

# Building Relationships

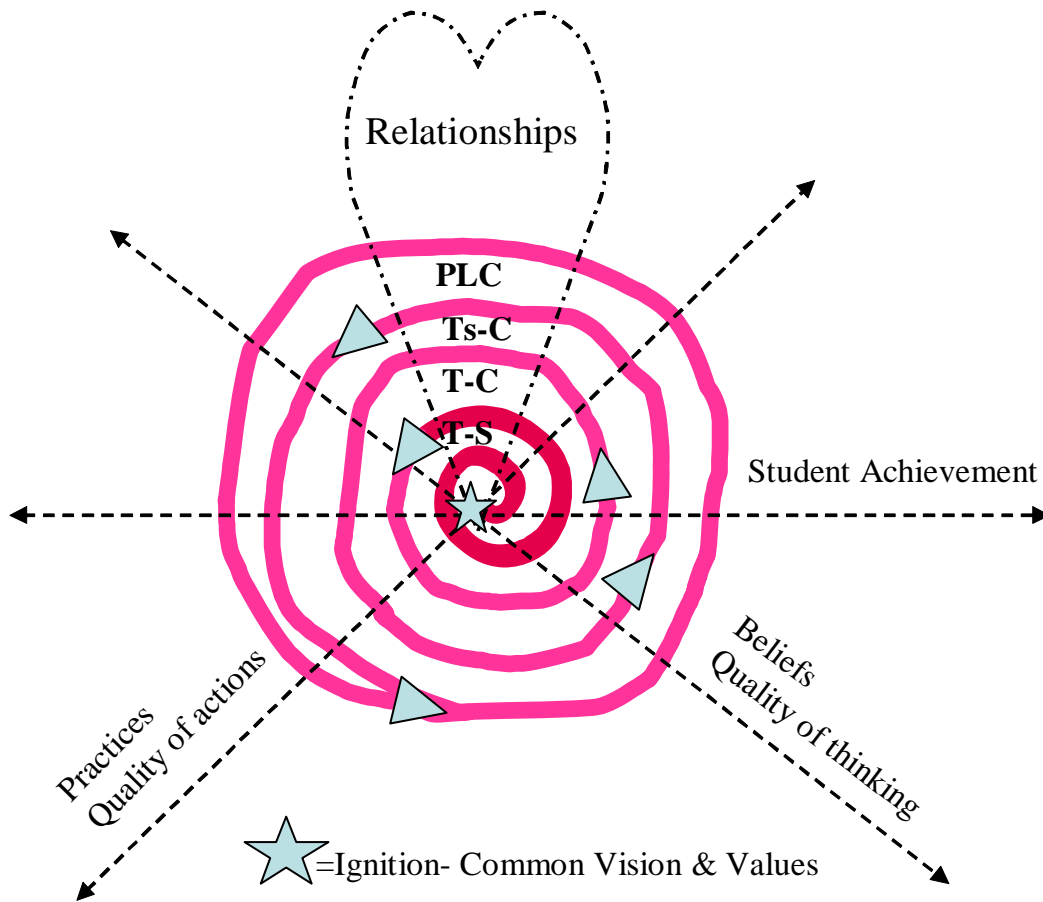
National Reading Recovery & K-6 Classroom Literacy Conference

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## Supportive Spiral of Success



★=Ignition- Common Vision & Values

T-S=Teacher-Student

T-C=Teacher-Coach

Ts-C=Teachers-Coach

PLC=Professional Learning Community

The Supportive Spiral of Success was the visual model I developed to try to capture what I believed happened during my study. It was difficult to capture the meaning with a visual or even written description because of the complexity of the change process and the fact that it too was evolving. During the process, relationships integrated with practices and beliefs. It was a recursive cycle gaining momentum and evolving, growing with each encounter. The power was in the expanding nature of it. There was an evolving spiral of understanding and expanding networks of relationships.

The spiral is reinforced with different variables. The relationships were the key and kept the spiral moving and growing. Just as a cyclone increases in size as it picks up things along its path, the spiral grows by multiple interactions. The spiral is always growing, like a cyclone spinning larger, growing with each encounter through people, understandings, practices, and student achievement.

The essence of an organization is in its people and ours was in the relationships. Relationships were the heart of the spiral and what supported the growth. Relationships were strengthened by the feminine attributes of care, collaboration, courage, intuition, and vision. They expanded from teacher and child → teacher and coach → teachers and coach → grade levels → professional learning communities. Coaching was fundamental to the trusting collegial relationships that promoted change and created professional learning communities. As the teachers and coaches worked together they discovered they had more power as a collaborative team than as an individual.

Intersecting with the relationships were beliefs and practices. As partnerships strengthened so did the beliefs and practices. The relationships provided a safe opportunity to reflect, brainstorm, and refine practices. Risk-taking occurred as teachers tried new components. Teachers and coaches were able to share their beliefs and construct deeper meanings together. They were learning how to learn together.