
Book Study Notes of Modello

*With Appreciation to Cypress
Initiative releasing the “Book Study”
where it was created to Center for
Sustainable Change-its Home!
To Dr. Jack Pransky (Author) for his
permission to use his copyrighted
material and helping to develop the
Book Study Notes about Modello
& to Dr. Diane McMillen (Washburn
University) for producing the
questions to further our book
discussion.*

Developed, co-written &
co-produced by:
Dr. Jack Pransky,
Dr. Diane McMillen,
Lynanne Lawhead

Book Study Notes
Modello
A Story of Hope for the Inner City and Beyond
An Inside-Out Model of Prevention and Resiliency in Action
Author – Jack Pransky
CCB Publishing British Columbia, Canada

“People’s lives become what they think is possible.” Roger Mills

The following is to provide you an in-depth, fast, and impartial view of the book “*Modello*” with the purpose of whetting your interest in how some thoughts might just make this a better world.

You will have an opportunity to have a creative hand in this creation through considering the following:

Idea one: Everyone already has the wisdom to know what is best for them,

Idea two: If you truly listen to another; they will eventually listen to themselves.

Idea three: Every person is doing the best they know how given the thoughts they have.

Idea four: If a person is feeling bad, the best for them is to realize it is just a low mood that will pass, and know it is best not to act at those times.

About Jack Pransky the Author of *Modello* page 301:

Jack Pransky, Ph.D. is founder/director of the Center for Inside-Out Understanding (formerly Northeast Health Realization Institute). He also authored the books, *Somebody Should Have Told Us*, *Prevention from the Inside-Out*, *Prevention: The Critical Need*, *Parenting from the Heart*, and Co-authored a children’s book – *What is a Thought? (A Thought is a Lot)* and a prevention curriculum for middle school students - *Healthy Thinking/Feeling/Doing from the Inside-Out*

Dr. Pransky has worked in the field of prevention since 1968 in a wide variety of capacities and now provides consultation and training internationally. He specializes in The Three Principles and prevention from the inside-out.

In 2001, his book, *Modello* received the Martin Luther King Storyteller’s Award, and in 2004 Jack won the Vermont Prevention Pioneer’s Award.

To contact Jack Pransky, see website www.healthrealize.com.

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About Roger C. Mills, Ph.D., President, and Co-Founder, 1943-2010*

Dr. Mills was one of the pioneers in the development, testing and application of a Principles-based psychology. His pilot-demonstration projects were funded by the National Institute of Mental Health, the U.S. Department of Justice, the National Institute of Drug Abuse, the California Wellness Foundation, and several major private foundations.

Dr. Mills’ work with inner city schools and communities plagued with drugs, crime, welfare dependence and abuse resulted in national innovative projects awards, national network and public television coverage, and foundation and corporate produced documentaries on empowerment, resiliency and change, and unleashing the human potential.

Dr. Mills was the author of *Realizing Mental Health* (1995), and co-authored other books and publications on [the Principles](#). He published numerous professional journal articles and was an international consultant, speaker and trainer.

*From the Center for Sustainable Change Website: <http://www.centerforsustainablechange.org/>

About Sydney Banks and the Three Principles:

“Hope is one of the greatest things in the world, so this is why you talk stories.” Sydney Banks

Mr. Banks is the author and philosopher who discovered and began teaching the Three Principles in British Columbia in the mid 1970’s. Sydney Banks uses the words “mind, consciousness, and thought” to describe the Principles that combine to create our ever-changing experience of life. “Mind” is our power source, the very energy of life. “Consciousness” is awareness, the way we recognize our thoughts and “see” them as reality. “Thought” is the power to create images and ideas.

These Principles discovered by Sydney Banks and the resultant body of work have led to the understanding of *innate health* – the knowledge that all human beings come “hard wired” with the resources and abilities to live happy, well-adjusted, productive lives. Resilience, the power of individuals to “self-right,” is a well-documented phenomenon that points to the existence of innate health. Rather than teaching various “techniques” for different situations, the facilitators focus on helping participants remember how to access their own innate common sense and good judgment to solve any problem.

“Many people make the mistake of believing that their moods create their thoughts; in reality, it is their thoughts that produce their moods.” Sydney Banks – The Missing Link

To learn more about Sydney Banks – his amazing life or the Three Principles or to find his books visit his website at www.sydneybanks.org.

