool for self-assessment. The Journey Book takes an asset-based approach to personal development, helping writers evaluate their own assets by looking at their experiences and community supports. These assets that had been documented by Search Institute studies as strongly linked to healthy development. In the Journey Book writers begin the work of building their own asset base by examining their personal goals, plans for change, and decision making strategies.. With the support of the Howard Heinz Endowment and the R.K. Mellon Foundation, the Journey Book has developed into a tool for both self-assessment and for qualitative and quantitative assessment of the assets and decision-making growth of a group.

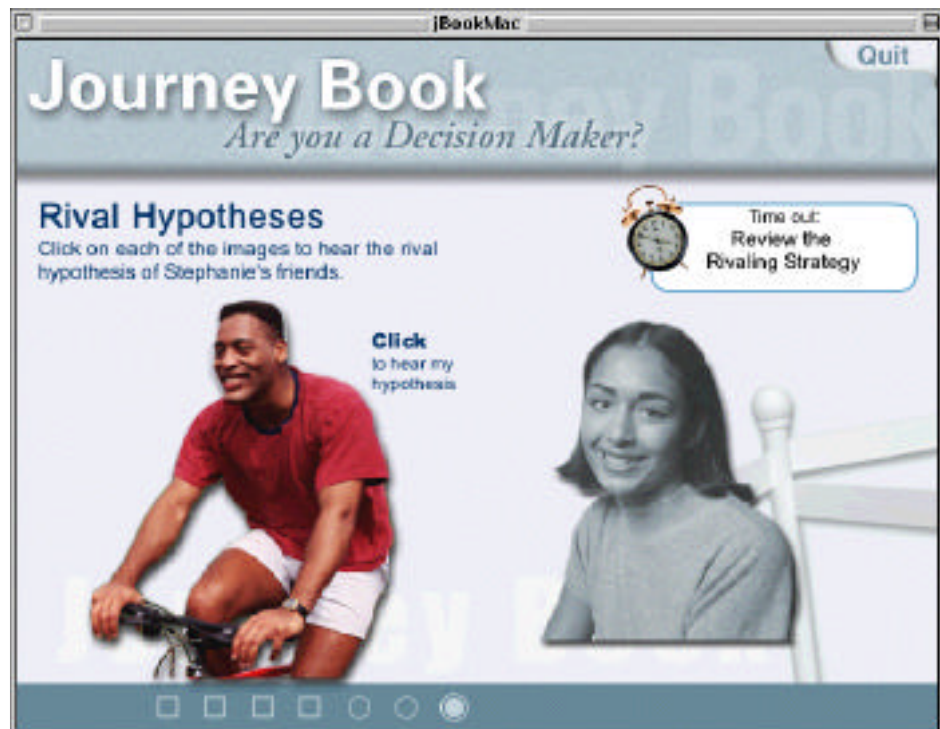
From the Decision Maker's Journey Book CD



See yourself as a decision maker

Hear , write, and share stories of good—and bad--decisions

Try out new strategies for decision making



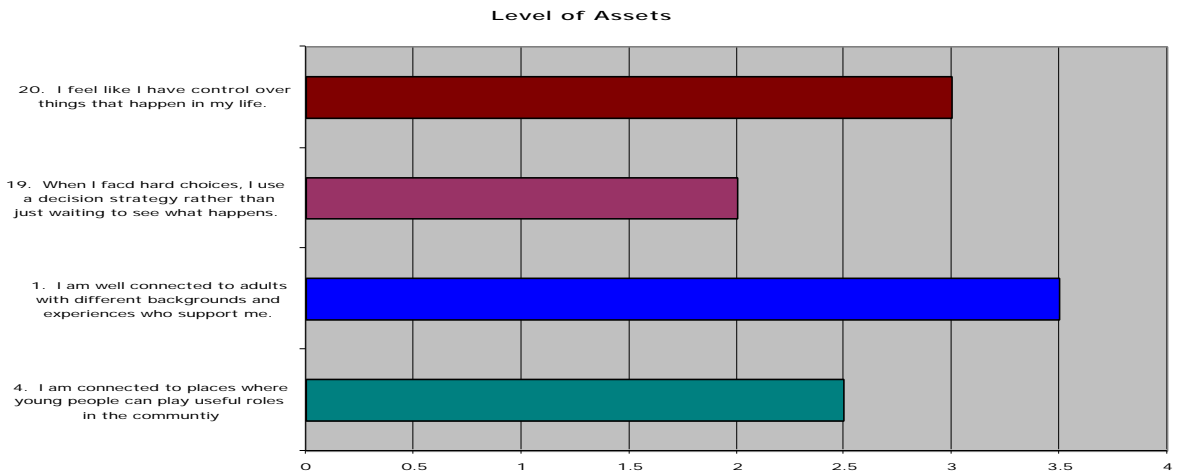
What Does the Carnegie Mellon Asset Assessment Report Tell Me?

The Network of Support Analysis

Gives you a quantitative snapshot of the size and diversity of the group's network of support—plus their awareness of how that support functions.

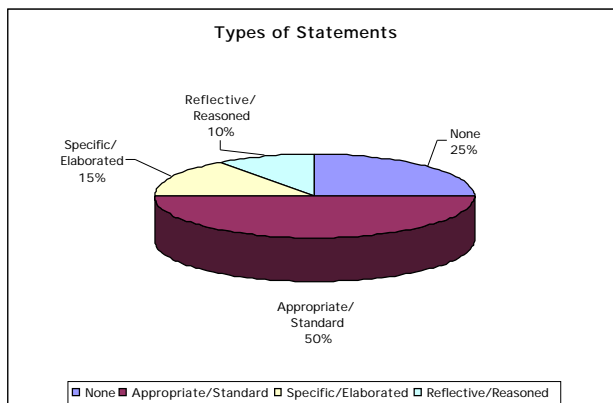
The Asset Analysis

Gives you a quantitative picture of the asset base (the level of support and size of change) the group perceives they have in 23 areas (clustered around issues of agency, motivation, decision making, support networks, and dealing with others).



The Reflective Decision Making Analysis

Gives you a qualitative assessment, scored by Carnegie Mellon judges, of the level of reflective decision making demonstrated in the 20 written comments throughout the Profile.



What type of statement is the student giving?

- Level 0. No statement*
- Level 1. Appropriate, general*
- Level 2. Operational, elaborated*
- Level 3. Reflective awareness of alternatives or qualifications*