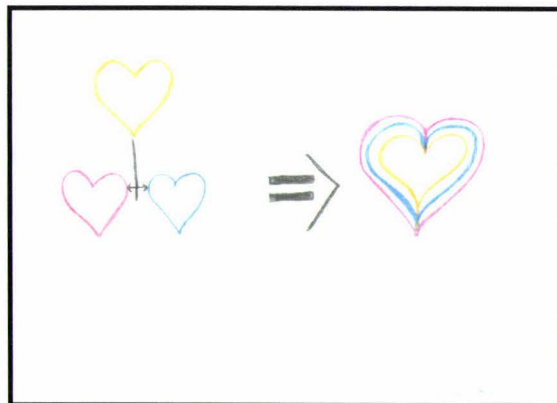


S.A.C.R.E.D.

Is there a mystery in learning?



Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

S.A.C.R.E.D

Is there a mystery in learning?

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Education (Adult Education)

Massey University
Palmerston North
New Zealand

Margaret Wood
2006

ABSTRACT

Relationships are at the core of life for all human beings. Learning is also core to our development as people. So is there a connection between relationships and learning that needs to be acknowledged and understood in the learning experience for adult educators?

This study combined the use of Grounded Theory with Photo Elicitation Interviewing, and Interactive Drawing. The power of placing the camera in the hands of the participants allowed the subsequent interviews using grounded theory methodology to be driven by interviewees. The use of grounded theory allowed the emergence of potential connection between relationships and learning. The use of interactive drawing fostered the encouragement of spontaneous creative expression and self-motivated learning for the third interview which confirmed the emerging theory.

Angela, Justine, Coral, Gina and I¹ were the five participants of the study who came from diverse backgrounds of formal and informal learning. They participated in the process through telling their stories using photo elicitation and subsequent interviews where they made discoveries about the connection between relationships and learning.

Six theoretical categories emerged from the coding data. These were synergy, authenticity, connectedness, reflection, empowerment and discovery. These were grouped together under the acronym of **S.A.C.R.E.D.** Each letter indicates a group that emerged in the coding process which had properties that were innate in the learning process.

From this study there emerged a theory that there is a connection between relationship and learning. The depth of this relationship was mystical; it spoke of a communion that was S.A.C.R.E.D. in the adult learning process.

¹ Participants gave permission for first name to be used in this thesis, except Angela which is a pseudonym.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For me personally the journey of this study has been full of discoveries, emerging ideas and creativity, challenge and transformation for me personally. This study determines learning and transformation do not occur in isolation, but rather in community.

I want to acknowledge the community of people who have journeyed with me, struggled with me and allowed the mystery to stay alive in the midst theoretical frameworks and the world of academia.

I have appreciated the research participants who willingly took photos, shared vulnerably and who risked sharing their soul to allow the theory to emerge. My thanks must go to Angela, Justine, Coral and Gina for giving of themselves and the heart they have had to walk through this journey with me. Thank you!

I have also appreciated the dynamic of relationship with my supervisor, Dr marg gilling from Massey University (Palmerston North). I want to thank you marg for making the time to help me bring clarity amidst the fog, and for not allowing me to “settle for less and miss the best”. I have appreciated the challenges that you have placed before me.

To Ian, my soul mate, husband and friend, you have laughed with me, agonised with me, challenged me, grappled with me amongst our wedding preparation, loved me amidst my frustration and weariness at all times of the day (including 2 a.m. when the mystery became clear) and kept the light bright in the darkness. I want to say thank you. I love you profoundly; “I am because we are, and we are because I am”. I began this as Margaret Waight and concluded this as Margaret Wood. I look forward to our life beyond this thesis!

Matthew and Anne-Maree– thank you for allowing me the space to follow my passion of study, to listen to my grappling and for loving me in ways that are truly you.

To my community – thank you! I would be less of a person without you.

I am thankful God kept us connected through the journey!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT		iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS		iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS		v
LIST OF TABLES		vii
LIST OF FIGURES		viii
Chapter One	INTRODUCTION	1
	Rationale for this study	2
	Research Context	2
	Research Aims	2
	Outline of Thesis	3
Chapter Two	MY PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AND THE BACKGROUND LITERATURE	5
	Philosophy of Literature	5
	Philosophising of Teaching and Learning	7
	Relationships in Learning – bell hooks	9
	bell hooks challenge to my practice of teaching and learning	15
Chapter Three	METHODOLOGY	18
	Research Approach	18
	Photo Elicitation Interviewing	19
	Grounded Theory	21
	Grounded Theory: Glaser, Strauss or Charmaz?	22
	Interactive Drawing	24
Chapter Four	METHOD	26
	Research Focus	26
	Participants	26
	Ethical Considerations	28
	Research Design	30
	Data Gathering Tools	30
	Data Gathering Process	32
	The Method of Data Analysis	33
	Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study	39
Chapter Five	FINDINGS	41
	1. Synergy	42
	2. Authenticity	56
	3. Connectedness	70
	4. Reflection	84
	5. Empowerment	94
	6. Discovery	110

Chapter Six	DISCUSSION	123
	1. Synergy	123
	2. Authenticity	127
	3. Connectedness	131
	4. Reflection	134
	5. Empowerment	140
	6. Discovery	144
Chapter Seven	S.A.C.R.E.D.	148
	Findings	148
	Discussion	153
Chapter Eight	CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	158
	Acronym: S.A.C.R.E.D.	159
	S.A.C.R.E.D. the mystery of learning in relation to hooks	161
	Recommendations	162
	Concluding Comments	162
Reference List		164
Appendix List		176
A	Information Sheet to Participants	177
B	Consent Form	179
C	Ethics Committee Approval	180
D	Photo Elicitation Interview Questions	181
E	Participants Visual Images of Relationship	182
F	Participants Visual Images of Learning	187
G	Coding Chart of Relationship	192
H	Coding Chart of Learning	193
I	Coding Chart of Visual Images	194
J	Participants Interactive Drawing Synergy	195
K	Participants Interactive Drawing Authenticity	196
L	Participants Interactive Drawing Connectedness	197
M	Participants Interactive Drawing Reflection	198
N	Participants Interactive Drawing Empowerment	199
O	Participants Interactive Drawing Discovery	200
P	Participants Interactive Drawing S.A.C.R.E.D.	201

LIST OF TABLES

1. Grounded Theory Design	24
2. Data collected during interview one on relationship	35
3. Comparison of Gina's data with Angela's data collected during the second interview	36
4. Coding chart of photos	38
5. Descriptive words for Synergy in Relationship	42
6. Descriptive words for the Synergy in Learning	43
7. Descriptive Words for Authenticity in Relationship	56
8. Descriptive Words for Authenticity in Learning	57
9. Descriptive Words for Connectedness in Relationship	70
10. Descriptive Words for Connectedness in Learning	71
11. Descriptive Words for Reflection in Relationship	84
12. Descriptive Words for Reflection in Learning	85
13. Descriptive Words for Empowerment in Relationship	94
14. Descriptive Words for Empowerment in Learning	95
15. Descriptive Words for Discovery in Relationship	110
16. Descriptive Words for Discovery in Learning	111
17. Links between findings and literature - synergy	124
18. Links between findings and literature - authenticity	128
19. Links between findings and literature – connectedness	132
20. Links between findings and literature – reflection	135
21. Links between findings and literature - empowerment	141
22. Links between findings and literature – discovery	145

LIST OF FIGURES

1. Consultation – A Research Process	5
2. Philosophy of Teaching and Learning	7
3. Research Design	30
4. Grounded Theory	33
5. Spiral of Learning	126
6. Authenticity Unlocks Synergy	130
7. Jarvis Model of Adult Learning	137
8. Holistic Model of Learning	139
9. The Person-in-the-World	154

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Are relationships at the core of life for all human beings? Is learning at the heart of our development as people? I have a deep curiosity as to whether there is a connection between relationships and learning that needs to be acknowledged and understood in the learning experience for adult educators.

Research in the area of relationships has developed over the past 20 years with major works considering theories in this field (Giddens, 1991; hooks, 2002; Jamieson, 2002; Mashek & Aron, 2004; Reis & Shaver, 1988). These authors believe that connectedness is a core dynamic of relationships. However there is varied discussion over the meaning of the words related to relationships.

The field of adult learning and teaching has been extensively researched and models adopted which have provided foundations for those in the adult education field today (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985; Boud & Walker, 1992; Brockett & Merriam, 1997; Brookfield, 1987; Fenwick, 2000; Fox, 1983; Jarvis, 2001; Knowles, 1972; Kolb, 1984,1998; Miettinen, 2000; Mulligan, 1993; Pratt, 1998; Ramsden, 1992; Rogers, 1996; Vince, 1998; Wlodkowski, 1999). These theorists and practitioners have focussed on frameworks, models and applications to enable effective teaching and learning. One example is Kolb's model of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984).

Some research has been undertaken to understand the dynamic relationship between the teacher and student (Pratt, 1998, 2003). Other research has been undertaken to discover the "inner workings" of the student that prevent or enhance the learning (Mulligan, 1992, 1993). Noddings (2002, 2003) has written on the significance of caring but with a focus on children's learning. Gilligan (1982) Belenky (1986) and Hayes (2001) address the issues of women in learning and relationships.

Relationships have many strands and textures that need to be discovered and grappled with in order to empower individuals in their journey of self and in relationship to learning.

Rationale for Study

This research seeks to discover if there is any connection between relationships and learning, and, if this exists, to begin to understand the phenomena of this connection.

In this research I chose to work solely with women. For four reasons, firstly as a feminist researcher it is my passion to empower women and therefore critical that I understand our learning and relational ways of being one with another. Secondly much of my background thinking on this topic has been from bell hooks, a feminist scholar who desperately believes that we as women need to discover deep connection with other women in order that we may respond to our own selves, and to the world that we live in far more effectively (hooks, 2002,). Thirdly, I work for a Private Training Establishment whose students are over 80% women. Fourthly, the scale of this study was limited in size and therefore it would clearly be consistent with who I am, how it has shaped me, to have studied and worked with women on this project.

Research Context

The context for this study was based upon women who live within driving distance of the Waikato. All participants were between the age of 30-50 years of age, with some experience of informal and formal learning. With the limitations of the study I placed a boundary on my research to only include females within a certain age bracket. This choice was made because with the size of this project I took a small sampling and with this reality did not want the research skewed by adding another gender and a wider age range to the mix. I think this project in the future could be extended to include a much broader base of people to further explore the findings.

Research Aims

Throughout my study in adult teaching and learning I have been constantly shaping my own personal philosophy of learning and teaching. In 2004 I began to grow a model (Waight, 2004)² which discussed my theory to date, but since this time I have lived with persistent grumblings in my gut that this model was not yet complete, but a continual work in progress. I had no idea what shape it would have to take. I had no inkling as to the path this search would take. I had some measure of certainty that it was related to the relationship between the learners, but had nothing concrete to measure this by. Hence my study was founded in my search for a strengthened philosophy of teaching and learning and then the uncharted journey began.

² I married on the 31st March, 2006 and am now known as Margaret Wood.

Outline of the Thesis

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. The first chapter presents an introduction to the research and presents a rationale for the research. It provides insight to the context in which the research is set and the aims that shaped this research.

The role of literature is discussed in chapter two only as it relates primarily to one author. This chapter outlines my philosophising of teaching and learning and the literature base of bell hooks that this research emerged from.

Chapter Three examines and discusses the wider literature, research approach and methodology that provided the framework for this research. This chapter discusses the choice of the interpretive approach and introduces photo elicitation interviewing, grounded theory and interactive drawing as three methods used in this research.

Chapter Four gives further insight into the design of the research. This chapter introduces the participants, the data gathering processes, and how the process of emerging theory was undertaken.

Chapter Five presents the connections made between relationships and learning based upon the participant's photo record which led to the emerging theory of S.A.C.R.E.D. This chapter is concerned with the participant's interviews which led to the emergence of S.A.C.R.E.D. The meanings made by the participants of their visual images are clearly presented to confirm the emergence of the properties and categories of the emergent theoretical acronym.

Chapter Six integrates the findings with the insight of literature and the literature is woven into the emerging theory through a process of constant comparison. This provides a perspective of literature which further strengthens the emergent theory.

Chapter Seven introduces S.A.C.R.E.D and the mystery discovered and experienced by the participants. The participant's data gives visual meaning to S.A.C.R.E.D. The second part of this chapter combines the findings of the participants with the literature.

Chapter Eight concludes the thesis and provides an overview of the study. The initial questions posed in this research are responded to, the impact of this research upon my personal philosophy

of teaching is addressed and bell hooks' work is appraised in the light of the emergent theory of S.A.C.R.E.D. The intrinsic strengths and weaknesses of this study are presented with these providing a platform to the recommendations for future research.

Chapter Two

MY PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING AND LEARNING AND THE BACKGROUND LITERATURE OF THIS RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

In this section I introduce why the literature is integrated into the findings of the research and does not pre-empt the research data as in more traditional research methods. I discuss my philosophy of teaching and learning and the work of bell hooks that formed the foundation of this research.

The Philosophy of Literature in this Thesis

Conservative researchers have traditionally adopted the process that first one has a premise to critique, evaluate or question which is based around an area of interest. The first part of data collection is the sourcing of literature to address the research problem or question. This model is represented in Figure 1.

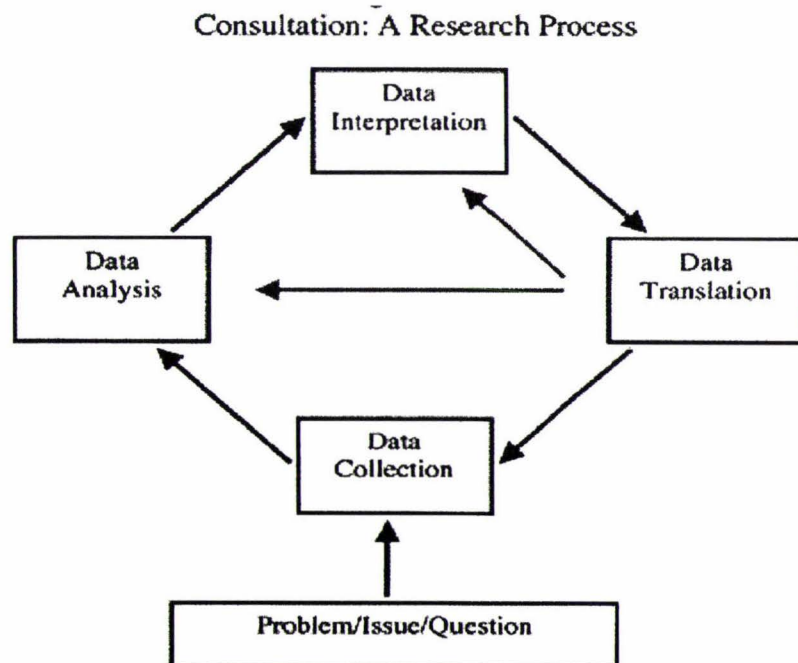


Figure 1: (Wulff, 2001)

In contrast to this traditional model of research I have chosen to combine the use of grounded theory (Charmaz, 2003, 2005, 2000; Glaser, 1992, 1998, 2001, 2003, 2005; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and photo elicitation interviewing (Harper, 2002, 2000; Pink, 2001; Rose, 2001; Schwartz,

1992; Wang & Burris, 1994; Wang & Redwood - Jones, 2001) and interactive drawing to verify the emerging theory (Withers, 2005). Once the data has been collected and the grounded theory emerges then literature will be woven into the research data as more data for constant comparison (Glaser, 1998, p.67).

I have done this for six reasons.

- I have a personal commitment to feminist theory which allows the participants power to speak and bring dimensions of thinking and participation that more traditional research methods do not allow. However in doing this I have been also conscious of the tension of filtering the voice of the participants with forcing the data; that is imposing the worldview of the researcher upon the participant (Glaser, 1998). This brings a complexity to the ethical issues (Olesen, 2000). Initially I approached this with the idealism of Glaser who purports that the data and the research subject is independent of the researcher. I have moved to understanding that all research takes place within a social context of which the researcher is a part (Charmaz, 2005).
- The synergistic way, in which grounded theory and photo elicitation interviewing compliment one another, in that they allow for the emergence of meaning, data and theory as a result of their processes. This limits the extent to which the researcher in both methodologies forces or pre-empts the data and findings of the participants (Glaser, 2005).
- I have a process of trust in the discovery of the research problem because my work does not begin with a fixed premise or belief that I am wanting to prove but rather a research question and research methods which can allow the data to speak to bring an emerging theory which can then be tested (Glaser, 1992).
- Grounded theory is ideally suited to me because I want to continue being "... open to whatever, still enthusiastically learning.....more likely to see fresh new patterns" (Glaser, 2003, p.61) in the face of this risk of forcing professional interest patterns.
- The way in which the literature can be integrated with the data without it being forced. Both grounded theory and photo elicitation interviewing is discussed fully in Chapter three and work from the premise that literature is interwoven towards the end of the

research process rather than at the beginning. To do this would be contrary to and oppose both forms of research.

- Interactive drawing allows the creative processes in an educational setting to promote the “integration of physical, emotional, cognitive and social functioning; enhancing self awareness; and facilitate change” (Association, 2005) and provides an external means of verification of the emerging theory.

Therefore the reporting of this research does not begin with literature other than what I brought with me to the entry place of research; my personal philosophy of teaching and learning and my understanding of relationships in learning evidenced by the writing of bell hooks (2003b) and others.

MY PHILOSOPHISING OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

I have represented my philosophising of teaching and learning as seen in the diagram Figure 2.