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OVERVIEW of writing Modello by Jack Pransky

This is a true story from beginning to end of how Dr. Roger Mills and staff accomplished the "miracle" in the Modello and Homestead Gardens Housing Projects, applying the Three Principles/Health Realization/Innate Health/Inside-Out approach.

Through extensive interviews with residents as well as Dr. Mills, his staff and other professionals, a compelling and moving portrait is painted of how two low-income, inner-city housing projects replete with violence, crack, drug gangs, abuse, welfare dependency and hopelessness were completely turned around within two-and-a-half years.

This book shows how people who lived in the most difficult circumstances were reached and came to find hope and to change their lives. "In all my years in prevention I have never seen this level of change in people!"

My rationale for writing it is because it is such an inspirational story. I am still in awe about how the lives of people, whom society has given up on, were completely turned around. At the same time it is a sociological study. It shows how a completely new paradigm that seems on the surface to be too simple and backwards to work can produce results and create changes in people’s lives that stand head-and-shoulders above the traditional way of conducting prevention, human services, social work, community development and education.

Modello Character Descriptions:

Carrie Mae: resident of Modello & Trainer

Miss Cicely: resident of Modello

Clytee Mills: Roger Mill’s Wife

Cynthia Stennis (Modello Day Care Director) & resident

Lamar: resident, gang leader & drug dealer of Modello

Lenny: resident of Modello and member of Student Tenant Council

Lisa, resident of Modello

Patty: resident of Modello

Rosie: resident & one of the leaders of Modello

Ruby: resident of Homestead Gardens

Thelma: resident of Modello

Chief Ivy (Homestead Police Department)

Colleen del Terzo (Homestead Middle School, Assistant Principal)

Dr. Roger Mills – Organizer for changing Modello - see above bio,

Dr. William Stokes (United Way Task Force, 3/87)

George Pransky- therapist/co-leader of “The Good Neighbor Project”/Three Principles Practitioner

Irene Edminster (Elementary School Teacher)

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Janet Reno (Dade County State Attorney)

Janyce Waters (Elementary School Teacher)

Lloyd (Begin as Part-time to eventually be the Full-time Social Worker in Modello),

Major Tom Lamont (Metro-Dade Police)

Maria Garcia (Homestead Middle School Teacher),

Officer Tom Cheney (Metro-Dade Police)

Pam Gibson (Housing and Urban Development) – worked alongside Dr. Mills and staff in Modello

Rita Shuford: Trainer for Dr. Mills Three Principles Program

Sam MacKinnon (Perrine Optimists)

Sydney Banks - the author and philosopher who discovered and began teaching the Three Principles

Tom Peterson (Dade County Chief Assistant State Attorney)

Modello Chapter Summaries:

Dedication to Roger Mills

Acknowledgements – page vi

Foreword by Bonnie Benard: a noted writer in the field of substance abuse prevention and resiliency. Pages vii-viii

Author’s Note - Preface to the Third Edition - How this author came to discover this project, and how learning the principles of Health Realization surprised him by improving his own life. Pages ix - x

Preface to the First Edition – pages xi-xii

I. Modello – beginning page 1

The horrors of living in the Modello Housing Project in the words of the people who lived it: drug dealers on every corner; shootings every night; severe child abuse and domestic violence; massive truancy; alcohol and crack abuse; welfare dependency; hopelessness..

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II. The Idea – 1985-1987 – beginning page 9

The effort germinates as Dade County State Attorney Janet Reno decides to prevent crime in the inner city. Dr. Mills is intrigued and maneuvers to get in. The oversight Task Force thinks his ideas are crazy and will never work.

III. The Discovery – 1976-1987 – beginning page 25

Flashback to the life of Roger Mills; how he and a partner stumbled on a new approach to psychology and prevention that touches people's hearts to move them to change.

IV. Fall, 1987 – beginning page 39

Enter Rosie, the volatile resident leader, a force to be reckoned with. Mills hangs out in Modello to break into the community. Rosie and residents call him crazy and want him out! Mills starts a Leadership Training Class for residents that don't take hold. Mills hires naive Lloyd as social worker. Lloyd and Pam, the HUD community developer, attend staff training in the principles. At first, Pam resists, but the ideas touch her.

