Directed Motivational Currents: An introduction

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Directed Motivational Currents: An introduction

• What is a Directed Motivational Current (DMC)?
  ▫ Examples
  ▫ Key features

• DMCs in the classroom
  ▫ Data evidence
  ▫ Can we create DMCs?

• What next for DMCs?
What is a DMC?

• A DMC is a powerful burst of motivation towards a clearly defined personally significant goal
  ▫ You get ‘caught up’ in a powerful stream

• Let’s look at some examples from different contexts
“I never cease to be amazed by how, when, um, people get the bit between their teeth they have this infinite capacity for hard work. I mean, here are Doug and Denny, they’re working a hundred hours a week, and yet they’re really fired up by this project. They’ve got that mad glint in their eye, and it, it rubs off on you, it makes me want to come back and see how they’re getting on. They only have 6 weeks now before they’ve got to get the ground and the first floor finished to take in some paying guests. And do you know? I think they’ve got a chance of doing it.”

Grand Designs Abroad. Series 1, Ep. 4.
First broadcast 29.09.04
‘Grand Designs’: Features of a DMC

• The goal is highly personal
  ▫ Always dreamed of moving to France and opening a bed and breakfast

• It is *over and above* normal levels of motivation

• It is well structured
  ▫ Clear final goal and timeline
  ▫ Mini-deadlines to keep the project on track
  ▫ Success at each mini-deadline adds its own injection of motivation
In 1990 Dave Cooke had a nagging feeling that something was missing from his life:

“Do you fancy driving a truck full of supplies over to Romania with me?”

“What had started as a snowball was quickly turning into an avalanche! Ton after ton of medical equipment started arriving. The original plan to take two trucks of aid was scrapped. Eventually, seven lorries decorated with tinsel, balloons and messages plus a team of eighteen drivers and a film crew set off...”

Operation Christmas Child: Features of a DMC

• The goal is highly personal
• It is *over and above* normal levels of motivation
• It is well structured

• More was achieved than had been believed possible
• The goal tapped into something which was core to his very sense of ‘self’
  ▫ It was ‘authentic’
DMCs as *perfect* long-term motivation

‘**flow**’ = *perfect* short-term motivation

**DMCs** = *perfect* long-term motivation
Do DMCs exist in the classroom?

“I can say I was kind of caught up in this current, this motivational current and, this carries me forward all the time, I cannot spend one single day without thinking about my thesis. It’s a kind of, how can I say that? ... It might be surprising for you, but I think it’s like a drug. It’s like I am pushed, something like I am pushed forward. Forward, or upward. I don’t know.”

1st year PhD student
The BIG question

- The BIG question: Can we create DMCs?
  - We can create the environment which may facilitate them
  - E.g. salient personalised goal and well structured pathway → project work
Facilitating DMCs through projects

- Projects *have the potential* to facilitate DMCs

- Why don’t all projects create DMCs?
  - Not personalised
  - No link between project & end goal
  - No link between end goal & real world
  - We cannot all be in DMCs all the time!
What next for DMCs?

→ Gather *data evidence*
  1) classroom based data
  2) data from other sources

→ Gain a better understanding of how DMCs occur naturally

→ Giving us a better understanding of how we might facilitate them in the classroom