Figure 2, M Waight, Philosophy of Teaching and Learning Model.
(Waight, 2004)

The model has three coloured wires. The blue wire represents the student in the process of learning. The red wire represents the teacher. The yellow wire represents that which is unseen and unheard but is fully present. The wooden circle represents the different dynamics of learning which interact with each other and each participant whether that is the teacher or the student. The process is dynamic and if you hold the wooden circle on each side and spin the whole construction, then the pieces tumble and interact with each other, causing vibrancy and

innovations to occur. This is symbolic of the learning process which is an adventure of exploration in which the different components of learning interact with each other.

The sound made by the movement of the different components as they move along the different axis is symbolic of the cathartic moments of discovery. The different coloured wires could have been filled with discs or balls - but there is intentionally space as there is always more to learn, more to discover and more connections to be made.

The yellow wire (unseen and unheard voices) has attached to it the blue (student) and red (teacher) discs. This demonstrates that both the teacher and the student have unseen and unheard voices that are powerfully present in the teaching and learning experience.

The blue wire (student) does not have a red disc (teacher) attached. This indicates that the teacher cannot do the learning for the students, but by functioning in this philosophy of teaching the teacher offers a culture that empowers the students learning and discovery making. The teacher is represented as doing this by the wooden disc which provides structure, content and as much as can be represented on the wooden ring.

The red wire (teacher) does have the blue (student) and yellow (unseen and unheard) discs because the teacher must be aware, and carry the responsibility for creating a context in which learning can take place for the student, while respecting the different dynamics and diversity that each student brings and the role in which unseen and unheard voices play in the learning process.

The wooden circle holds the contents of

- Experiential learning (Kolb, 1984; Yorks & Kasl, 2002)
- Holistic teaching (hooks, 2003b; Pratt, 1998)
- Meaning making (Zepke & Leach, 2002)
- Motivational processes (Wlodkowski, 1999)
- Reflection (Jarvis, 2006; Pratt, 1998)
- Testing (Kolb, 1998)
- Process (Jarvis, 2001)
- Experimental (Aoki, 1991; Jarvis, 1992)

- Story telling (Wardlaw, 1983)
- New discoveries (Bateman, 1990; Kolb, 1984)
- Imagining (Mulligan, 1993)
- Concrete and Abstract (Kolb, 1984).

My philosophy of teaching is embraced in the quote "The art of teaching is the art of discovery" Van Doren (1998). This model is not static but is dynamic and continuing to emerge. In this regard there will be new discoveries to be made that will be added to this model as research continues.

Relationships in Learning – bell hooks

My quest for an understanding of relationships in learning has been significantly shaped by the writing of bell hooks. This study has also been shaped by her writing. The examination of bell hook's writing (hooks, 1981,1984, 1989, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2000d, 2001, 2002, 2003a, 2003b, 2004a, 2004b) and her work opened up debate and introspection among myself, colleagues and peers. Her writing for me has come to be "a place that is life-sustaining and mind expanding, a place of liberating mutuality where teacher and student together work in partnership" (hooks, 2003b, p.xv). While this has not occurred face to face, bell hooks writing is such that a person can be drawn into the text as a living document which embraces interaction with the writer herself.

As an unashamedly feminist cultural critic and scholar, bell hooks is a visionary leader in the area of race, sexism, domination and liberation teaching. bell hooks has the ability to take her students, readers and critics on a journey of self discovery where she defines the transformation process that occurs for each person who interacts with her work as an action, not a feeling, and harnesses action to address national and international concerns (Dodson, 2001).

Gloria Watkins (bell hooks) was born in Hopkinsville, Kentucky. She grew up in a poor working class family and endured much to become a Distinguished Professor of English at the Graduate Centre of the City University of New York. bell hooks loved learning and describes the learning experience:

To be changed by ideas was pure pleasure. But to learn ideas that ran counter to values and beliefs learned at home was to place oneself at risk, to enter the danger zone. Home was the place where I was forced to conform to someone else's image of who and what I

should be. School was the place where I could forget that self and, through ideas, reinvent myself. (hooks, 1994, p.3)

bell hooks describes her childhood as a journey of rebellion, of a struggle to create self and identity distinct from, and yet integrated with, the world and community around her. As a girl she grew up in a family of five sisters and constant themes of bell hooks childhood illustrate a prevailing perspective of intuition and a critically thinking mind (hooks, 1996). Her father was a strong man who did not talk, who did not show feelings, who did not give time and or attention. He was known and recognised as the provider, protector and the warrior who guarded the gate. It was evident from bell hooks writing that she did not know or was not allowed to know her father, to hear his childhood stories, or to embrace his memories, this remained unexplored territory for hooks (hooks, 2004b).

The perspective of bell hooks and her personal challenge.

The examination of the development of bell hooks writing of two decades has led me to an examination of my own teaching practice in the light of her challenges to us as adult educators.

In bell hooks first book, *Ain't I a Woman* (hooks, 1981) she surveyed the impact of racism and sexism on black women, the civil rights movement and feminist movements. bell hooks perception was that the downfall of the contemporary feminist movement was the emphasis supported by the dominant values of the culture on individual fulfillment above collective change. This meant that the energy of the movement was dispersed into individual benefit rather than a structural change to society. This raised questions for me of community or individualistic ways of teaching.

bell hooks published *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (hooks, 1984) in an attempt to develop feminist theory from a perspective of those who live on the margin. She wanted to identify factors from the broad spectrum of human experience which could enable feminism to become a mass political movement and have a “revolutionary, transformative impact on society” (hooks, 1984, p.163). This was her first formal description of feminism from the perspectives of race, sex and class. This challenged my understanding of institutional feminism and its power in learning environments.

In her book *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black* (hooks, 1989), she raised the issues surrounding the impact of education upon the community. bell hooks argued that while education is seen as a route of escape from a black persons present context, it also has the possibility of alienating an individual from their community and the “learned black person might lose touch with the concrete reality of everyday black experience” (hooks, 1989, p.78). I had recognised this in my own life, where as a result of education I had alienated myself from my community within the church. In this book bell hooks first raises the need for self-recovery and feminist transformation that could enhance understanding of black experience and gender.

In her collection of essays entitled *Yearning: race, gender and cultural politics* (hooks, 1990), she addressed spirituality and its link to community in that individuals are not alone. bell hooks raises the sense of renewal that comes when we know love and the shared spirit that is truly sweet communion. She says that this sense of “well-being cannot exist in a context of sexist domination, in a setting where children are the objects of parental domination and abuse” (hooks, 1990, p.43). This book raised questions about spirituality and its role in a community of learners.

In her work *Sisters of the Yam: black women and self-recovery* (hooks, 1993) attempted to raise the consciousness in black women of their own well-being and self-concept. She challenged the black society in areas of addiction, truth telling, work, spirituality, reconciliation and other central issues to black community. In this challenge she shares how black women's development has been moulded by the daily abuse of domination through their culture. bell hooks states that it doesn't matter how many positive images of blackness people are surrounded by, if individuals continue to feel “less than” because of their dark skin and kinky hair nothing will change in terms of self-hatred. bell hooks writes

If internalised racism enters the souls of black folks through years of socialisation then we are not going to be rid of it by simply giving shallow expression to the notion that black is beautiful. We must live in our bodies in such a way that we daily indicate that black is beautiful. We cannot do any of this constructive action without first loving blackness. (hooks, 1993, p.96)

bell hooks aim in writing this book was to create a platform where black women would both work on their own individual efforts for discovering personal identity and still remain very integrated into the larger world of their community. Her hope was that the end result would be to find collective

dignity as black women. This challenged my practice as an adult educator, and left me pondering the ability of individuals to discover personal identity amidst a wider community of learners.

Teaching to Transgress (hooks, 1994) criticised teaching for the use of banking education which denies and suppresses diversity. She alleges that colleagues use “the classroom to enact rituals of control that are about domination and the unjust exercise of power”(p.5). This draws on the influence of Freire (1970), who sees education as the practice of freedom. For hooks, “teaching is a performative act that offers the space for change, invention, spontaneous shifts, that can serve as a catalyst drawing out the unique elements in each classroom” (hooks, 1994, p.11). hooks argues for a holistic education:

To educate as the practice of freedom is a way of teaching that anyone can learn. That learning process comes easiest to those of us who teach and who also believe that there is an aspect of our vocation that is sacred; who believe that our work is not merely to share information but to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of our students. To teach in a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students is essential if we are to provide the necessary conditions where learning can most deeply and intimately begin. (hooks, 1994, p.13)

As an educator I was struck with the issues of power, control and domination which I had experienced as a learner and challenged my philosophy of spontaneity in learning.

Bone Black: Memories of Girlhood (hooks, 1996) brings to our attention the experiences of black girls growing up in a black community based upon her own childhood experience. She brought revelation that men and women played significantly different roles in society and within her family the role for women was one of silence where black identified her status. hooks asserts that writing released life and found for her a new place of belonging, a place she could call home. It could be said that some women are finding that education is becoming their place of belonging, a place of acceptance outside the black community of their family of origin. This has implications for traditional cultural models of family and community. hooks experience had become my own. Education was a place where I could belong.

Sixteen years later when hooks wrote the second edition of *Feminist Theory: From margin to center* (hooks, 2000b) she reflected on the transition of her views to an accepted position in which

gender was looked at from perspectives of race, sex and class. She observed the impact that the feminist movement had made in a cultural revolution which had “changed how we see work, how we work, and how we love” (hooks, 2000c, p.14). My experience has shown that the revolution has not yet ended patriarchy, sexist exploitation or oppression.

There appears a genuine shift in hooks to a more spiritually based writing with a focus on inner healing and religious transformation. She argues that what is needed in modern humanity is a love of the self that is not self-centred, and a love of each other that seeks a social good beyond ethnic, economic, political or personal self-interest. hooks says the choice to love is:

The deepest revolution, the turning away from the world as we know it, toward the world we must make if we are to be one with the planet – one healing heart giving and sustaining life. Love is our hope and our salvation. (hooks, 2001, p.225)

This direction continued with bell hooks in her writing of *Communion: The female search of love* (hooks, 2002) where she argued that women are born into a patriarchal world, which initially invites individuals to discover love, but then places all the barriers to love in their way. She believes that women need to rediscover the call to help younger women discover love that sustains them on their journey and to “create circles of love that nurture and sustain collective female well-being” (hooks, 2002, p.xix). hooks argues that this breaks the misguided thinking of patriarchal culture because,

we come to our search for love knowing that there is nothing more romantic than the intensity of mutual connection. That intimacy lays the groundwork for two individuals to become soul mates, partners who are willing to do the work of love. (hooks, 2002, p242)

My adult education practice was birthed in a patriarchal world where women could listen but not teach. Women often retreated into a role of submission rather than leadership and the collective female well-being was not a priority. This belief of bell hooks stirred my quest to see women in a place of wholeness and being sustained by other women.

In *Communion: The female search of love* (hooks, 2002) hooks urges women to bond together in a way that empowers and brings transformative healing in relationship. This she believes is a communion of souls which will sustain and abide.

bell hooks is referring to a level of human functioning that is at the more sophisticated level of self-actualisation as proposed by Maslow (1970) than the pragmatic reality of survival in a context, where communion is at the level of protection and provision only. The communion of souls challenged my individualism in education and learning.

In progressing her work on inner healing, hooks wrote *Rock My Soul: Black People and Self Esteem* (2003b). In response to the psychological fallout of hurt and trauma amongst black people, bell hooks sought to draw a wide range of sources together to help develop a healthier self esteem and the discovery of values, ideals, integrity and spirituality. While she admits that the power of white racism has lessened, she also points out that the transition from rigid segregation towards full integration has resulted in crippling emotional and psychological trauma, breeding paranoia, fear, self doubt, self-hatred and addiction as black people try to assimilate and become as if they were white in the workplace (Pinkett, 2004). hooks invites people to discover the power of the soul “the unique opportunity to renew our faith in one another and restore our hope. Soul enables us to dare to trust even though our trust has been betrayed again and again” (hooks, 2003a, p.216). This was a personal challenge for me to re-connect with my soul and begin to trust again having been betrayed by an institution.

Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope (2003b) developed and expanded the themes of *Teaching to Transgress* (1994) written a decade previously. hooks places a new emphasis on the building of community in the class room or learning environment. She promotes the establishing of partnerships between students and teachers and the extension of education beyond the formal learning of the classroom into community organisations and public forums to confront racial and sexual biases. She challenges white people to make a difference in attitudes towards racism and white supremacy so that “they can bond with people of colour in beloved community, living the truth of our essential humanness” (2003b, p.35).

bell hooks writing has offered me a place to personally reflect upon her growth and development of writing. She began with theoretical models and has now moved to a more practical application in the lives of men and women across all genders and races. Her work allows me to examine my teaching and learning practice in my context in the light of her challenges and assertions.

bell hooks challenge to my practice of teaching and learning

The challenge to me from bell hooks writing comes in at least two themes: domination and education.

Domination

As a teacher who embraces experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) it has been a constant challenge to move from a "banking education" (Freire, 1970, revised translation 1996) model which is full of power and authority to a model which allows interaction in the context of community. Extending this process is a continual challenge.

However bell hooks makes the point that domination is not restricted to the teacher/student relationship but where there is diversity amongst the students, particularly around the issues of race and gender and sexual practice. "It is possible for everyone to engage in power struggles, and in fact for certain students to have potentially the power to coerce, dominate and silence" (as cited in Burke, 2004).

What strikes me is the interaction and experiential learning dynamic that can be life giving and empowering for communities but it generally is still a rare form of relating in teacher/student relationships.

Education

Education can function as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring conformity to it, or it becomes the "practice of freedom", the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of the world (hooks, 1989, p.66).

Central to my teaching practice is the desire to raise a new level of critical consciousness that can allow people to reflect and wrestle with the learning outcomes in their context and culture. bell hooks has heightened my awareness of an engaged pedagogy which combines reflection and action (hooks, 2003b).

In reading bell hooks I was somewhat shocked to read that the patriarchal models of learning in our communities are in fact undermining men's masculinity. bell hooks work left me in a place of crisis as I had made an assumption that patriarchy has indeed given men identity and

masculinity. In the light of bell hooks I could no longer teach without a deeper consideration of the rules and impact of patriarchy (hooks, 2004a).

The raising of self esteem has consistently been integrated into my teaching by valuing, nurturing and empowering learners as they grapple with new understandings. The challenge is to see that self esteem can emerge in the bonding and connection with each other in community. The barriers to love that bell hooks raises in her writing (hooks, 2002) can cause conflict in a culture if women are threatened by each other, are deeply insecure and the communion that bell hooks calls for is deeply suspect. The question each woman asks is 'what will I lose if I share with another woman'? hooks believes that within patriarchal models of learning women can only have communion in relationship with men, after having experienced this first with other women (hooks, 2002). The building of trust so that "transformative healing" can take place between women and women and then women and men is a colossal challenge.

Conclusion

When I first began to read bell hooks I was confronted by feminist frameworks. I felt her depth of emotion to being marginalised as a black woman by both the white middle class leaders of feminist movements and by black men. The progression of bell hooks journey in which she has sought to practically apply theory so that true liberation of both men and women occurs has challenged me deeply. I was stirred by bell hooks to take my own deep values and find ways of teaching and learning to address the issues of identity and self esteem so that people can celebrate their self-hood in a wider context.

bell hooks has left me unsatisfied with accepting what is seen as visible, but to rather search for the invisible in order to see people liberated as whole people. I felt motivated by bell hooks towards a new journey in education so that together,

we move through the fear, find out what connects us, revel in our differences and discover the union that is possible in a learning context. This is the process that brings us closer, that gives us a world of shared values of meaningful community. (hooks, 2003b, p.197)

The work of bell hooks combined with my growing philosophy of adult teaching and learning has been the background for this study. My philosophising about the process of adult learning represents a dynamic interaction between students, teacher and the unseen and unheard yet fully

present voices (Zepke & Leach, 2002). These questions and challenges left me with many uncertainties in the learning process.

It was from these uncertainties that this research emerged. Glaser commends researchers to read widely in other areas during the research. He purports that to undertake extensive reading prior to research risks contaminating the emerging theory (Glaser, 1998). I resisted delving into other literary sources until the participants findings were complete and other literature could be sourced in the light of the emerging theory.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In this chapter I examine and discuss the research approach and methodology that provides the framework for this research. Initially I discuss the positivist and interpretive approaches to research then explain the choice of the interpretive approach for this particular study. Secondly I introduce photo elicitation interviewing and interactive drawing as data gathering methods and grounded theory as the data analysis method used in this research.

Research Approach

Social reality has been examined in two contrasting ways by the social sciences (Blaxter, Hughes, & Tight, 1999). Traditionally social science research has drawn upon the protocols of natural science in understanding behaviour of individuals and groups. This process has frequently used predetermined questions, experimental design and descriptions of observations and data. This has been quantified in objective measures and has been generally viewed as positivist. This view assumed that law like explanations could be made by analysis and the accumulation of fact and logic (Davidson & Tolich, 2003).

However, in contrast, a more recent interpretative analysis presents another approach being more concerned with making meaning of behaviour by observation, experience and the way a person "creates, modifies and interprets the world in which he or she finds herself or himself" (Manion, Cohen, & Morrison, 2003, p.7). Interpretative research is subjective rather than objective. The assumption of interpretative analysis is that individuals are active participants by being intentional about their behaviour, and that people respond and/or react in ways that have meaning or create meaning in their contexts. The interpretative researcher seeks to understand the dynamic and changing nature of the social world and acknowledge that each human is unique. They bring to their situation meaning and complexities that cannot be rigidly analysed. The interpretative researcher considers it primary to examine situations through the eyes of the participants rather than the lens of the researcher (Manion, Cohen, & Morrison, 2000). However such a view is overly optimistic, as we bring ourselves and need to accept that we can advance effective research "without the cloak of neutrality and passivity which enshrouded mid century positivism" (Charmaz, 2003, p.511).