V. November, 1987 – January, 1988 – beginning page 59

Lloyd enters Modello for the first time and is deeply moved and stunned by the scene. Rosie is hired as staff and takes Lloyd to confront his first difficult case. Mills and Lloyd enter the school.

VI. Late Winter-Early Spring, 1988 – beginning page 73

Mills starts a P.T.A/parenting class to try to teach his new ideas, but residents give him a hard time to try to make him leave. He won't give up. Enter Lisa, sexually abused as child, suicidal, with extremely low self-esteem. After her man cheated on her she points a gun at him while he's in the shower. Pam gets friendly with one of the drug dealers. Rosie keeps getting into trouble and clashes with Mills. Enter Cicely, pathetically withdrawn, whose sons are Modello's biggest drug dealers with a cache of guns in the house, and whose daughter is prostituting herself for crack.

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VII. Spring, 1988 – beginning page 93

Mills conducts teacher training and as he presents principles, the reader is exposed to them. The P.T.A. deals with school problems that help them to also morph into a Resident’s Council. Enter Thelma, severe alcoholic, severely beaten by crack-addicted boyfriend. She comes to the parenting class badly beaten and muddy; Mills and the class show her only love, and it shocks her. Staff and residents begin to go on fun outings together, and a family feeling begins to develop. Volatile Carrie Mae, who beats her child, learns about the effects of moods and has a major breakthrough with her 6th grader who had just pulled a knife on someone at school.

VIII. Summer, 1988 – beginning page 113

Mills helps Lisa deal with her man putting her down all the time. Thelma begins to respond. A kid with whom Lloyd tried to work shoots another kid. After class, Mills's car won't start; it's getting dark. AAA is afraid to come in to fix it. Parenting class residents sit around his car to protect it. Mills realizes he's getting through.

IX. Fall, 1988 – beginning page 123

A crack-addicted mother prostitutes her young daughters for crack. Lloyd, Pam and Rosie try to help. The police are called in and yank the kids—horrible scene. Inroads are made at the school. Enter Cynthia who's having trouble with her kids. She attends a parenting class, gets touched, and asks Mills if he would consider expanding into Homestead Gardens Housing Project. Pam's drug-dealing friend stops dealing. Lisa gets stronger

X. Winter, 1988 –Into 1989: Into Homestead Gardens – beginning page 141

Mills lands a larger grant that adds staff time; expands into Homestead Gardens. Mills hires Cynthia and attractive Carol. Rosie, Lisa, Cicely, Thelma, and Carrie Mae, whose lives started to change, are hired as parent trainers to help others and attend a training of trainers where their own life changes skyrocket. Cicely straightens out her kids. Cynthia has a breakthrough with her children, and then helps out others.

XI. Late Winter – Early Spring, 1989 – beginning page 153

Mills lands a larger grant that adds staff time; expands into Homestead Gardens. Mills hires Cynthia and attractive Carol. Rosie, Lisa, Cicely, Thelma, and Carrie Mae, whose lives started to change, are hired as parent trainers to help others and attend a training of trainers where their own life changes skyrocket.

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XII. Spring, 1989 – beginning page 165

Thelma stops drinking and kicks her abusive man out of the house. The school tries to handle Thelma's difficult kid. Rosie's life changes as she calms down and stops her own abusive situation. Lisa helps when someone's kid is sexually abused. Staff and residents go on a trip to Disney World and act like little kids. Thelma learns from Dr. Mills, and then helps out other residents. A new spirit begins to permeate Homestead Gardens.

XIII. Late Spring, 1989 – beginning page 183

The teacher training moves into the elementary school and changes how the teachers deal with students. Teachers’ own lives also begin to change. One day Mills realizes that the kids are no longer truant; all are in school.

XIV. Summer, 1989 – beginning page 193

Lisa tries to study for her G.E.D. Cicely is elected president of the tenant's council, and then tries to help the drug dealers. Drug dealing winds down in Modello as the council works with the police. Mills notices no more drug gangs are hanging on the corners. The parents stop showing up for classes and the staff realizes that they're all either working now or in school.