I have chosen to use an interpretative approach because it applies a holistic approach where the power is held more firmly in the participants' hands and can be integrated into people's daily life experiences of relationships in learning.

Rationale for choice of methodologies

For the purpose of this study I have chosen to combine the use of three approaches, photo elicitation interviewing, and grounded theory and interactive drawing.

Photo Elicitation Interviewing

Photo elicitation interviewing (PEI) is a method of research developed in 1967 by anthropologist John Collier, as a valid way of data collection. A number of recent articles and books have examined the use of this methodology in contemporary society (Banks, 2001; Collier & Collier, 1967, 1986; Harper, 2000, 2002; Pink, 2001; Rose, 2001; Schwartz, 1992). Photo Elicitation moves away from words alone in an interview process, to the use of photos alongside text. It is the use of symbolic representation that stimulates deep elements of human consciousness that words alone cannot do.

Photographs provide a visual story of peoples' lives which can record events, or images that are relevant to the particular lives of the participants. Photographs also provide images which connect a person intimately with their society and cultural history (Harper, 2002). The use of photographs to elicit a response became known as photo elicitation when it was used by the Colliers (1967,1986). They recorded that:

Picture interviews were flooded with encyclopaedic community information whereas in the exclusively verbal interviews, communication difficulties and memory blocks inhibited the flow of information. (Collier & Collier, 1986, p.106)

Instead of showing photos taken by a third party, the majority of photos in this work were taken by the participants themselves. This has been called "auto driving" as "the interview is driven by informants who are seeing their own behaviour" (Heisley & Levy, 1991, p.269). The power of placing the camera in the hands of the participants allows the subsequent interview using grounded theory methodology to be driven by interviewees.

Photo elicitation studies use photographs, "but there is no reason why studies cannot be done with paintings, cartoons, public displays of graffiti, or virtually any visual image (Cowan, 1999,

p.93) One participant in this research chose images that were recorded by another person. However the images themselves gave access into a part of their human consciousness that was significant for this participant as they were “charged with psychological and highly emotional elements and symbols” (Colliers.1986, p. 108). What is critical is that the images connected an individual to experiences or eras even if the images did not reflect the participant’s actual life (Harper 2002).

PEI empowers the participant to discover the subjective understanding of the images. This process has the ability to bypass some of the traditional dynamics of power that are possible in regular interviewing (Clark-Ibanez, 2004). Photographs can be expressive containers storing memories, emotions and experiential moments which can be captured and later used to share insight (Loeffler, 2004).

The participants in a research project conducted by Harrington (1998) reflected upon PEI and noted that this method deepened their level of reflection beyond what an interview alone would have. The use of photos can trigger the discovery of meaning that would otherwise have remained hidden, allowing the memory trigger to enhance the participants ability to reflect upon their story (Loeffler, 2005; Schwartz, 1992).

The use of PEI is able to reach into deeper parts of the human psyche than traditional words-alone interviews. There is an extraordinary sense of seeming to retrieve something from the photos that has been lost but alone belongs to the photograph. This then allows the participant to reflect and give voice to a deeper sense of being (Harper, 2002). In a recent Australian study photo elicitation interviewing gave the participants a tool to demonstrate their ability, their issues and to canvas deeply held thought and emotion (Beilin, 2005). Photographs allow participants a unique way of communicating dimensions of their lives (Clark-Ibanez, 2004).

Photographs give the reflection of an individual’s point of view, biases and knowledge and cultural lenses. Participants bring images that contain psychological and highly charged elements and symbols (Collier & Collier, 1986). Cronin suggests “the full function of photographs is the creation and maintenance of meaning, and to this end a hermeneutic approach, [in research] which concentrates on the meaning woven around a photograph, is desirable” (Cronin, 1998, p. 323).

PEI has been criticised by some researchers because of the subjective interpretation of the content of photos (Banks, 2001). However, it is this very factor that fits so well with the emergence of theory within the practice of grounded theory. PEI provides a platform for collaborative research where the researcher becomes a listener and the individual brings their own interpretation and meaning to the researcher (Loeffler, 2004).

The ethical issues that have to be monitored in PEI include the potential for the invasion of privacy, increased participation required by the interviewee, and technological challenges with the use of cameras (Fang & Elwein, 1990; Wang & Redwood - Jones, 2001). However the advantages of PEI are overwhelming. They include the power of PEI to “challenge participants, provide nuances, trigger memories, lead to new perspectives and explanations and help to avoid researcher misinterpretation” (Hurworth, 2003).

Photo based research has been disproportionate in quantity to word based research and has been under utilised and under applied in traditional word based forms of research (Harper, 2000; Prosser, 1998). This study seeks to integrate the use of PEI creatively alongside grounded theory and interactive drawing.

Grounded Theory

Sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) introduced the methodology of grounded theory in 1967 at a time when the perceived difficulty in verification was causing concern and questions were being raised about the legitimacy of qualitative research. This directly countered the prevailing view that quantitative studies were the only form of legitimate social scientific investigation (Charmaz, 2000).

A grounded theory approach does not focus on the detail of data gathering techniques, but rather the analytic process which emerges through the development and connection of concepts as they relate to each other. The schema of grounded theory includes concurrent collection (in this study using the methods of PEI) and examination of the data, a coding process, comparison and validation by other methods (in this study interactive drawing), memo writing which supports the emergence of theory followed by polishing of the theory and finally the integration of the emergent theory.

The traditional research approach is to study the literature prior to beginning the research. However the grounded theory principle is that the literature research is completed during the latter stages of sorting and writing when the discoveries can be interwoven into the emerging grounded theory as another means of comparison with the data (Glaser, 1998).

Glaser, Strauss or Charmaz?

In the years following the original work by Strauss and Glaser (1967) there was a major separation in thinking concerning what was grounded theory. Strauss and Corbin (1990) place an emphasis on grounded theory being both scientific and creative at the same time, following clear research procedures and patterns. Strauss and Corbin's systematic design provides a set of measurements for the development of a grounded theory driven by the close connections between data collection and data analysis. The important concept in this method is the identification of the steps in data analysis and the use of open and selected coding procedures in order to construct a theory or a "visual picture of the theory generated" (Cresswell, 2002, p.441).

In response to this Glaser (1992) advocated that true grounded theory must gather data without forcing preconceived theories or frameworks. Glaser argued that Strauss and Corbin had in fact developed a new form of research called "full conceptual description" while using the grounded theory name and had completely mistaken his understanding of the "goals, methodology, freedom, level of abstraction, constant comparison, naturalism, emergence, trust and care about what participants perceive and what their problems are" (Glaser, 1992, p.124). This rigorous discussion continued between Glaser and Strauss until the time of Strauss' death.

Glaser (1998) remains firmly positioned on allowing a theory to emerge from the data without forcing. Not forcing involves more flexible coding than used by Strauss and Corbin where the emphasis is on constant comparative coding. This must submit to his four central criteria of "fit, work, relevance and modifiability" (Glaser, 1998, p.104).

Grounded theory is induction, generating concepts from systematically collecting data – evidence – based on a unique methodology of constant comparison procedures, which constantly verifies validity of concepts as they are generated from data and related to each other as hypotheses. But once generated the theory simply gets modified - not proven - by constant comparisons with more data. (Glaser, 2003, p.61)

Since that time a third stream of grounded theory has emerged developed by Kathy Charmaz. Charmaz first suggested this strand of constructivist grounded theory in 2000. "Constructivism assumes the relativism of multiple social realities and recognises the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed and aims toward interpretive understanding of subjects meanings" (Charmaz, 2000, p.510). Glaser vigorously challenges this development considering that it places the emphasis on the researcher's professional concern and not the participants. Glaser considers that constructivism has no place in grounded theory (Glaser, 2003). However, Charmaz disputes the idealism of Glaser's theory that treats the data as independent of the researcher (Glaser, 2002).

Notwithstanding Glaser's objection, Charmaz has further developed this, choosing to draw upon the Chicago school antecedents in grounded theory. Her method of constructivist grounded theory "adopts grounded theory guidelines as tools but does not subscribe to the objectivist, positivist assumptions in its earlier formulations" (Charmaz, 2005, p.509).

A constructivist approach brings to the fore what is being studied rather than the process of studying it, draws upon the social dynamic that is present and which actively involves the researcher, denies separation of data from the participants and is realistic about the worldview that the researcher brings as an interpretive frame to the research context (Charmaz, 2005). Charmaz departs from the use of diagrams or conceptual maps and focuses upon the "views, values, beliefs, feelings, assumptions and ideologies of individuals than in gathering facts and describing acts" (Cresswell, 2002, p. 509) so as not to become locked into the rigidity of a constructivist approach.

In summary the three main approaches for grounded theory are the "emerging approach" of Glaser (1998), the "systematic approach" of Strauss and Corbin (1990), and the "constructivist approach" of Charmaz (2000).

In this study I began with the idealism of Glaser, as someone who was separate from the data and the participants, to integrating the theory of the constructivist approach of Charmaz with aspects of Glaser's theory and that of Strauss and Corbin.

Grounded Theory Design Used in This Study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers role in the process fore-grounded, my beliefs and values discussed (Charmaz, 2000)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of constant comparative coding procedures, comparing incident to incident, incident to category and category to category. (Glaser, 1998)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of “active coding” labels to capture the experiences of the participants. (Charmaz, 2000)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memoing and sorting (Straus and Corbin, 1990)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notion of “good” grounded theory fitting the four criteria of fit, work, relevance and modifiability. (Glaser, 1998)

Table 1. Grounded Theory Design

This is consistent with the view of Charmaz (2003) that “We can use grounded theory methods as flexible, heuristic strategies rather than formulaic procedures” (p. 251).

Interactive Drawing

Margaret Naumburg (Strickland, 2001) first pioneered the use of art in therapy and education in the 1940s. She developed the theory that stressed the importance of creativity, the intuitive, the nonverbal, and the unconscious for educators. It has been transformed and refined by a number of different practitioners including Rubin (2005), Jones (2005), Ulman and Withers (1975).

Ulman describes drawing as a “means to discover both the self and the world, and to establish a relation between the two. In the complete creative process, inner and outer realities are fused into a new entity” (Ulman & Dachinger, 1975, p.13). Drawing is used to liberate a person from the traditional rigid frameworks of learning and attempts to create new meanings with one’s world and experiences (Smitskamp, 1989). Art allows the authentic expression of the human soul and is significant in bringing the unconscious which is hidden into the conscious or visible realm (Rubin, 2001).

In the early 1990’s in New Zealand the use of art was developed into a new modality called “Interactive Drawing Therapy”. Interactive drawing therapy (IDT) works by systematically alternating between the left brain and right brain functions, between the persons cognitive schema, beliefs and attitudes and their latent capacity to put things into a different perspective with insight and conviction (Withers, 2005). It has been found that IDT spans ages, culture, language and people differences. IDT places meaning making in the hands of the participants and as such can be integrated with the principles of both photo elicitation and grounded theory. Placing art and its creative expression in the hands of participants allows the “signature of the soul and that what we create are” (Rubin, 2001, p. 344).

Conclusion

This chapter has explained the use of interpretative analysis in this research and the premises a researcher must adhere to in using this form of analysis. This chapter has sought to explain the power of images used in photo elicitation interviewing and interactive drawing as a way of self-discovery. These methods contributed to the grounded theory process used in this research. In using grounded theory I have sought to draw upon the pioneering work of Strauss and Glaser, and integrate this with the constructivist approach of Charmaz.

Chapter Four

METHOD

Introduction

In this chapter the goal is to describe the design of the research undertaken. Initially the chapter covers the focus of the research, and then gives an introduction to the participants, data gathering tools and processes that were used to undertake this research and the methods of analysis that were used.

Research Focus

The focus of this study was to explore and explain if any link could be made between relationships and learning. I am the director of a Private Training Establishment and direct a distance learning programme for adult students. I have a commitment to see positive learning experiences for adults and have constantly pondered on the dynamics, gaps, minimised or overlooked dimensions in the learning experience that were significant for learners. It is an area of passion and interest for me as an adult educator that arose from my reading of bell hooks and my growing philosophy of teaching and learning.

However just as grounded theory demands, I had no formal hypothesis. I did not begin with preconceived measurements of outcomes. In grounded theory the researcher cannot pre-empt the outcome, or begin the research with a fixed premise (Glaser, 2003). I did bring my worldview, values and beliefs along with my pre-constructed knowledge largely shaped by bell hooks. I began with broad brush strokes on a pad that required detail, colour and shape.

The questions of interest that permeated my thinking were:

1. What relationship/s do learners have with each other in the process of learning?
2. What effect do/does relationship/s have on the learners in learning?
3. If there is relationship/s, then how do these affect my philosophy of learning and teaching?

Participants

The participants in this study were women who lived in the Waikato region, between the ages of 30 and 50 years of age. This age group was based upon my professional experience where this

group formed the largest group of learners enrolled in courses in the Private Training Establishment in which I am employed. Each person has experienced and participated in informal learning and formal learning post secondary school.

The proposed sample was 6 female participants. The rationale for adopting a research group of one gender is that different genders bring different needs to a learning environment and for the purpose of this research it was important to narrow the differences. There would be room in further research to include a study of both genders.

The profile of each participant follows:

Gina: works in the education industry as a student support officer. She is aged between 30 and 40 years of age, is married and has no dependent children. Gina has undertaken both formal learning at University and informal learning during her life. Gina is currently studying part time by means of a distance learning course which has regular tutorials. As part of her current employment she also attends a number of training seminars.

Coral: works in the recreation and sports industry as a manager. Coral is aged between 40 and 50 years of age, is divorced and has three dependent children. Coral has undertaken formal learning through training seminars that are industry specific. Coral has recently begun a part time distance learning course which has regular tutorials with peers.

Justine: works in early childhood as a supervisor. She is aged between 30 and 40 years of age, is single and has no dependent children. Justine has undertaken both formal learning at University and also has attended seminars which have been industry specific and of personal interest.

Angela: is a primary school teacher. She is aged between 35 and 45 years of age, is married and has two small children. Angela is currently completing formal learning at University. She also attends training events which are of personal interest to her personally and professionally.

I am employed by a private training establishment and direct training programmes. I am aged between 40 and 50 years of age, married and have two adult children. I am currently completing University study at Masters level by extramural studies. I have also attended seminars that have

been of personal and professional value to me. As a feminist researcher it was important for me to join in the discoveries and connect with the women as a participant.

Ethical Considerations

Participant Safety

I was aware that as part of the research participants would express their personal experiences of relationship and learning. These experiences were to be portrayed in my research and therefore I was proactive to avoid the risk of exposure and embarrassment, to ensure they could stand tall at the completion of this work (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). I also ensured that at times I had to function at a distance so as not to merge my interpretation of their photos with their personal stories and therefore to compromise the validity of the emerging grounded theory.

It is important in undertaking research with people that I followed the Code set out by the Health and Disability Commissioner (Commissioner, 1994) in order that each person had

- The right to be treated with respect
- The right to freedom from discrimination
- The right to dignity and independence
- The right to effective communication
- The right to be fully informed
- The right to make an informed choice and give informed consent
- The right to support

To maintain a person's dignity is pivotal in this research (O'Brien, 2001).

All participants were provided with an initial information sheet (Appendix A) which outlined the details of the study and what would be required of them, and it was clearly explained that no cost would be incurred by them, other than a commitment of time. Participants were requested to sign the Informed Consent Form (Appendix B) and they all did so willingly. All participants were shown the letter dated 1st August 2005 from Massey University Human Ethics Committee approving the research as low risk. (Appendix C)

Informed Consent

Each participant was asked to sign an informed consent form which outlined how the information would be used by the researcher and the obligations and responsibilities I had to undertake to respect their privacy. This was not a silent and informal contract between us, but rather a formal document. I ensured that the participants knew and understood the relevant information about the study that they were to be part of (Wilkinson, 2001). If a person wished to not be part of the research having heard about its content then this was entirely their right. One participant exercised her right to withdraw before the fourth interview stage.

The permission for the researcher to use personal images in this thesis was given by each participant. Each participant as they gathered images also asked the people being photographed if they were happy for their photo to be taken or used. A letter was obtained from each participant agreeing that the copyright of these photos now belonged to the researcher for the purposes of the thesis.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All participants were interviewed in a space of their choosing which reflected their comfort and freedom of expression for them. The venue needed to provide the women with confidentiality. In the writing of the research each participant was given the choice to use their given name or a pseudonym. Some women chose to use their given names; others chose a pseudonym to protect their privacy. All women gave permission for their photos to be included in the reporting process.

I have a legal obligation as outlined in the Privacy Act (Government, 1993) to “manage” the privacy of the participants. I must adhere to the requirements of the Act regarding the collection, holding, use and disclosure of personal information covered by the privacy principles. Following the conclusion of the research all notes, drawings and photos will be stored in a locked place.

Potential harm to participants

Participants were assured and reassured of the unique contribution they were making to this project and were regularly reminded that there was no intention to evaluate their relationships, or learning experiences with others. Participants were treated with dignity and respect at all times throughout the process of data collection and of reporting.

Participant's right to decline

Participants were given the right to decline participation in this study and were given the opportunity to delete or reject any of the data they provided either through image or voice. This allowed participants the right to reinforce the data that was emerging or to reject it, as they deemed necessary to keep their integrity. In the process of photo elicitation all participants were invited to reduce their images from ten photos to five. This included the opportunity to discard any photos they did not want recorded in the research.

Research Design

The research was completed over five phases. The process is outlined visually in the table below:

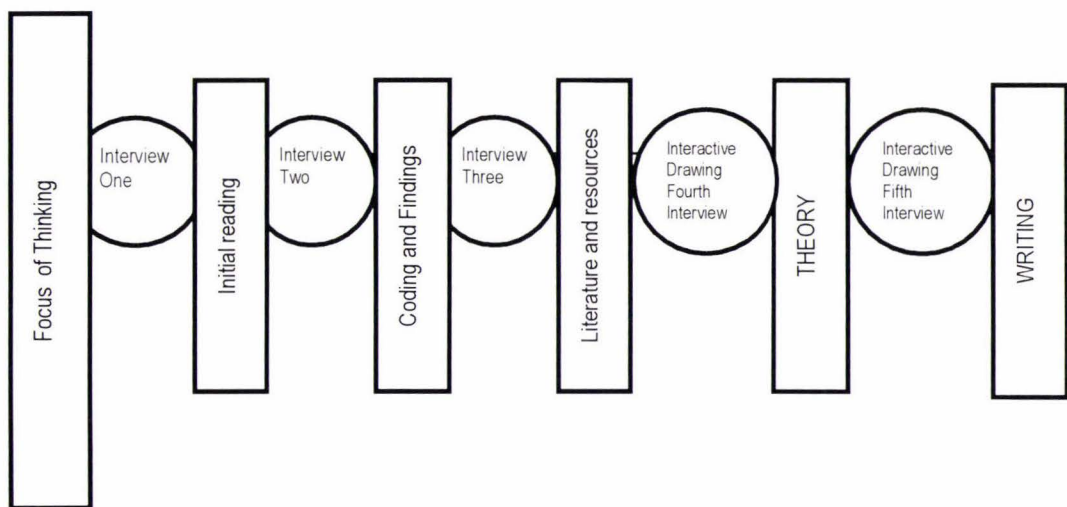


Figure 3: Research Design

Data Gathering Tools

Photographs and Interviews

An initial discussion was held with each participant during which we talked briefly about the process of participation in this study, not the content or outcome. Each participant was given a digital camera with a built in flash and pre-loaded memory card to enable them to “take pictures that will illustrate their understanding of relationship” (Clark-Ibanez, 2004, p.1511). Participants brought these to the interview for the photo elicitation (Harper, 2002).

Participants came with between 5 and 10 photos/images that they had chosen which for them represented in some way relationship. No fuller meaning or brief was given in order that the data collected would be pure as possible (Glaser, 1992). When the participants attended the interview they spoke from their photos and their own expression of relationship naturally emerged. The use

of photographs within the interview process created a snow ball effect, triggering memories and meanings either forgotten or seeing things they had always seen in a new way (Banks, 2001).

During the initial interview I asked the participants to reduce their images to the five most important images for them. This provided an opportunity for the participants to confirm or reject the meanings of the data they themselves presented and to narrow their selection.

At the conclusion of the first interview each participant was invited to go away and follow the same process as for the first interview. They captured five to ten images that represented in some way learning for them personally. No greater meaning or brief was given so that the photos that they would take would represent their personal experience and reality, not mine as the researcher. When the participants returned they gave voice to their photos in relation to their learning experiences (Wang & Burris, 1994).

During the second interview I asked the participants to reduce their images to the five most significant images for them. This provided an opportunity for the participants to self select the images that were of greatest significance to them. It was important for me to allow the participants to have the power to select from their own work. This process allowed the process of grounded theory to be strengthened (Glaser, 1998).

As part of the third interview participants were invited to see if they could make any connections between the meanings of the first set of photos (relationship) with the second set of photos (learning). At no time did the researcher intervene or assist the connection making process, so as not to pre-empt their data (Glaser, 1998). To complete this stage of the interview process and data collection the researcher discussed with the participant their discoveries and clarified any questions that needed clarifying.

During and throughout the interview process resources and the pool of literature was growing and being gathered. Immediately following each interview the coding process was completed.

However as I continued with the research process I found that nothing further was being gained or added to the research and saturation had been reached. Glaser (1992, 2001) describes the place of saturation as the point where continuing to interview adds no further value to what is already discovered about a particular topic and it is therefore not a requirement to keep collecting

more repetitive data. When I reached saturation at five participants, I concluded the first second and third stage of the interview process.

Prior to beginning the fourth stage, one participant withdrew from the process. This participant struggled with the discovery she made when exploring the theme of relationship and the reflection process became too painful.

At the conclusion of the coding process and as the theory was emerging participants were asked to participate through interactive drawing, representing each of the categories that had emerged. This took place in a fourth interview. Participants were also asked to represent through interactive drawing the categories of the emerging theory. This allowed the process of verification of the emergent grounded theory to occur.

Participants were invited to return for a fifth interview to represent the combined components of the emergent theory through the process of interactive drawing. This further dovetailed with the literature.

Data Gathering Process

Interview Time Frame

Interviews were conducted over a six month period in 2005-2006 and each interview was no longer than 40-50 minutes in length. The researcher took full notes based upon their training and professional experience. The note taking occurred during each interview in order to record what was happening and how the participants experienced the topic at hand.

The information sheet given to participants stated that the photo elicitation interviewing process would be audio taped. A decision was made not to tape the interviews because according to Glaser (1998) this denies the development, skill and creativity required to undertake grounded theory. Glaser (1998) claims that the biggest invasion into grounded theory is the taping of interviews. He states that,

The confusion is between traditional uses of the interview as complete evidence for substantiating or verifying a finding compared to grounded theory's use of interviews for conceptualisation or the generation of concepts and hypothesis. (Glaser, 1998, p. 107)

Taping removes the researcher from the immediacy of the data and almost inevitably delays the initial coding of the interview (Glaser, 1998). Grounded theory requires the taking of comprehensive field notes which includes both spoken words and behavioural observations in a meaningful mix (Glaser, 1998).

Through observation, conversation and interview around the medium of photos key issues were able to be noted (Dick, 2002). The interview process when using grounded theory requires that the researcher works with constant comparison. Initially the researcher compares interview with interview. When the theory begins to emerge this is then compared with the data that emerges from subsequent interviews.

Participant Recruitment

Each participant was known to me as they had been participants at some training events led by the Private Training Establishment that I am employed by. In the regular e-letter sent to clients, students and past participants mention was made of my ongoing study and research. The participants who became involved in this research project responded to the e-letter asking if they could be involved in the research process. At this point, they had no prior knowledge of the research that I was undertaking. The total pool of participants was 5 women, including myself.

The Method of Data Analysis

Grounded theory can be summarised in the following Figure 4:

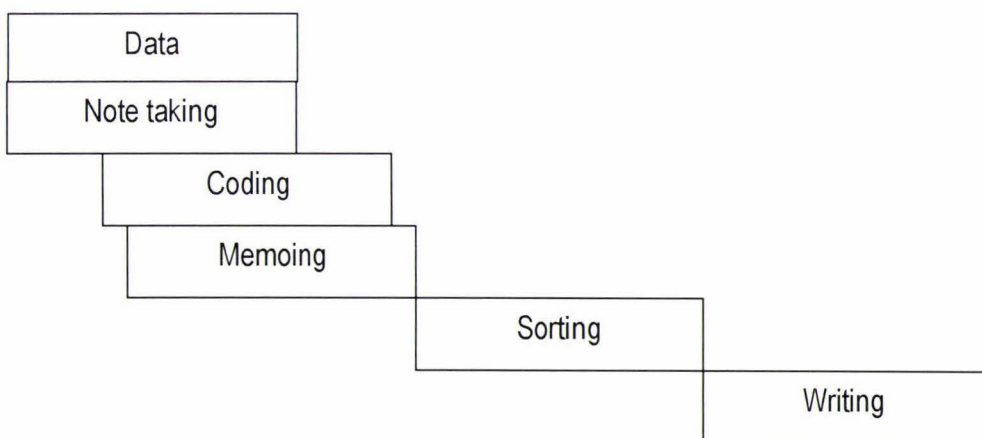


Figure 4: (Dick, 2002)

Data collection and observations in the interview process occurred initially. During the process of coding some theoretical principles were revealed. These were in relation to links between

categories, or about a core category which was central to the research. As the categories and properties of each category emerged, they and their connections to the core category provided the emerging theory. The reflections written in this stage by the researcher are named as memoing (Dick, 2002).

When the research became saturated, this was an indicator to begin the sorting process. The sorting process ensured that the theory was clear and ordered. The literature was accessed during the research process as it became relevant. Having made the connections the process of writing began (Glaser, 2001).

Coding

The process of coding was foundational to the analysis of the data gained from the interviews. Coding is defined by Glaser as “conceptualising data by constant comparison of incident with incident, and incident with concept to emerge more categories and their properties” (Glaser, 1992, p. 38).

The process of coding was a critical building block in the route towards an emerging theory. So the initial step was that of open coding which was relevant to the preliminary sighting of “categories and their properties”. Open coding began with a blank page and examined the field notes from the interview. This structure of coding helped the researcher to remain synchronised with the participant’s views of their truth and experiences. This helped limit assumptions about the researcher’s hypothesis of the participants personal worlds (Charmaz, 2000). As this process continued categories emerged.

Categories are themes and subjects that identified patterns of thinking which came from the participants. It then became clear to the researcher that these categories had properties which data correlates with, to bring greater meaning to the category. During the comparison stage categories emerged with a higher frequency and were found to be connected with many other categories. It was this category that became the core category, from which emerged new theory (Glaser, 1992). This process required patience so that the theory emerged rather than it being forced by the researcher, in which data was made to fit my theory, as can happen.

Coding and Constant Comparison within this study

The design of this research enabled the researcher to acknowledge the observations and experiences of the participants as they interacted with the topic being researched. Listening to the participant's narratives I attempted to move from simply reporting the facts of the images, but instead encouraged the participant's to share their experiences. "This means taking the participant into a story and imparting its mood through linguistic style and narrative exposition. This strategy removes the writing from typical scientific format without transforming the final product into fiction, drama or poetry" (Charmaz, 1995, p.47).

At the conclusion of each interview the notes were scanned for possible codes and categories that were emerging. It wasn't until I had completed four interviews in the first phase that I started to see emerging possible categories. An example of the first phase of interviews coding analysis is shown below:

<i>Coding on first analysis</i>	<i>Properties of Categories</i>
Being who you are is important	Unique Complimentary Team Individual in relationship Option to be unique
Connection	Access to each other Some things in common Two way synergy
Fragile	Don't abuse it Precious Painful Not easy
Passionate	Creative Determined Alive

Table 2: Justine - Data collected during interview one using the first set of photos

Various properties emerged first, although some overarching themes did reveal themselves in the initial phase which later became core categories i.e. connection. The constant review and comparison of the data led to the emergence of categories later in the study.

The subsequent interviews were coded in the same way with the analysis of the first interview in my memory. The process of constant comparison continued throughout the research process between presentation of photos, interviews, the note taking process and literature.

Each interview produced coding charts, one for each participant. As the comparison process had begun as interviews were being held, the emerging core categories became strengthened. Below is a comparison of how different participants viewed learning which was drawn from the second interview phase.

Gina	Angela
Learning of new skills New opportunities	Discovery of new understanding Unexpected pathways New possibilities
Internal growth, Transformation Constant change	Growing and changing Movement
Form of relaxation	Involves whole being
Helps you through life transitions	Offers hope
Shared experiences Open and honest with others Depths of who you are will be explored	Influencing others Relational
Life giving	Looking, questioning
Reshaping of your thinking processes	Mindsets and perceptions Core values strengthened
Progression of learning	

Table 3: Comparison of Gina's data with Angela's data collected during the second interview

Memoing

Concurrently with the photo elicitation interview process I also began the process of memoing. Memoing was done in a journal, where I placed words that seemed relevant in the centre of a page and mapped out my notes, thinking and connections of relationships that I began to see emerging. When the journal page no longer contained all the memos and notes, they were then transposed onto a number of A3 sheets of paper to bring a greater visual component to my thinking. Words such as "intimacy", "touching", "soul", "common ground" became single words that entered the memoing process. These words and memos were then taken into the sorting

process along with the data and analysis. Memoing is viewed by Babchuck as a “vehicle for creativity central to the development of the emerging theory” (Babchuk, 1996).

Sorting

The data, photos and memos from the interviews and research process were then transposed, sorted and organised. It was a process of bringing threads together, in order to see if they matched, blended or conflicted with the other strands (Dick, 2002). It was like allowing the birthing process to take on its final stages: painful, messy, and fluid and at times I became frustrated waiting for the theory to be born.

As part of the continuation of the coding process it was important to remain open to the emergence of new coding themes (Glaser, 2005). I examined the total and combined data across the 5 participants. At one point I discovered that one of the categories that had emerged was in fact a category of another much stronger category e.g. synergy was a stronger category than interactive.

Reading of the interview notes continued with viewing of the photos. The analysis showed that six categories were becoming apparent. These categories were named as follows:

- Authenticity
- Synergy
- Connectedness
- Reflection
- Empowerment
- Discovery

The final birthing process occurred as I reviewed the analysis and noted the depth and passion that was communicated as participants expressed meaning of the photos that they had captured; the strength of voice when they spoke of a category with conviction led me to see the emergence of a theory. This is consistent with Charmaz’s flexible approach to coding (Charmaz, 2005).

The following table summarises the categories discussed by the participants in the joining of their photos which represented relationship and learning.

Authenticity	A,J,G,M
Synergy	A,J,G,C
Connectedness	A,J,G,M
Reflection	A,G,M,J,C
Empowerment	G,M,A,C
Discovery	A,M,G

Table 4: CODING CHART OF PHOTOS

The participants photographs engendered understandings that shed light on the meanings and connections unseen by the researcher but visible to the interviewee (Schwartz, 1992). The photographs became like an independent third party that facilitated a deep union and transparency between the researcher and the participant (Collier & Collier, 1986).

With the emergence of the core categories (synergy, reflection, connectedness, empowerment authenticity, and discovery), I invited each participant in the fourth interview to further verify my findings through the process of Interactive Drawing (Withers, 2005). Each participant was asked to represent each category on a separate piece of paper. When they had concluded their representations through drawing they discussed the meaning of their work based upon experiences and gave meaning to the symbols they had drawn (Schram, 2003). Each person gave expression of what was drawn and this further articulated the category. This fourth stage using interactive drawing (Withers, 2005) triangulated the emerging grounded theory.

As the emergent theory was sharpened and the categories became vital for the participants, I sat with the categories looking to see if there was any relationship or connection between them. I wondered if there was something I was not yet seeing. Over a period of two weeks I allowed myself the privilege of pondering upon the participants work and it was in the darkness one morning at 2 a.m. that a light was turned on. I discovered that the core categories formed an acronym (S.A.C.R.E.D) and this acronym embodied the participant's photos, expressions and experiences as noted in their interviews. This is fully discussed in chapter eight.

In order to verify the strength of this acronym, participants were invited to return to discuss and use the process of interactive drawing to validate this emergent acronym. This process confirmed the validity of this acronym in this research for the participants. The categories contained a dynamic of a union that existed to facilitate learning for the participants. This union was mystical; it spoke of a communion that was sacred.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Study

There are four main aspects of this research that could be classed as both strengths and weaknesses. These are:

- Participants known by the researcher
- Gender
- Race
- Sample Size

Participants known by the researcher

All participants were known by me as the researcher through attending seminars or training led by the Private Training Establishment that I am employed by. This could be considered a strength and/or weakness of the study. The participants freely shared and made themselves vulnerable in the process of interviewing because of the existing relationship which could be considered a research strength and a weakness in that they could have been tempted to give the answers the researcher wanted. However the open process of photo elicitation helped to minimise this.

Gender

All participants were women. The strength of this is that it reinforces the feminist research methodology. The potential weakness is that it does not allow cross comparison with male participants. It could be argued that women naturally seek out relationship and connection in learning contexts. Therefore to sample the data from an all women pool could mean that the data is imbalanced.

Race

This study was based on pakeha women. Further study could explore other groups. bell hooks work which was the springboard for this research challenges primarily black women in her writing to discover communion, greater authenticity and empowerment. It could be a strength of this research that her work was able to be integrated in a white mono-cultural sample, however this could also be a weakness because I have not addressed any cultural or cross-cultural dynamics in this work.

Sampling Size

The sampling is small and was limited to five participants as no new properties or categories were emerging from the data collection process. This could be a strength that it allowed in-depth

interviewing, a total of five with participants, allowing extensive cross-validation. It could be a weakness in that the results could not easily be generalised.

Conclusion

The research design has been described, the participants have been introduced and consideration has been given to the ethical considerations for the participants. The process of data collection and methods of analysis is outlined prior to the following chapter that discusses the findings. This chapter also summarises the strengths and weaknesses of this research.

Chapter Five

FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the research. These findings demonstrate the process the participant's undertook, and explores the link between relationship and learning that brought the emergence of categories. The acronym S.A.C.R.E.D. emerged from the coding process from the first and second interview, as discussed in the previous chapter. This acronym was then strengthened in the third interview process where participants linked their photos of relationship with their photos of learning.

The object of this chapter is to provide data to illustrate the emergence of the categories and properties to form the acronym S.A.C.R.E.D. This is demonstrated with the inclusion of the linked photos from interview three and gives evidence which the participants shared in relation to their own photos.

This chapter is divided into six main parts:

1. Synergy
2. Authenticity
3. Connectedness
4. Reflection
5. Empowering
6. Discovery

Each category contained a number of properties which formed the basis of a category. Each of the six parts of this chapter has the same format. There is a table that provides an overview of the category from the perspective of relationship and then a table providing a perspective of learning. This is followed by quotations from the participants of their images for this particular category.

Synergy

Interview One

Participants arrived at the first interview with photos they had taken that represented relationship for them personally. As they spoke they used words to describe their photos as in Table 5 below. These descriptive words indicated the emergence of the category of Synergy.

RELATIONSHIP
Exponential
Togetherness, Mutuality
Team
Individual in Relationship Complimentary
Interaction

Table 5: Descriptive words for Synergy in Relationship

The participants' emphasis was on the dynamic that occurs when there is a "coming together" in relationship that means more than the sum of the individuals. This synergy was reflected in the comments made by Angela who stated:

When I am in relationship with someone, we have common goals, a sense of team, a sense of "I can't do without you, and you can't do without me and yet together we can achieve far more than on our own". This requires interaction, it requires an acknowledgement of others uniqueness and a moulding of who I am with who they are in order to release exponential energy.