XV. Fall Into Winter, 1989 – beginning page 203

Cynthia sees teens drug-dealing in Homestead Gardens and tries to stop it. Enter Lenny, the teen gang leader. He gets busted and runs to her house late at night. Lenny has breakthrough and changes his ways; he gets his gang to go back to school. Lisa relapses when her man cheats on her again. She plunges into depression and thoughts of suicide, gun on table. Lloyd intercepts her and she has a major breakthrough.

XVI. Late Winter to Early Spring, 1990 – beginning page 221

Cicely's son shoots someone and is thrown in jail. Lenny organizes a Student Tenant's Council in Homestead Gardens, and they keep the other drug dealers out of their projects. Six huge drug dealers demand that Cynthia and Lloyd find them jobs "NOW!"

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XVII. Spring through Fall, 1990 – beginning page 227

Enter Ruby, a crack-cocaine mother, extremely violent, constantly in fights. Her son is disrupting the school. Cynthia begins working with him, and then tries to help Ruby. Ruby curses her but Cynthia won't back down. She gets Ruby to attend a parenting class. Mills helps her out with her son. A neighbor comes to her to fight and Ruby calms her down instead of fighting.

XVIII. Into 1991 and Beyond – beginning page 241

The grant ends and Mills leaves. Lloyd, Cynthia, and Rosie are hired by the County to continue their work. Thelma's son again gets in trouble but this time Thelma handles it beautifully and her son has a breakthrough. At an assembly he tells the entire school to give up gangs. Thelma is moved to tears. Ruby's crack boyfriend kills her brother in a fight. Ruby decides to enter drug treatment. She has a breakthrough, she kicks crack, and her life completely changes. Lisa finally gets her G.E.D. after a long struggle, which she experiences as the most wonderful feeling. She has changed so completely she looks completely different and never looks back. She helps a friend get her G.E.D. Cynthia is shocked to learn that Lenny and his friends are all in college.

XIX. The End and a New Beginning – beginning page 261

A summary of the incredible changes - Dr. Mills talks about why Health Realization works and created the changes it did. How Health Realization can be of help to humanity and give hope to the hopeless.

Epilogue: The Hurricane – beginning page 281

Hurricane Andrew devastates Modello. But the people whose lives had changed as a result of Health Realization handled it very impressively and were the ones helping out others, even though they themselves had lost half their homes.

Notes and Bibliography – page 292

Resource and reference materials used for story background – page 293

Other works cited in book – page 295

Recommended: Other Books by Jack Pransky – pages 295 -300

About the Author – page 301

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Summary of the Modello Model*

When a housing project or any low-income community is considered non-fixable by county resources and its own residents - what solution is viable to develop a difference in the residents and the county resources?

Typical process has been to work from the outside-in, such as provide services and other resources, offer training programs, and renovate the buildings they live in, provide information, teach skills, build supports, or try to organize the community in an attempt to affect the residents. The impact on residents, their homes and the resources often ends in a stalemate – neither seeing the results they desire.

Dr. Roger Mills showed that once the residents recognized they were healthy inside then they began to change their own lives, and then their relationships improved, and then when a critical mass of people is reached they work themselves to change the conditions they live in. Change occurs through the ripple effect.

To show how an inside-out process evolves through an individual and/or community – an excerpt from: *Prevention from the Inside-Out* is provided:

- I. Living the Feeling/Living the Understanding***
 - II. Creating the Feeling/Creating the Best Climate***
 - III. Deep Listening***
 - IV. Conveying or Drawing Out the Understanding (Teaching)***
-
- V. Insight: A Shift in Perspective***
 - VI. The Ripple Effect***

The above flow is a logical sequence in successfully applying an inside-out/Health Realization approach to prevention programming and community development. The first four components shown would generally flow from one to another in sequence, much overlaps occurs, so there is much back-and-forth movement. The sole purpose of the four components is to move people to a fifth – a shift in perspective- which no one else can make happen for another but is the desired result. When people have an insight of enough magnitude that it changes their lives so they function at a higher level, then they can reach out to others’ lives which have the ripple effect within others and their community.