Second Interview

Participants entered the second interview stage having represented through photos the word "learning". As the participants spoke about their photos, they recalled different experiences. A number of descriptive phrases and words became thematic amongst the participants.

LEARNING
Exploration Curiosity New directions and discoveries Possibilities and ideas Interactive Experiential Potential unleashed and realised Unexpected outcomes from being together Draw upon collective resources

Table 6: Descriptive words for the Synergy in Learning

The participants in the second interview stage described the energy that is released when the collective group rather than the individual person is focussed upon. This was indicated by Justine

In a learning environment it is important to me that I can push beyond what I already know that I can build upon this knowledge in relation to others. Learning is layered in that once we start exploring with other people, it can lead to new discoveries, and at times we have no idea where it's going to lead. It gives me the opportunity to ask lots of questions, to interact with others and experience different beliefs. After a learning session like this, you look back and see that there was some dynamic happening that was bigger than any individual present.

Third Interview

In the third interview each participant was asked whether they could see any valid connections between relationships and learning that existed in the photos. This gave the participants the opportunity to choose photos from their relationship selection and join with photos in their learning section. Once they had chosen the photos they were then asked to share the meaning of these links for them personally.

This was a critical stage in the emerging theory process which continued to strengthen the emergence of theory. At no time as the researcher could I make judgement, or alter the meaning or try to interpret the meaning they had made of their photos. This would be to minimise their own discoveries and to underestimate the significance of the connection they were making between relationships and learning.

Angela chose the two photos below to represent relationship and to represent learning.



The photo of the construction site picturing scaffolding spoke to Angela of the supportive nature of relationship amidst the process of transformation for her. Angela shared the following:

Relationship with me is about transformation, growth, becoming stronger in my identity. Relationship with others is about the supportive interaction that pulls together that which is mutual. The scaffolding represents the growth and expansion that can occur when this happens. The result of this relationship is you are more than who you were prior to the relationship.



The branches in this photo represented for Angela the supportive nature of learning. The tree is growing to new heights and in different directions which is the desired outcome of learning for Angela.

Angela stated,

True learning occurs for me in a supportive environment where my potential can be unleashed, where I can interact with others and experiment, I can let my curiosity go wild and make exploration into new territories. I need the collective group (represented by the many branches in the photo) to be supportive in order for me to become more and in fact the end result is that we become more together.

When Justine was interviewed, she very quickly made the connections between relationship and learning and spoke with passion about the meaning of her photos. Justine chose the following photo to represent relationship and the second photo to represent learning.



The photo of the knife and fork represented relationship for Justine. Justine believed that the knife needed the fork and the fork complimented the knife. Each had a unique purpose and function and yet the outcome of using both the knife and fork meant for Justine that a greater outcome could be seen by the use of both, rather than one on its own.

Justine when describing relationship was quite tearful, as she is presently single and longing for relationship with a life long partner. She spoke of relationship as,

I can be on my own as a fork, but quite frankly I cannot cut the thick stuff without a knife. I can be on my own as a knife, but how do I pin down the thick stuff I am trying to cut? If I use one utensil I am much more limited, than if the two work together. The outcome is much greater. Its hard work being on your own, it takes twice as long to achieve anything

and I could find new ways of doing things, on my own I am limited to my own past experiences and understandings of life. Its togetherness that is critical in relationship.

When Justine was asked to link the photo on relationship with a photo on learning she chose to link the above photo with the photo below.



Justine took this photo as it represented for her the building that occurs in learning and the layering of the bricks represented for her the learning and layering that happens in the learning experience. She states

In a learning environment layering occurs. This is the process where someone comes with existing knowledge and the new learning is layered upon this. It allows for trial and error, it allows for expansion, it allows for growth. If you miss a brick, there is a fault in the building. If you miss a learning moment, there is a fault in your overall learning. You cannot do without the other bricks in building, just like you cannot do without the other learners in the learning environment which help to build upon your previous understandings. It's simple you cannot have one without the other, it's a matter of coming together and drawing upon the resources of others to give strength to the learning. The meaning is in the way the sum of the individual bricks combines to become something greater, in this case a wall.

When Gina was asked to look at her photos in the third interview and see whether she could make any connections between relationships and learning from her photos she chose the two photos. The first photo is shown below.



Gina chose the photo of her holding hands with someone, to represent the sense of commitment, the blood pulsing together through the hands, and the sense of togetherness. This was the personal meaning she gave to her photos to demonstrate relationship for her.

She shared in the interview

When I hold hands with people I am in relationship with, it sends a message that we are together, that unashamedly we are close and it is a two way relationship. I am still an individual in the relationship, but in order to hold hands there needs to be a right hand and a left hand which for me symbolises the complimentary nature of relationship, and yet is also significant because the force, movement and power behind an individual hand is far less than the combined power of two hands moving together. This is relationship for me.

Gina shared this with a sense of pride in the interview. Other significant people did not want her to make a life-long commitment to her present partner, and yet she is unashamedly close to her partner and talked at length about the combined force of their relationship in her learning and their goals together.

When Gina was asked to link this photo with a photo from her learning pile of photos she chose the photo of Waikato University to represent learning for her.



This photo for Gina represented the place that gave her the confidence to learn beyond her capacity. The experience for her unleashed her personal potential and her professional potential. She spoke about this in the interview

Going to University was life changing for me. I embarked on a new journey despite my families wishes for me to have a “normal job”. At University as I explored the major of my degree, I also explored myself and this brought unexpected outcomes from being in this environment with other learners.

The discoveries I made about myself when I was dialoguing with others meant that I could explore ideas, experience more fully the learning I was doing and enabled me to be more interactive. I needed others though to help give me permission to make these new discoveries. I had so much energy that only came from the sharing of our resources together as we learnt.

Before the participants returned for the third interview, I also had taken photos of images that for me represented relationship and learning. It was critical however that I did this prior to me interviewing the other participants in order that the data I collected was not in any way embellished with their data.

When representing the word relationship through photo I chose the photo below of three women.



(Hallmark, 2001)

I chose this image as it represented the closeness, the vulnerability and uniqueness of each person within relationship. The central person sharing their hair with each person on either side spoke to me of something very personal being shared intimately with the women on either side. The togetherness round the coffee table spoke to me of how relationship should be, and the closeness of the bodies represented for me the depth of interaction that is required for relationship to have exponential qualities.

As I allowed myself to recall relationships and give voice through note taking as to the meaning of those relationships I wrote the following:

Relationships can grow to a place where people can share vulnerably together. I remember a significant relationship where we always met around the dining room table, there was a sense of being individuals and yet close in relationship. We complimented each other, I was future thinking and she was very much in the here and now. When we met to dream together it was the combination of the two, and it was like our hearts were beating at the same time. We began as individuals and ended our meetings as inspired, motivated and together.

When I looked for an image I could represent through photo of learning I chose a picture of a training event that I was leading. This was an experiential exercise where participants had to construct something together. I linked the photo of the three women in relationship with the photo below.



This photo was taken when participants at this training were invited to work together to build something. They had not met prior to this event and this was their first exercise in working together. They were working with materials that none of them had previously experienced. It was a totally new learning situation for them all. I wrote about this as follows:

Each person was out of their comfort zone working with people and materials that were new to them. When individuals accessed others knowledge, resources and intuition something meaningful was constructed. It was a difficult process but the outcome was that a construction was made that not only served the purpose of the exercise but also had unexpected outcomes of relationship and working together. People made discoveries about the exercise, but more importantly they made discoveries about themselves and each individual present.

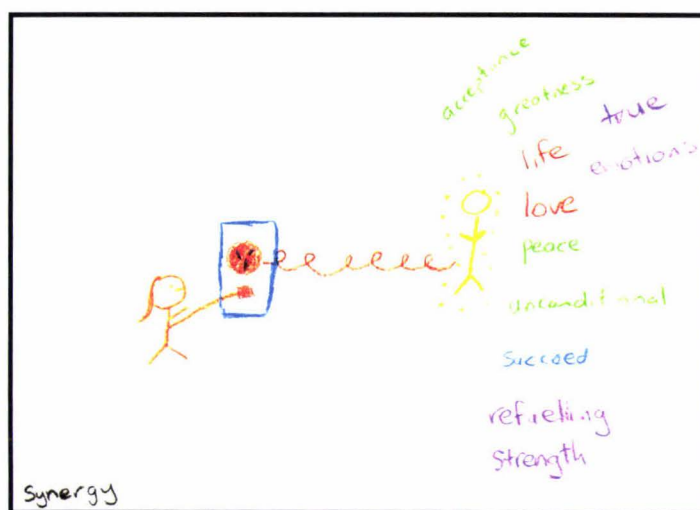
The connection made between the photos of relationship and learning continually confirmed the properties of synergy of an emergent category in this research. Having reached this point the participants were invited to return to cross-validate this category through interactive drawing. This occurred in interview four.

Fourth Interview

The fourth interview was conducted in order to cross validate the core category that had emerged in the first three interviews. This time participants were told of the six categories that had emerged in the process of the interviews and coding process. Participants were excited about the emergence of the categories. Together they recognised that these categories were critical but not exhaustive for good learning to occur.

Participants were asked to represent each category through Interactive Drawing. This meant that participants were given a piece of A3 paper, with a jar of crayons and were asked to represent in any way they like, the key category. This was done in silence with no prompting from the researcher. This is important in the Interactive Drawing process so that the data is not skewed in any way. Participants often spent a moment in silence, looking out the window and then often they would begin saying “I’ve got it, I know how I can represent this....” They then proceeded in silence until they had completed and said “that’s it!”

Justine drew this picture to demonstrate what synergy means for her personally.



Justine spoke about the sense of refuelling, greatness and strength that synergy gave her in learning. Justine stated that:

Synergy comes from a place of life and unconditional acceptance amidst people who want to make discoveries. When we are plugged into the resources of others, something dynamic happens that produces success. Synergy is released in an atmosphere of acceptance, unconditional love and is life giving. When this occurs I can be true to my emotions, I can feel a sense of greatness and strength.

The properties of refuelling, strength and the sharing of insight were also spoken about by three other participants. Joining with others allowed participants to move out of isolation and powerlessness and allow energy to flow.

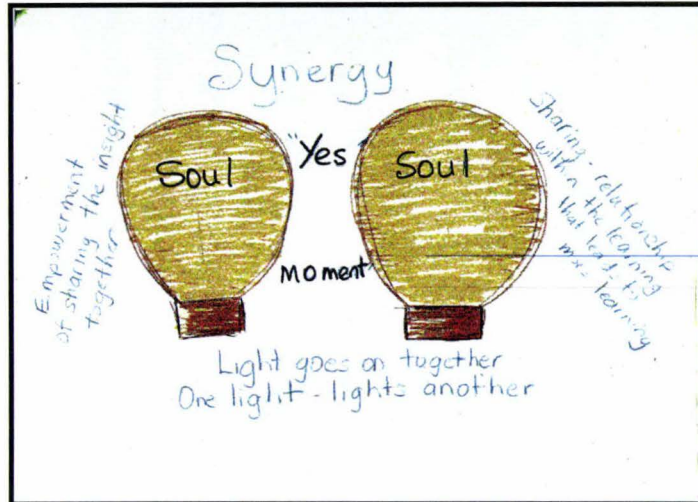


In the fourth interview Gina represented synergy as a thick cloud with two different lightening bolts emerging from the clouds. When Gina had completed the drawing she said,

Synergy comes from a combining of different perspectives, theories, attitudes, beliefs and experiences which when they are shared bring new dimensions of spark. I have represented this in the drawing by the lightening from the clouds. Often in learning there appears to be a chaos of learning which clashes with my pre-learned experiences. It is like a cloud that hangs in your brain and then all of a sudden it all comes together as we pull together and something appears like a bolt of lightening. This for me is synergy.

The sense of pulling together, and the working out of new thinking and beliefs in amidst relationship was a constant theme in the category of synergy by all participants.

When Angela was asked to represent the word synergy she took some time choosing the colours and the giving shape to her drawing. When asked about this later she spoke of this category being critical for her in learning and if it was not present then learning was marginal in her experience. Angela drew the picture below to represent synergy for her personally.



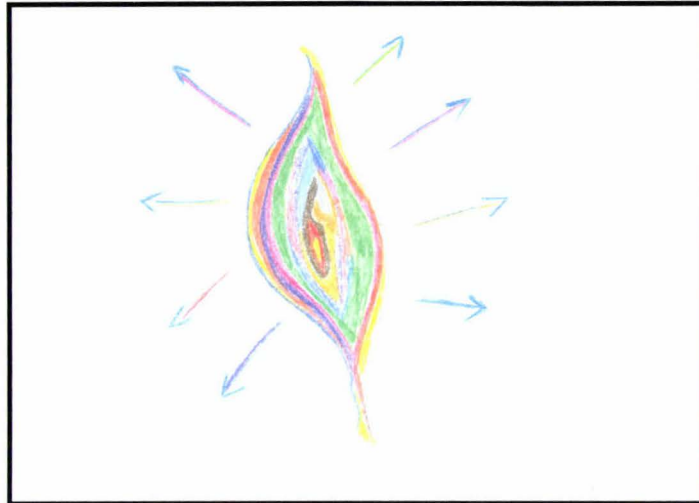
Angela began by representing two light bulbs. She then wrote soul on each light bulb. Angela then spoke saying,

Synergy for me is about the connection of two souls. In learning this is when the light goes on, it's the yes moment, its when one light, lights another. When we share the learning we are making together, this brings empowerment. For me it's not about head connection it's about soul connection. This deep sense of connection of the soul releases synergy.

It was agreed by all the participants in the fourth interview that if people work together co-operatively, the realisation is made that those individual efforts can often be improved through the combined effort of what each has to contribute to the learning context. This was represented in their drawings.

Prior to the participants coming to the fourth interview I also took an A3 piece of paper and represented the word synergy through the use of crayons. I did this prior to the other participants in order to keep my thinking as pure as was possible around this category.

I represented synergy through the vibrant use of colour in a flame and also through coloured arrows.



This drawing represents a flame that is burning very brightly, emitting a reasonable amount of heat. The flame is not drawn totally upright, because for me this represents the dynamic nature of synergy and its movement. The arrows represent the multiplication of what exists into something much bigger and brighter than any one individual. As I have looked at this representation I have given voice to synergy through the following journal entry.

Synergy is the moment when combustion, the divine intervention, the connection of heart, soul and mind liberates people into a place of learning beyond themselves. I describe this as "magic moments in learning". As an educator I yearn for these. I recognise that without other individuals synergy will not occur. Synergy brings unexpected outcomes and possibilities.

Synergy was recorded through the photos and drawings as critical for each participant in the process of learning. Some participants saw this of greater importance than others, but all saw this category as valid and of high priority. All participants believed that synergy included mutuality, collaboration and discovery along with exploration and curiosity.

Synergy is the enhanced result of two or more people, groups or organisations working together. In other words one and one equals three. It comes from the Greek work "synergia" which means joint work and co-operation in action (synergy 2005).

Conclusion

This section has identified the importance of creating synergy in learning. The dimension of relationship required for synergy to be released included soul connection, mutuality, collaboration

and the drawing upon the resources of others. The properties of synergy were cross validated through the photo linkage process in the interviews and then again through the use of interactive drawing. All of these properties contributed to the exponential learning experience that comprises synergy.

AUTHENTICITY

Interview One

During the first interview participants shared the photos they had taken that represented relationships. As they spoke they used words to describe their photos which are shown in the table below. These descriptive words indicated the category of authenticity.

Relationship
Who I am , Identity
What's Important to me, Uniqueness
Option to be different
Genuine
Bone fide
Vulnerable
Painful

Table 7: Descriptive Words for Authenticity in Relationship

All participants indicated the need for relationships to be authentic. This category soon emerged to be pivotal for the participants, and they spoke with considerable passion amidst pain of previous relationships that had not been genuine and where they felt their identity had been compromised. They spoke at length about the need for self awareness and the need to be aware of others. Participants spoke of the qualities of relationships that determined whether relationships were short or long term.

When I form new relationships I deliberately reveal something of myself that is unique to me but I am also not too vulnerable. This means I can test the water to see if I am really accepted for who I am. If they don't accept me I withdraw. If I am accepted then I can then share something of myself. Its like a dance, everyone does it. I will only make relationship with people now who I assess as bone fide, genuine, and who allow me to be me. All others I quickly pass by. (Justine)

Second Interview

As the second interview progressed, participants shared their representation of the word "learning" through the photo images they had taken. Each person took the opportunity to speak about the different learning experiences they had encountered which had meaning for them. As

the participants spoke, they used words to describe and explain their photos. These phrases made up the category for the participants of authenticity.

Learning
Holistic Core Values remain amidst others Who I am Uniqueness Embracing my capacity Me amidst We Inner growth

Table 8: Descriptive Words for Authenticity in Learning

Many of the participants were quick to reflect upon their past experiences where they thought the learning they had participated in was not genuine, and in fact spoke of the hypocritical nature of many in their learning experiences. Two of the participants spoke of the frustration of being in a group where people were conveying a message and yet obviously living another. They also spoke of the times in their lives when they had avoided being authentic because the risk was too high and would they be rejected not only by their peers but also the teachers.

I remember a time when everything inside me was screaming in a lecture. I was being asked to grapple with a provocative issue and yet when I shared my initial thoughts was shot down by my lecturer and my peers. I couldn't risk from that moment on being who I was. I felt powerless because I ran the risk of getting lower grades because of my lecturer's response to me, and I felt powerless within myself to be genuine and to keep my core values amidst others in the learning group. I believe effective learning only occurs when we can be true to ourselves, embrace our own values and capacity and this then has the potential to lead to inner growth.

All participants shared positive and negative learning experiences where they felt their own personal authenticity was at stake, or the authenticity of others was being masked in order to provide protection and safety. The positive experiences were spoken about with strength, excitement and unswerving belief that authenticity was a core category in their learning.

Third Interview

Each participant was given the opportunity to choose from their selection of “relationship” photos and to see if they could discover any valid link with their photos representing “learning”. This empowered the participants to make their own linkages and discoveries without interruption or coercion from myself as the researcher. Sharing the linkages of the photos provided the participants the opportunity to give their own personal meaning to their thoughts. This stage continued to strengthen the emergence of the theory.

The participant's indicated in the interview process their belief that learning and relationships were holistic activities involving whole learners with other whole learners. This involves their participant's whole life experiences and took into account all core values held by them as individuals. It was emphasised by participants that while learning was holistic they each contained their own uniqueness, their own capacity and their own stage of inner growth. It is critical that we develop and maintain our authenticity through the process of taking action and then reflecting on what we have done and what others tell us about what we have done (Brigham, 1986).

Angela chose the photo of the tree trunk which for her represented characteristics of relationship that was important to her.



This photo spoke to Angela because it showed the roots going deep into the ground. For Angela, the roots showed the internal growth and depth of identity that comes when we are self-aware.

When I am intentional about my relationship with myself, I become aware of the internal growth that has occurred in the past and the internal growth that is yet to come. When I am in touch with myself in this way there is growth in my sense of identity. For the tree,

or, if you like, my life to be strong, it requires of me that I genuinely am aware of my life from every angle and embrace who I am and where I have come from.

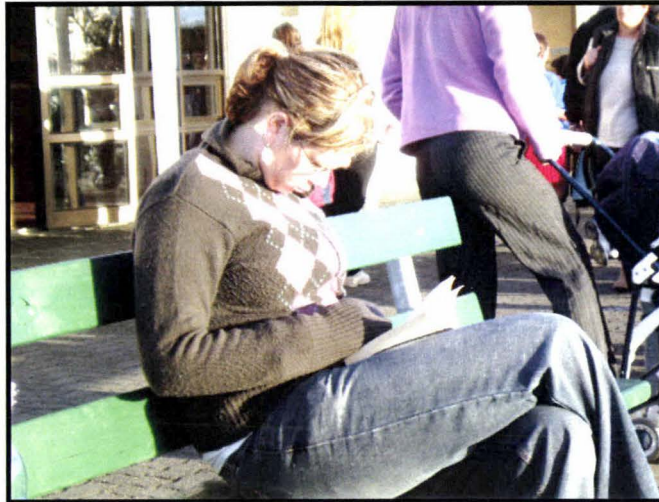
When Angela chose a “learning” photo to link with the “relationship” photo she chose the photo of the person on the beach reaching into the sand and finding something.



This “learning” photo represented a person making their own discoveries and looking deeper into what they are looking for or at, according to Angela:

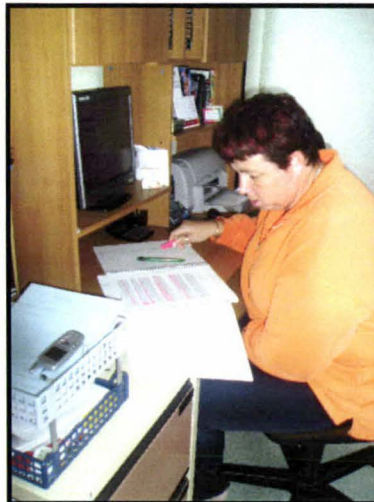
I have chosen to link these photos together, because both are about making personal discoveries, of digging deeper, of searching for truth, looking at things from different perspectives. The key to transforming both ourselves and our relationships is learning what it means to accept and embrace ourselves just as we are. When we do this we become stronger in who we are.

When Coral entered into the third interview stage she selected the photo of the person sitting on the park bench to depict relationship for her.



This photo represented the person having relationship with self. Coral said that “In this picture the person is reading a bible in order to grow their relationship with God”. Coral liked the person sitting by themselves while others were walking past as this was a fair representation for her of her singleness and the way life was for her at that moment. While her voice was strong in giving this message, her body showed some measure of discomfort giving the message to the researcher that this was also a point of conflict for Coral.

As part of the third interview process Coral was asked to connect the selected “relationship” photo with a photo from her pile of “learning photos”. She chose the following photo.



Coral had just begun a distance learning course where in the first module she was completing an audit of her own personal values which looked holistically at her life.

I have made so many personal discoveries about myself and now I have the choice to reveal myself in this learning context and risk the elements of self-disclosure that this

requires. What happens if I make discoveries that I don't like about myself – this will bring immense pain to me.

All participants spoke of “daring to be themselves” and found this quite a frightening phase but if they pushed through this the dimensions of growth were far beyond what they imagined. Two of the participants spoke of the empowering nature of this choice and what this could lead to for them personally and professionally.

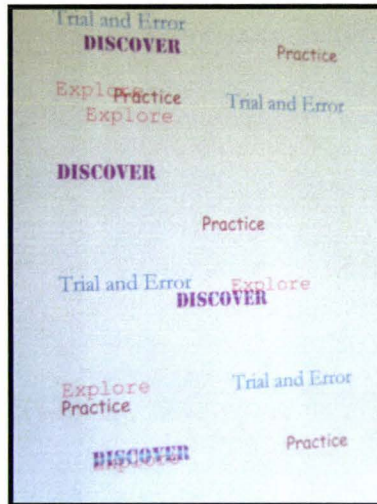
In the third interview phase Justine selected the photo of the three candles to represent relationship for her personally at that particular time.



Justine shared with tears that this photo represented herself supported by two other significant people. These people had journeyed with her throughout a very painful and stressful time and for her spoke of the “fragility and vulnerability” that relationship is characterised by.

For me, one of these candles would give very little light, but with three together there is a much bigger light. I have needed the combination of the three lights in order to give me hope in the darkness of life.

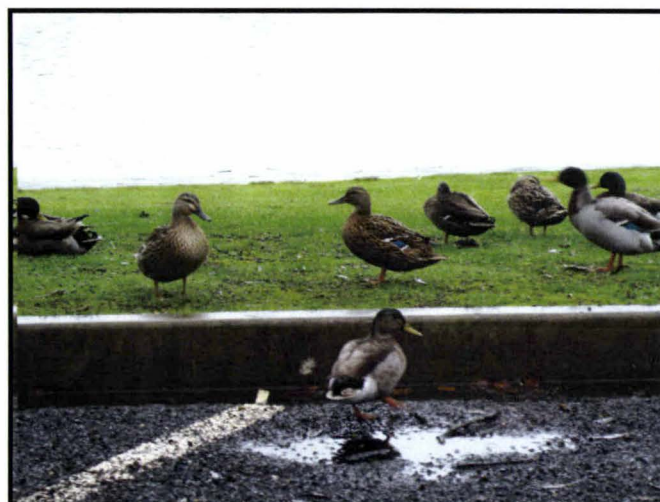
Continuing with the process of the interview, Justine then reached for the photo below to represent learning and to link with the photo of “relationship” from above.



This photo Justine chose as for her it had words on it that spoke of learning for her and that linked with her photo of relationship. The words “discover”, “trial and error”, “explore”, “practice” described her learning experience over the past few months particularly in relationship with the people represented in the first photo. She says the following about the linkage made:

The past few months has been a painful time of daring to discover myself again, I have needed to explore, practice and have a go and get things wrong. It was the response of the people in the “candle photo” that allowed me to accept my capacity, to accept my strengths and limitations and to let me find who I am again. I had a mask taken down and I was in a place I had no option other than to discover me again. It was a dark place and I needed the light of the other people who I could trust.

When Gina began the third interview stage, she was asked to select an image from the selection of photos she had taken which described “relationship”. She reached down with some excitement and with some measure of force placed the photo of the ducks on the table.



Gina shared that this photo was the ultimate photo to describe her relationship with her newly found husband. This was a place that Gina and her husband would go when they were courting.

We would go here and sit for hours, we would sit here for hours and say nothing and yet feel totally connected, totally loved and I knew I could be me amidst the couple relationship that was forming. Even now we still return to this place as it represents total complete acceptance of one another.

When Gina was asked to select a “learning” photo that she wanted to link with the previous photo of “relationship” she chose the photo of the toddler against the table.



Gina chose this photo of the toddler as “he is just learning to walk”. Gina said this child is

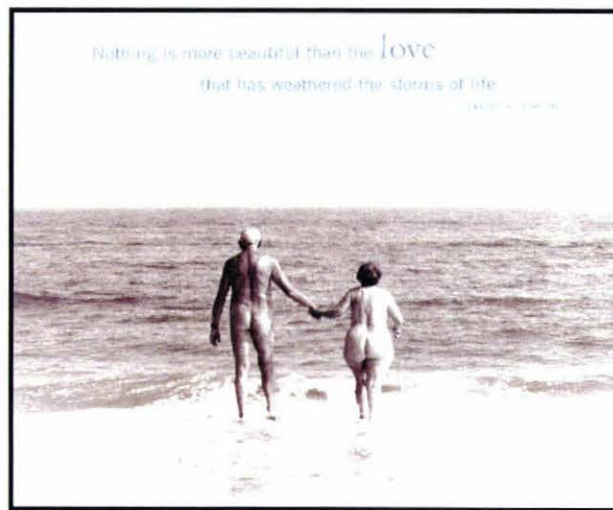
accepted for who he is, if he falls someone picks him up, if he walks a couple of steps people celebrate with him, if he makes a mess on the floor, others help him to clean it up. He is totally accepted in every part of his life as he learns new ways of doing things. He is unique and yet totally loved as he grows into the man he will one day become. This is how it needs to be for me too in learning.

The uniqueness of each person’s journey of relationships and learning came through strongly as I conducted this interview. Each person had their own authentic way of functioning in relationship and spoke of what they required of learning and yet each person spoke of the qualities of authenticity as they shared the meaning of the photos for them personally.

As the researcher, and also as a participant, it was important for me to process my findings in a way that was separate to the other participants. This enabled me to minimise the distortion of data.

Before the other participants were interviewed at this phase I spent time alone looking at the photos of relationship and the photos of learning that I had selected and took notes on the meanings of my photos and the experiences that these photos provoked.

I chose the image of the two people naked on the beach to represent “relationship” for me personally.



(Nagasaki, 1989)

This photo is headed with the words “Nothing is more beautiful than the love that has weathered the storms of life”. Underneath this caption I can see a photo of two bodies which store diverse experiences and memories. I believe that the nakedness in the photos represents for me the vulnerability of who I am when I am in genuine relationship with another person.

When I looked through the pile of photos that were taken to represent the word “learning” I chose a photo that was taken on the day of my graduation.



This photo represented a journey that I had taken in learning and together that day we were celebrating each other's capacity to learn. It was a celebration of who I was in the process of becoming and the uniqueness of my journey. It was often the genuine support and belief of others that pulled me through into a new place of discovery not only of learning content but of myself. I wrote in my notes

The celebration this day of being true to myself, gave me renewed strength to cope with other transitions that were occurring in my life. It released emotional energy as I celebrated my capacity for life and for learning.

The linkages made by the participants between the photos of "relationship" and the photos of "learning" established the category of authenticity as an emergent category. Once this became clear from the data collected in the interviews, coding and memoing process the participants were invited to return to a fourth interview to cross validate this category.

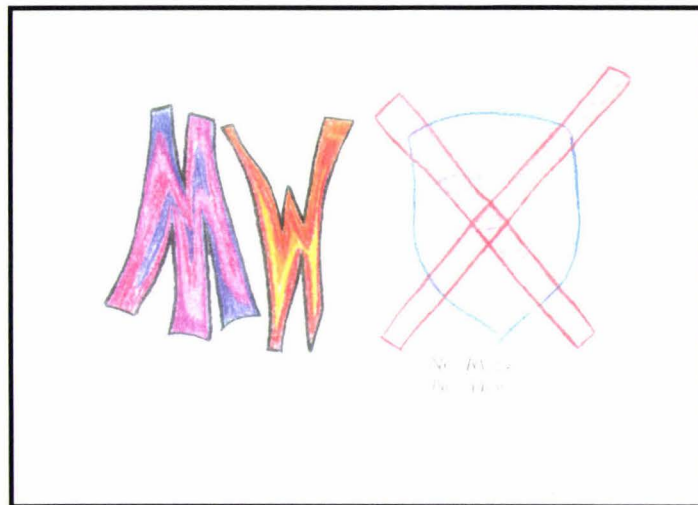
Fourth Interview

Participants were invited to represent the word "authenticity" through interactive drawing. Each person was given a piece of paper and a jar of crayons and then invited to draw something that represented for them "authenticity". In the silence they picked up the crayons and proceeded to make representations of what this meant to them personally.

A similar process followed and participants were asked to share what they had drawn if they felt able and this often gave them a springboard to speak of other experiences they had of "authenticity".

As was consistent with the process, prior to the participants' arrival, I had completed my own drawings for this particular category and the following diagram emerged from the interactive drawing process.

I represented the word authenticity through first placing my initials on the blank page. The different colours in my initials represented the different parts of my life and the letter "W" which represented my surname was a different colour which depicted for me the transition I was in as a result of becoming engaged. The mask on the right was drawn which represented the times when I had erected masks and walls as a means of protection in relationships. The red cross over the mask spoke to me that this was now not an effective option for me in relationships and learning.

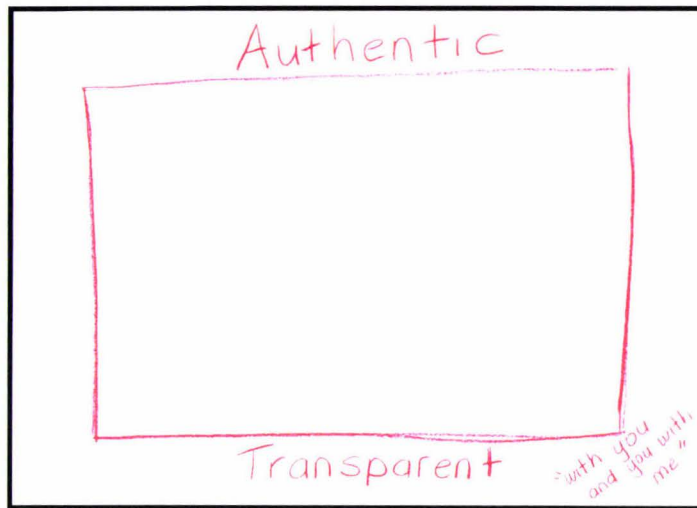


I wrote in my notes the following,

Authenticity brings a greater connection with self and one's context, and it starts with being true to ourselves by removing the mask. If the mask remains this prohibits connection with self and with others. In a learning situation I need to be aware to remove the masks and walls to allow for greater connection with self and others.

The characteristics and phrases used by participants as they spoke of authenticity were transparency, uniqueness, embracing of me, uniqueness, who I am, embracing my capacity "me amidst we". These words were seen in the representations of interactive drawing as each participants spoke about the images they had drawn.

Angela represented authenticity as something that was transparent and yet mutual. She wrote the words "Transparent and Authentic" at the top and bottom of the page and then continued to write the phrase "with you and you with me" on the piece of paper.



In the sharing time, Angela said that for her authenticity in learning meant,

something that is transparent and is mutual in order to encourage learning and relationship. It meant that people were required to be bone fide, and vulnerable with each other, but this was a two way dynamic. I have known when this has not been a two way process and people have used information against you. This is very painful and closes down the process of learning and relationship.

When Gina was asked to represent the word "authenticity" she quickly drew a certificate, with a common seal on the bottom of the certificate.



I drew a certificate which for me represents the genuine nature of authenticity. I believe it is really important for others who are external to bring validation of authenticity. People can see whether we are genuine, or authentic. It's not just a matter of stating that you are authentic, but authenticity is something that is witnessed and tested by others.

Gina shared that she had just begun training in a profession that had limited professional standards or measures at this point as it's a new industry. She knows of people who are eagerly labelling themselves as a particular professional when in fact they have no training or qualifications. This allowed a measure of emotion to be expressed by Gina in the interview as she sees the reflection this has on the industry as being inauthentic, when it is her aim in studying to be authentic in this profession.

Justine when she proceeded to represent the word "authenticity" drew a number of separate drawings. She wrote the word "brokenness", "up front", "beauty", "true" and "faulty fault lines" on the page and then placed a pair of eyes at the centre of the page. She also represented a person further down the page with a red heart.



Justine spoke with a measure of conviction as she gave meaning to her representations. She was clear about the process having walked this process in the previous year and wanted to share with others what she could see to be authenticity in living. Justine said,

The process of authenticity occurs as you walk through brokenness, repair the cracks in your identity or the fault lines and discover a new sense of self. When we are up front with ourselves about what is present in our lives that we want to discard we give

ourselves the opportunity to come to a new place of beauty. It's like the cutting of a diamond, eventually you get a beautiful thing. Being authentic is about revealing yourself to yourself and to others, you cant do it alone.

Authenticity was represented through the photos and the drawings as something that touches the absolute core of who we are. Authenticity was not defined by job or title, function or role. It was the uniqueness that an individual carries deep within themselves. As participants spoke of authenticity and its meaning for them I was made aware of the pearls hidden in their shells, which when revealed to others revealed treasure beyond words.

Conclusion

This section has identified the significance of authenticity in learning and relationships. It was recognised that authenticity is not static but is one of the critical components in the learning process. Authenticity reaches into every part of our lives and therefore is holistic incorporating our life experiences, values, beliefs and true soul connection. It was clear from the participants that this is not an easy journey but requires trust to be built, rapport to be present to enable the participants to have the courage to risk new learning. The properties of authenticity were cross validated through the process of interactive drawing and the photo elicitation process. Authenticity became a core category for these participants in learning.