It sounds simple. Though in practice it sounds easy but is harder to grasp when one is in the habit of keeping and repeating the same thoughts. There is no set way to make it happen – it’s planting the seed and allowing it to blossom either in a short time or taking longer. Each person must find their own way that feels natural to them. What we as practitioners can do is notice what effects are occurring and being open on how to proceed through listening or conveying further understanding or resources to assist them in their growing understanding. It is up to the person in the moment to determine what limitation they place on themselves which determines how they limit their own thinking.

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Additional Resources to learn about Modello, Dr. Roger Mills, Sydney Banks and Jack Pransky:

www.youtube.com

Dr. Roger Mills Last Interview

Sydney Banks – The Quiet Mind and other videos

The Three Principles in Communities

Part 1 – Modello

Part 2 – Lockwood Gardens

Part 3 – Poko Way

Part 4 – Des Moines, MS

Buddy Higgins – Three Principles in Greenville, MS

Transformations in Communities through innate well being

What is Community Development?

Dr. Jack Pransky – Modello Community Project – Part 3
Modello Community – Part 4

3P Video Links

<http://www.threepprinciplesmovies.com>

Basic questions on how and why this came about in relation to community resources, residents in the housing projects vs. end results.

1. How did this project begin?
2. What programs and services were brought in as an experiment into the low-income areas and how did they work?
3. Why do you think these did not substantively improve the lives of the residents of Modello?
4. How did Roger Mills begin the change in Modella?
5. Where did he gain knowledge of developing this program?
6. Why did Prevention Resources feel fixing outside resources would solve the resident’s problems?
7. How do the resources work together in the beginning and for what end result?
8. Did the resources change their tactics over the time they worked there? Did the end results change also?
9. What did solve the resident’s problems?
10. Which character could you relate to? Why is that?

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Group Discussion Questions developed by Dr. Diane McMillen:

Chapter 1

- 1) Despite the rather "grim" circumstances described in the first chapter, there is a note of promise. What ideas of hope do you find? What possibilities are they speaking of?

Chapter 2

- 2) What motivates Janet Reno to want to tackle the problems in these neighborhoods? What is she proposing?
- 3) Andas "good" as many of her ideas are, why are they problematic? Especially for this situation?
- 4) How are Roger Mill’s ideas about what they need to do different from Janet Reno? What are the problems he sees with the "salad bar" approach of services and providers? What does he propose, and what reactions does he encounter?

Chapter 3

- 5) In this chapter we meet Roger's friend George Pransky, what was Pransky's initial response to meeting Syd Banks? What do you suspect are his reasons for this reaction?
- 6) What is Sydney Bank's message?
- 7) What were Roger's insights about people who are learning about their own thinking? And how people change?

Chapter 4

- 8) Why is Rosie so important to the program?
- 9) How did Roger approach the residents of Modello? How did he handle the groups? Do you have any thoughts about his methods?

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10) What were the other service providers’ responses to Roger? What do you think of that? Does it seem familiar?

11) What was it about Lloyd that made him such an attractive candidate for the position as social worker? What did he think about the approach that Roger advocated?

Chapter 5

12) What about Pam? What was her point of view? What happened for her during her training in POM (as they called it then)?

13) Describe Lloyd's approach to working with some of the really challenging residents, like Samantha. And with his work at the school, what was his approach?

Chapter 6

14) Here we meet Lisa, what a life story. What do you think it was that kept her from shooting her man while he was in the shower?

15) What was Lloyd's 4-step process? How come it worked?

16) What made it possible for LaMar to talk with Pam as he does? And talk about how it is that Pam could respond as she did to LaMar's question "What do you think of what I do?"

17) How did Dr. Mills help Lisa think differently about her kid? And how did he help her in the conversation with the school?

Chapter 7

18) What did Roger hope to accomplish with his teacher training at the school? What does he teach the teachers?

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19) What do you think Thelma was thinking and doing when she, in a state of complete disarray, walked into her 3rd meeting with Roger? What happened? Later, while on a picnic on the beach, she has an insight about what it was that was "different" about this program, what was she learning?

20) What did Dr. Mills teach them about "moods" and how what we "see" changes based on our mood?

Chapter 8

21) Talk about what gets in the way of Lisa being able to "hear" Roger's message "You can be happy. You can be whatever you want to be" given her circumstances.

22) What happens when Roger's car will not start and he has to call AAA and it gets dark? What does this event suggest?

Chapter 9

23) This chapter describes a horrendous situation with a crack-addicted Mom and her 9 kids. The decision is made to "arrange a sting" and pull her kids. Given that the helpers here operate from a "see the health/see the innocence" framework, talk about the wisdom (and the outcome) of this action.

24) What do you think were some of the main elements that helped make the difference in the school? What did it do for the teachers?

25) For Lisa, and many of the women in Modello, their relationships with their men were convoluted and violent. Why was it like that? And how did it change?

Chapter 10

26) What is your thinking about how Carol Murray seemed to be a "natural" and already have a handle on her frame of mind? How does she know that w/out being "trained" in the Principles?

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27) How is it possible that Cicely's daughter changed as she did?

Chapter 11

28) Describe Cynthia's insight related to her children? What happened? What changed?

29) How did having the Modello parents be the ones to talk with the Homestead parent's make a big difference?

30) What is Cynthia's explanation of how mood affects communication and relationships?

Chapter 12

31) Describe the changes in Thelma and how she helps another woman in Homestead Gardens.

Chapter 13

32) How did Ms. Waters change the climate of her classroom? What were the teachers starting "to get" about how to work with their students?

Chapter 14

33) Again, more changes in Thelma's life...how is she able to do what she does?

34) How come Lisa has such a struggle with her GED?

35) How did the casual PTA sponsored community picnics change the relationship with the police?

Chapter 15

36) What was Cynthia's plan for how she was going to work with the teenagers who were selling drugs in Homestead?

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37) What happened with Lenny?

38) What's your opinion of Orange Hayes's approach?

39) Talk about how Lloyd works with Lisa when she is in a very dark moment? What seems to change for her?

Chapter 16

40) Why do you suppose the Student Tenant Council was so successful in making change?

Chapter 17

41) Why would the approach Cynthia and Office Edwards used with Jamel work so well?

42) How did Cynthia get Jamel's mom, Ruby, to come around?

43) What happens for Ruby when she attends Roger's parenting class?

44) What do you think of Lloyd's "moment of truth" when he asserts he will not be a "doormat" to Sandy's foul mouth and behavior? Why does it work?

Chapter 18

45) How does Thelma handle her son Tyrone when he ends up in jail? How/why does it work out like it did?

46) How does Ruby have a breakthrough related to her crack addiction? What does she come to "think/know"?

47) Describe Lisa's experience of deciding to get her GED.

Chapter 19

48) What are some of the changes that have occurred? And pick a couple of the people and talk about how they have changed.

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- 49) What made this Health Realization (Three Principles) approach work?
- 50) Given the simplicity of this approach, why doesn't everyone pick this up and live this way?
- 51) What conditions need to be in place to have the best chance of having an effect in another's life?

The Epilogue

- 52) What indicators do you see of the lasting impact of Health Realization/3 Principles, even as their homes and community gets blown apart by hurricane Andrew?

About Dr. Diane McMillen from Washburn University About the Faculty & Staff

Dr. McMillen has a longstanding interest in social action, community health, and prevention, thus her doctoral degree had its research focus specifically directed toward “changing the odds” and enhancing outcomes for children and families. Her interest in prevention, and sabbatical to research a Principle-based method of inside-out prevention, continues to grow and influence her work. She continues to consult with and provide training for group homes, social service agencies and various community agencies and programs, as well as supervising students to provide training and workshops, and presenting at National, Regional, and local conferences.

In the last several years her service has focused on providing training, workshops, and consultations with agencies and programs working with both staff and consumers related to an inside-out approach to prevention. She also serves on the Board and is active in a local community group, 100 Good Women (100goodwomen.org) which has the stated objective “To promote well-being in our community through service, education, and social connection.”

About Lynanne Lawhead – former Executive Director of Cypress Initiative & now COO with CSC

After the Full Service Center Manager read *Modello* and wanted to begin a Book Club with *Modello* that included members of the Full Service Center. She asked if there was a study guide for it and at that time there was none. I contacted Jack to see if he had one and he said no but had wanted to do one - so I asked him if I did the drafting throughout the process with him - would he work with me to develop it and he agreed. He asked for me to add Dr. Diane McMillen to assist and we all worked on it till it was ready for release in 6 weeks. We all agreed it would be Free to all who wanted it.