CONNECTEDNESS

Interview One

The individual participants entered the first interview stage with a selection of photos which for them represented relationship. The words used to describe “relationships” are shown in the table below. These descriptive words indicated the emerging category of connectedness.

Relationship
One with another
Heart beating as one
Celebration of each other
Meeting of hearts, mind, soul
Emotions joined
Bond

Table 9: Descriptive Words for Connectedness in Relationship

The participants emphasised the actual “meeting”, “joining”, “bonding”, and “oneness” of relationship. It was the action rather than the outcome. This was often supported by their use of hand movements in the interviews. Individuals would join their hands together or demonstrate the joining by the clasping of hands to support the words which seemed at times limiting for the participants. At times I was surprised by the commitment to this emerging category given that some of the participants lived alone, were choosing not to be in any formal intimate relationship and yet these descriptive words were essential to them.

Looking at the images of relationship I realise that this is life giving for me, and yet it's also incredibly painful as connection if it doesn't last can also be destructive. I have known both. Perhaps this has highlighted for me what I don't have or is it that I just need lots. I am in the midst of this discovery at this point. (Justine)

It was a heart pounding moment in the interview process as it was clear from the words Justine used and the depth of emotion she expressed as she talked that she was on the verge of making a major discovery. In the interview process I gave her the space to grapple with this discovery until she was at a place to move on. I wanted to respect her moment of discovery and allow her the integrity of her processing.

Interview Two

Participants were invited to select from their images photos that represented “learning”. Each participant eagerly shared the discoveries they had made and the meaning they had sought to capture through the photos. The descriptive words used as the participant’s spoke of their photos are recorded in the Table below.

Learning
Opening of mind to others
Celebrating learning milestones
Emotional connection
Encouraging others to discover
Offers hope
Drawing out the resources of others to join with my resources
Each person shaped by learning
Common goal
Sharing of experiences

Table 10: Descriptive Words for Connectedness in Learning

Participants shared a variety of words to express the meaning of learning through their photos, but each word was a movement word. The meaning of learning for them was forward thinking, of growing, of working alongside others offering hope, encouragement, sharing resources, being shaped by others, sharing experiences and working towards common goals. The meaning of learning was not seen in isolation but rather in relationship with others and it was this dynamic that was being captured by the participants.

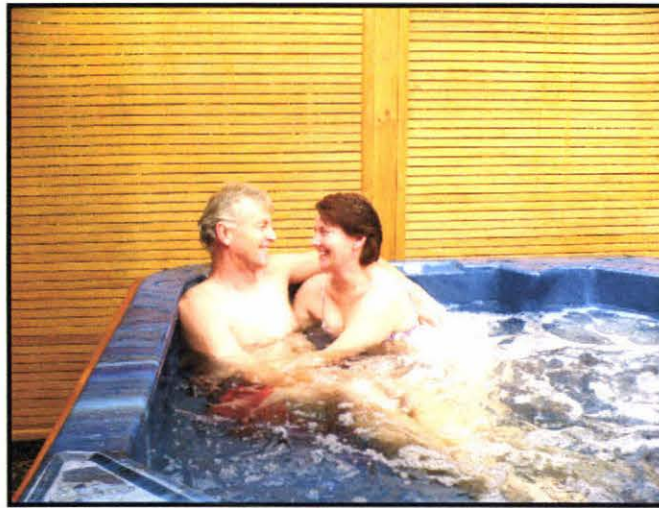
When I am in a learning situation I intentionally open myself up to working with others, allowing their input into my life, and being shaped not only by the learning but also by the others learning. It's a two way process of connection that allows togetherness for me. This is very rarely achieved on your own and certainly not to the dimensions I am talking about. (Coral)

Corals words readily pick up the threads and descriptions of the other participants. Each participant was again trying to express a dynamic that was difficult to contain by the limitations of text. Often participants lent forward and became expressive with body movements as they talked about this dimension of learning that was eagerly sought for each participant.

Interview Three

Each participant arrived at this interview ready to make the connections between the two selections of photos. Initially each participant was invited to choose a photo from the "relationship" photos and was asked to share the significance of this photo after they had made their initial selection. This phase in the interview process allowed the participants the freedom to make connections and linkages that were critical for them. If I had intervened and made the connections I would have aborted the grounded theory process and given meaning to photos that simply was not present.

When asked to proceed in this way Angela chose the photo of the two people in the spa pool to represent relationship for her.

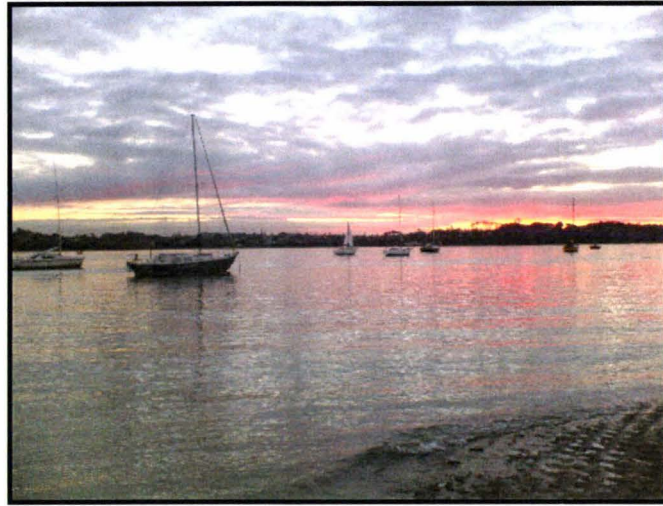


Angela chose this photo as it represented for her the discovery of a person's heart, mind and soul in relationship.

Relationship is not effective until you can drop 12 inches from a persons head and connect with their heart and soul. It is the ongoing discovery of a person's heart and soul that strengthens relationship.

It was clear from the expressions that surrounded this sharing that Angela desired holistic relationships. Intellectual relationships alone were not seen by Angela as effective, life giving or allowing for hearts to beat as one as she desired.

Angela was then asked to see if there was any link between the photo of relationship that she chose and a photo of learning from her selection. Angela chose the following photo of a sail boat in the water.



Angela believed that learning was “about lifting another person’s sails so that they could explore new lands and possibilities”. This photo represents a sail boat embarking on new water. Angela believed in the critical nature of relationship to allow and encourage this to occur.

Learning is about being offered hope and courage from other learners so that I can push past the psychological limits I have around my life and embark on new possibilities. It's like the boat I can stay with my sail down and learn within the comfort of still waters or I can have my sail raised and venture into new waters and push past my own limitations.

Relationship was critical for participants for learning and the depth of joining was spoken about many times in the interview process. The coming together of people, the coming together of different life experiences and the coming together of heart, soul and mind was given great emphasis by the participants in this interview stage.

When Justine was asked to chose a photo which for her represented “relationship” she chose the following picture.

Justine had a photo of some art work that she had done. She described it in this way.

When I did this piece of art I began with a safe circle which is represented by the blue circle. This then contains the elements of learning that I find to be safe as I learn who I am and who I am in relationship to others. The words are “positive role models”, Trust, caring, love, motivation, faith, encouragement, cheering me on, support, people who believe in me, specialists, and experts. These words describe the qualities of the people in my life who make learning safe.

When I asked her to describe the link between the first photo of relationship and the second photo of learning she expressed it this way,

Being in close relationship with others who are safe and have the qualities I have spoken about allows me to be comfortable around information. I can feel supported, fed and informed by it rather than feel threatened or smothered by it.

It was becoming clear in the interview process that connectedness offered people a sense of belonging, a sense of deep companionship when it came from a place of mutual trust and safety.

At this interview Gina selected from her photos of “relationship” the picture she had taken of her guitar.



Gina described this “relationship” photo as a representation of what connected her with her past, her history and when she spent time writing songs “*they were songs which drew from the resources of her past*”. Her guitar was spoken about with much passion and it was obvious to me as the researcher that her guitar was part of her identity as a person.

When Gina was asked to link this photo of “relationship” with a photo of “learning” from her selection she chose the following photo of the bookcase.



Gina said as she looked at the photo of learning, “this library speaks to me of the books that connect me with others who are older, wiser and who bring perspective that I longed for, but do not contain”.

Gina chose to link the two photos together because as she said,

These two photos connect me with my past, my present and my future, this strengthens my identity and allows me to move forward in learning with greater understanding of who I am and what I come with to the learning moment.

When Coral was invited to share a “relationship” photo she chose the photo of the person being baptised in the church.



Coral chose this photo to represent relationship as for her it “demonstrated the person’s depth of commitment to God”. As she described this picture she said,

This person who is being baptised was once separated from God’s heart, they knew about Him, but had no heart relationship with Him. This baptism represents the shift this person has made in the relationship to now a heart connection. The other people who are baptising him, also are connected with the person, so the connection is not only with God but also with others.

When Coral was asked to choose from her photos a “learning” photo which she wanted to link with the above photo she chose the photo of the people who were sitting in church together.



This photo represented for Coral “learning” about God and learning with others. When asked to share what the significance of the link between the photo on “relationship” and the photo she had now chosen on “learning” she described it in this way.

Both photos are connecting you with something outside of yourself, either God or other people. This for me demonstrates the horizontal relationship of learning and also the vertical relationship of learning that is present in my life. In being connected with God I am joining with what is unseen and unknown and growing and learning as an individual from this relationship.

The descriptors of connectedness continued to emerge and reinforce each other as each participant shared in the interview process.

Prior to the interviews with the other participants I selected the photo which for me represented "relationship". I chose the photo of the candles which we held together by the candlestick holder.



This photo represented "relationship" because of the individuality that is evident in the shape and flame offered from the candles, yet the same effect would not occur if there was only one candle. I also was very aware that while the focus is on the candles, it was in fact the candleholder which brought the candles from being individual to being a group. I noted

often we do not focus on what connects us, but rather focus on what we see, when in fact it is the dynamic of connection that is the strength of relationship for me.

The candle photo represented the sense of being together, the depth of union, connection and yet individuality and being shaped by life experiences that is for me "relationship".

I then chose an image from my selection of “learning” photos to link this with the previous photo of “relationship”. I chose the photo of the two females who were showing delight as they experienced each other. The words to the side of the image say “Joy is not in things it is in us”.



(Wnuk, 1996)

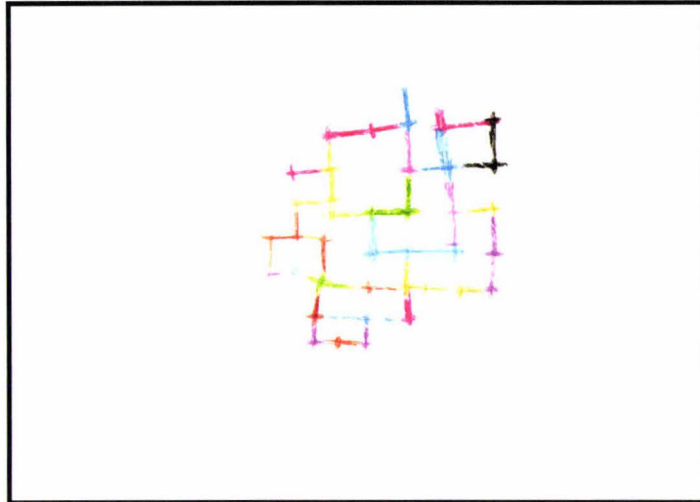
I chose this image of “learning” as it described the experience of learning of discovering “what is in us” and celebrating together in the learning environment each others capacity. I have experienced this and when this occurs all my senses are brought to life and it affects the core of who I am. The two photos linked together celebrate the sense of being together and the sense of celebrating together as we make discoveries together in learning.

The consistent theme that emerged from these interviews and data collection through photos and drawing was that the “joining, meeting, bonding” sense of connectedness was critical for the participants in a learning situation. If this was not present their learning felt constrained. This confirmed for me as the researcher the strength of this category as part of the emergent theory. This category was then cross validated through the process of interactive drawing in the fourth interview.

Fourth Interview

Participants each took a piece of A3 paper, and a box of crayons and spent time reflecting upon the word before they put the crayon to paper to represent the word connectedness.

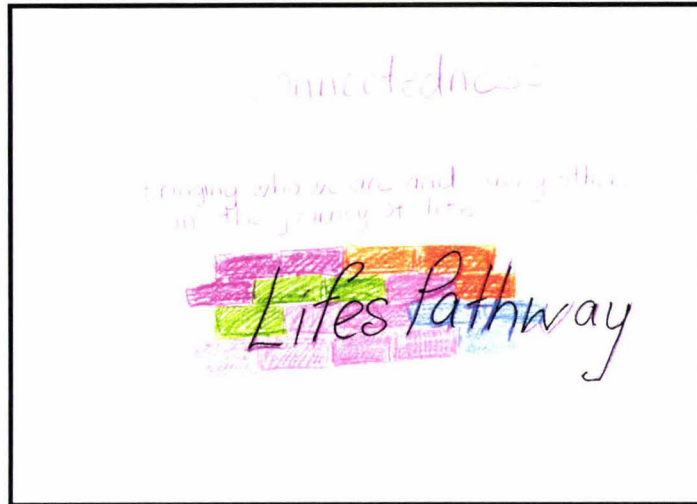
Justine drew the following picture to represent for her “connectedness” through interactive drawing.



This drawing represented a child's game where children can join together metal sticks that have magnets in the end of them. It is the magnetic field which connects the different pieces which are of different shape, colour and size. When constructed this makes something much larger, brighter and more than an individual piece. This was Justine's description of what she drew to represent connectedness. Justine then looked at her drawing and stated,

People have differing styles, unique qualities and characteristics which when connected can create a beauty that is beyond an individual. It is the learning of these styles, qualities and characteristics that is pivotal for me in learning. Without this connectedness you are limited to your own characteristics, this does not bring about the learning that I want in life.

The descriptive words of emotional connection, being shaped by others and joining with others hearts, soul and minds were resources emphasised by all participants. For Angela it was a way of life that she had engaged in. She represents this through her interactive drawing where she represents connectedness.

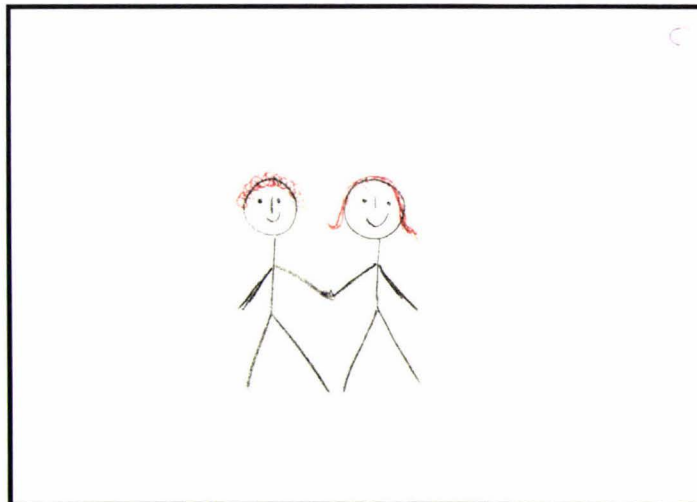


Angela said,

Connectedness is "life's pathway" for me, it's a matter of me bringing the depth of who I am and joining this with another. It is a force that I actively seek in learning with others.

Angela made it clear that this was not an action that came from the head, but rather a way of living that comes from your sense of identity and it is a "joining, bonding" that seemed to her beyond a formula.

Gina represented "connectedness" through the process of interactive drawing as follows.



Gina chose to draw a picture of two people who were joined by hands. As she drew this picture she strengthened the colour of the arms and hands, and as she did this she spoke of the "joining" nature of connectedness. She stated,

This joining allows each person to be moved forward by the other person, it signifies the dynamic of relationship that comes when you are connected with another person. It is not static but in the sharing of who you are, you can move towards common goals and be shaped by each other.

When I represented “connectedness” through interactive drawing I represented a process of learning that I felt was necessary and depicted connectedness. This is shown in drawing below.



As I reflected upon the drawing I wrote,

I represented connectedness as the coming together of two individuals (could be more) who learn what it is to move from standing alongside, to facing one another revealing the core identity of each person to another. This is a journey of trust, rapport, and discovery of self in the learning process.

The properties of joining with others, common goals, sharing of experiences, emotional connectedness and revealing of self remained core descriptors of “connectedness” in this research. The participants maintained it was more than an action; it was a dynamic that was almost intangible but very present.

Conclusion

This section examined the data and the emergence of the category of “connectedness” as a valid category in this research. The participants’ voice has been heard and the meanings that they have given have been represented through their photos and drawings in the data collection process. The properties of “connectedness” have been cross validated through the photo linkage

process and also through interactive drawing. These properties contributed to the dynamic of "connectedness" being incorporated into the emergent theory.

REFLECTION

Interview One

The participants during the first interview shared the photos that they had taken which for them represented “relationship”. As they spoke about their photos they used words to describe the meaning that they give to “relationship”. These words were noted and are included in the table below.

Relationship
Commitment to the journey
Access to each others knowledge
Trust dimensions
Vision, Mirroring
Non-Abusive

Table 11: Descriptive Words for Reflection in Relationship

The participants accentuated the dimensions of trust that were required for relationship to occur that had meaning and purpose. When trust was evident in a relationship this allowed participants to have access to parts of each other’s identity, personality and qualities. Trust also allowed people to grapple with the vision they had for life and to expose themselves in a way that would point them towards their future.

Within a relationship of trust, I can allow others to speak to me of what they can see that perhaps I can't. I can give them access to hold the mirror up to me. I know they are committed to me, and will not abuse the privilege of building me up and helping to hurl me forward. (Angela)

Interview Two

When the participants began the second stage of the photo elicitation interview stage they used powerful descriptors when they spoke of “learning”. These words were recorded and in the coding process were formed into the table below. As participants spoke of “learning” the photos served as a springboard enabling them to recall memories of learning experiences. The words used by the participants became thematic as each interview built upon the last interview in this stage.

Learning
Vision of new learning Safety for contemplation Rapport and trust as discovery is made Help each other over learning obstacles Gentleness as transitions of learning occur Encouragement in cathartic moments of learning

Table 12: Descriptive Words for Reflection in Learning

The participants described “learning” as a place where they could contemplate upon what they already knew and what they were now being presented with in the learning context. It was during this period that the participants required safety, trust and gentleness to be present in the attitudes of other learners. The participants also recognised that as they contemplated or reflected upon their rising discovery that they required encouragement to move towards what they termed “cathartic moments”.

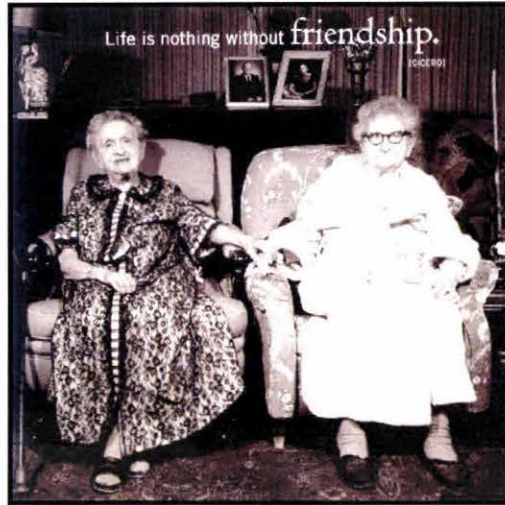
I get to the place where I know I am being confronted with something new, that is uncomfortable. At that point I am faced with the challenge of contemplating whether to retreat or to move forward. I need encouragement in those moments of transition to push forward into a new place of discovery. (Coral)

The process of looking into yourself, facing your preconceived values and beliefs was a constant theme when the participants spoke of learning. It raised some dimensions of discomfort for many of the participants and they acknowledged that there were times when they had chosen not to address what they were being confronted with in order to remain comfortable.

Interview Three

The third interview stage involved each participant being asked whether they could see any clear connections between “relationships” and “learning” from their selection of personal photos. This gave the participants the opportunity to sit with their photos and to make their own discoveries. It was imperative that I allowed the participant to interact solely with their photos without interruption or suggestion. This allowed them to discover their own personal significance in the discovery.

I chose to select the photo of the two older ladies in chairs to represent “relationship” for me personally.



(Danson, 2002)

This photo spoke to me of the deep sense of companionship and community within relationship. These two ladies know that “life is nothing without friendship” and this too has been my experience.

When I looked through my selection of learning photos to find a connection between the above photo and learning I chose the photo looking through a tunnel towards a bridge to represent “learning”.

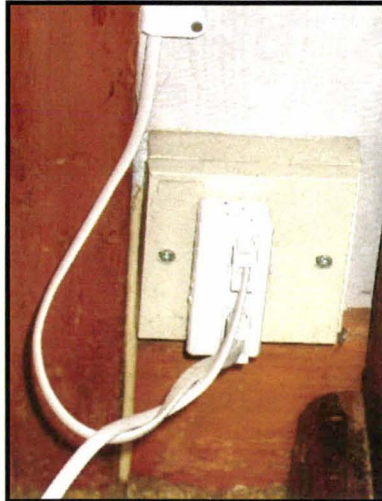


I believe learning is

not just about what is seen in the immediate but has a future outcome focus, beyond what we initially see and experience. I have sought to represent this in the photo. The connection I want to make between the first photo and this image is that the process of discovering what is beyond that which we initially see and experience is best worked out

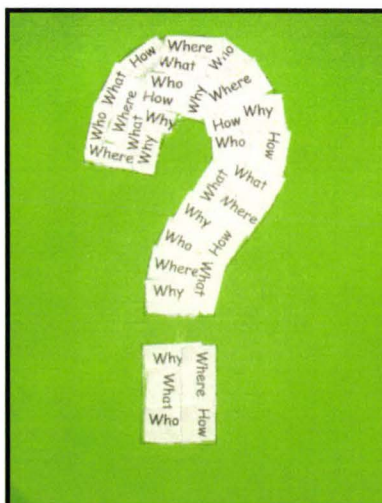
in a context of relationship that is marked by companionship as expressed through the first photo.

When Justine was invited to select from her photos a photo that represented relationship she selected a photo of a telephone cord, plugged into a socket. This spoke of “relationship” for her.



Justine believed this photo represented for her relationship as it showed a cord being plugged in. As she said, *“if its not plugged in then it doesn't work”*. This demonstrated connection and safety which for her were important in relationship and learning.

When asked to consider which photo she would like to select from her “learning” photos to connect with her previous photo she chose the image of the question mark.



Justine chose this photo and described this photo as “the questions of learning”. Justine linked the photo of learning with the photo of relationships because she believes that she is asking of these questions in the forming of new relationships in learning situations.

When I look to form new relationships I am asking “who, what, where, how, why” of people. I want to know “what the relationship will look like, where it will happen, how it can happen, why I want to be in relationship with this person. When I go into a new learning situation I am asking “who, what, where, how, why”? I want to know “what am I supposed to do, how can I make this happen, why is this necessary”. The same questions are being asked in both contexts, after I consider the answers to these questions then it is possible to continue at a deeper level.

When Coral was asked to select from her “relationship” photos she chose the photo of the two people hugging as this had meaning for her.



Coral liked this photo as it represented that within a healthy relationship *“I can hold the mirror up to others, and they can do this with me. This then allows me the chance to reflect upon my unhealthy attitudes, beliefs and values and have the opportunity to grow and be shaped into a better person”*.

When asked to see if there was a link between this photo and a new photo of “learning” she drew from her pile of photos the photo of the water pump with the pumps and pipes reflected in the water.



Coral described this photo as follows,

You can see the water pump and pipes above the surface but if you look beyond the surface you can see the pipes. This photo represents for me what others can see that I can't see, and when this is shown to me, I have the opportunity to go deeper with myself. I need other people to help me see what I can't see, so I can learn.

When Angela was asked to choose a photo from her "relationship" photos she selected the photo of the bricks, all stacked up on top of each other.



Angela believes that within relationship there is "*unlimited and unrealised potential*" which can be realised within the context of relationship. The bricks in this photo are simply bricks, but have the potential to be part of a building. As Angela states "*they need to be connected to another brick in*

order to function in their capacity, so it is with relationship, we need to be connected to someone else”.

When asked to choose a photo from her selected photos of “learning” that she would like to link the above photo to, she chose the photo of the beach scene.



Angela describes the photos as follows,

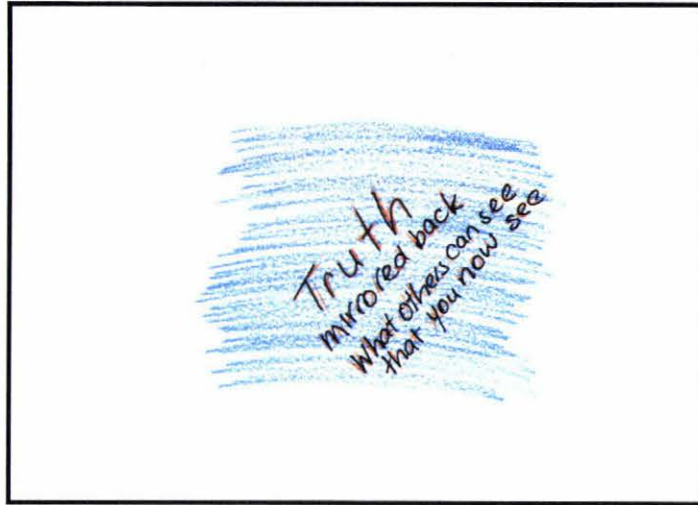
This photo shows the cloud formation reflected in the water. The picture also shows not only a shoreline but also a land further in the distance which is yet to be explored. The reflection of the clouds in the water is a process in learning that allows me to take stock of who I am, how I think, what I have known and to sound this out with others. While this process is happening for me, it is important that I keep focussed also on the future and what I am about to identify or discover. So while it can contain an element of looking at my “present life” it needs to also contain elements of my “future life”. The combination of the two allows my soul to be touched, this is powerful.

Each of the participants used words to describe learning and relationship as “mirroring, reflecting, contemplating, accessing each other, non-abusive and offering vision”. These words continued to strengthen and give value to the category of reflection as important in this study for these individuals.

Fourth Interview

It was important when working with interactive drawing to allow the participant to interact with their own personal image and not be distracted by an external voice.

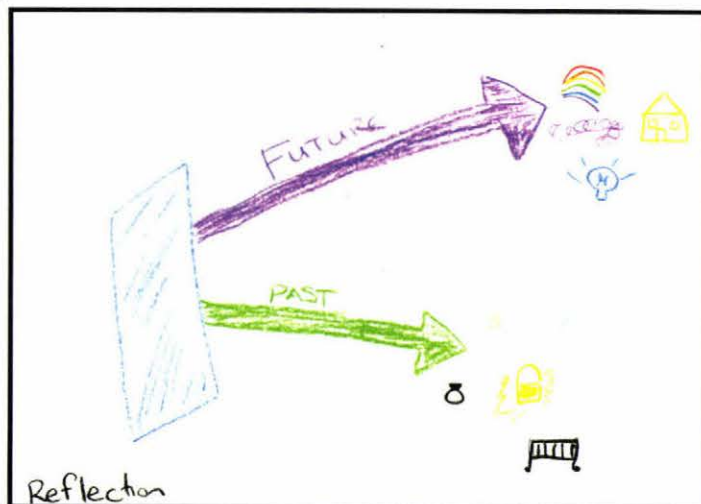
When Angela was asked to represent reflection she did so by simply writing the words "Truth - mirrored back. What others can see that you now see". This was written over the top of blue crayon giving the impression of the words reflecting off water. At the top of the page she wrote the words "reflection/reinforcement".



Angela described her representation as follows,

I wanted to represent the communal nature of reflection, where reflection does not occur in isolation but in relationship with others in the learning process. The process of reflection brings me to a greater place of self awareness and enables me to evaluate myself more effectively. For me I like to have this reinforced over and over, so that I can discover truth.

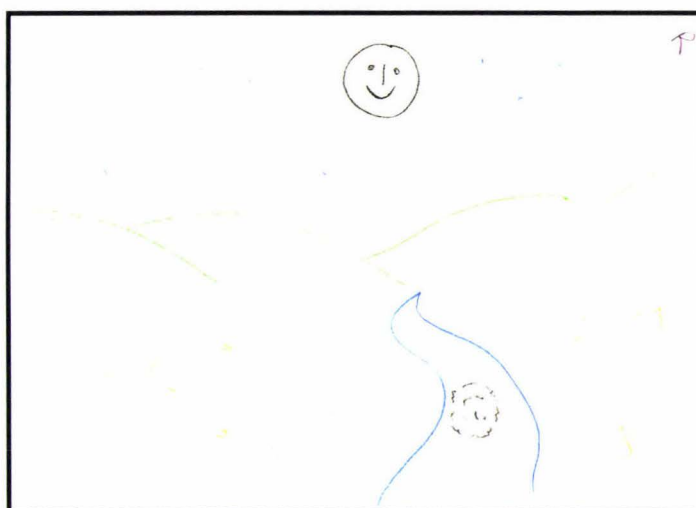
When Justine was asked to represent through interactive drawing the word "reflection" she drew the following picture.



Justine describes this drawing as follows,

Reflection is like a door that opens enabling you to see into the past. Reflection also allows you to see the future and offers to you light and hope which I have represented in the rainbow and light bulb. The purple squiggle represents the energy that is used in the process of reflection in learning. If I look at my past experiences in education I am reminded of “tears, wedding rings, cot, and music” that symbolise events of other learning peers who went through life transitions and the discoveries they made. . Reflection is a past and future event that affects the core of who you are.

When Gina was asked to represent reflection she drew a scene of rolling hills with a river flowing through it. The moon was out and its reflection could be seen in the river.



Gina describes her drawing as

This drawing represents for me the process of reflection and the dynamic movement that I can take when reflection takes place. The moon's reflection can be seen by all who are contained in this drawing. The dots in the sky of this drawing represent the others who assist in the process of reflection and engage alongside me in the process of reflection in learning.

The properties of mutuality and mirroring were spoken of by all participants and were seen to be essential for personal growth and learning when done in relationship with others. The photos and the drawing cross validated for the purpose of given strength to this category of reflection as important for these participants.

Conclusion

This section outlined the experience of the participants with the emerging category of process reflection. There was a dynamic interchange between a person's history, social context and experience which placed reflection centrally in learning for each participant. (Le Cornu, 2005). The process of cross-correlation reinforced the place of vision, trust, mutuality and safety as characteristics for safe interpersonal reflection. This gave participants the possibility of forward movement into personal growth in the learning context as they embraced the process of reflection in learning.

Empowerment

Interview One

Participants entered into the initial interview having taken photos that represented for them “relationship”. As they spoke of the photos they used descriptors which gave meaning to their photos. These words have been contained in the table below.

Relationship
Respect for others
Life giving to others
Give power to
Nurturing, protective value
Safety

Table 13: Descriptive Words for Empowerment in Relationship

The participants focussed on the power dynamics within relationships, and the protective and nurturing dimensions of relationship that were important to them individually. All participants spoke of abusive relationships that they had encountered which left them feeling uncared for, devalued and were destructive. They were each committed to being in relationships that were life-giving. This was verbalised by Angela when she said,

I will not tolerate relationships that are destructive, where you as a person are under threat or devalued. Every person has the right to be treated with respect and dignity and it is imperative that this is the foundation of all relationships.

This message was echoed by all participants who knew what it was to be in relationship where there was an imbalance of power. Some participants spoke about these situations with tears rolling down their cheeks, others spoke of these as if they were detached from the present moment but in their minds eye capturing past experiences as if they were reliving these.

Interview Two

Each person was then invited to return to share the images they had captured which described for them “learning”. Each participant shared the meaning of their photos and expressed data based upon their previous experiences in various learning situations.

Learning
Experimental Feed forward Calling upon other people resources Belief and support Courage amidst vulnerability

Table 14: Descriptive Words for Empowerment in Learning

Each person spoke of the need to experiment, to believe in each other, to offer courage amidst people's vulnerability and to give constructive reflection which enabled participants to move forward in learning. This was expressed by Gina as follows,

I find it imperative in learning to have others who will walk beside me and care about me in the process of experimenting, applying and practicing new skills and theories. To have others' support and encouragement to find courage in the midst of being out of my comfort zone is so empowering for me. Something is triggered within me, that gives me permission to go to a new level of understanding.

Interview Three

In this interview each participant was asked whether they could make any connection between relationships and learning that existed in their photos. This gave each participant the opportunity to choose from their selection of relationship photos and join these with their learning photos. Once they had chosen the photos they were then asked to share the meaning of these links for them personally.

This was an important stage in the emerging theory process which continued to strengthen the emergence of theory. As the researcher I could not interfere, manipulate or offer suggestions to the participants so that my interpretation did not get in the way of their linkages. For me to do this would be to minimise or exaggerate a connection that they were making in their own work.

Gina chose the two photos below to symbolise relationship and learning for her.



The photo of the cat spoke to Gina of the deep sense of love and bond that exists in relationship. Gina shared the following:

It is a bond that surpasses moments and lives through experiences. It is a bond that accepts and cares warts and all. It is a bond that allows the freedom of expression, the freedom of thought, the freedom of action. It is such an empowering bond.

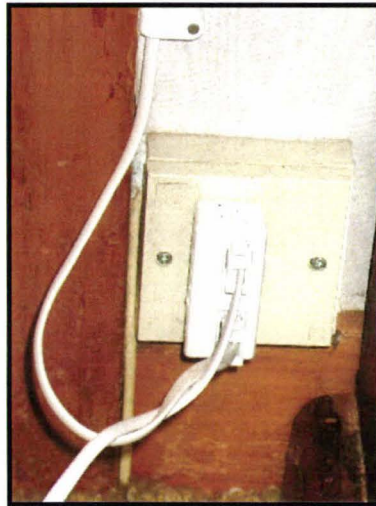


Gina then selected the photo of the plant from her learning images. This represented for her the new growth that occurs in learning. The yellow leaves represented the beliefs, assumptions, responses, ideas, knowledge that seemed irrelevant or able to be discarded in the face of new understandings and knowledge. This is part of the empowering process for Gina.

As I look back on learning in my life, I am aware that I began like the pot that this plant sits in, a very small, rigid and contained person with set ways of thinking and being. When I risked entering into formal learning who I was became expanded which is represented in the photo by the new growth that is much more luscious than the rigid pot.

However I recall moments when I was empowered to let go of “old thoughts” and “ways of being” that seemed unnecessary or limiting of my understanding. With the help of others I was able to shed away the learning that had little value and embrace new discoveries that could be integrated into my knowledge and experience base.

When Justine was interviewed she was very positive and displayed lots of energy and enthusiasm around the word “empowering”. She sat on the edge of her seat, her eyes sparkled and it was as if everything within her had come to life. Justine chose the following photo to represent relationship³ and the second photo to represent learning.



The photo of the telephone cords plugged into the socket spoke to Justine of richness of connection that she required for empowerment. If the cords were not plugged “into” the socket then they would not work and if the socket had nothing plugged “into” it then it did not function and give power to the cord. Justine spoke with conviction as she described relationship as

Relationship for me must be life giving. It is about giving power to “be”, and being given power to “be”. It is a mutual connection that totally respects others functions, roles and uniqueness and empowers mutually new levels of functioning as people. I have experienced empowering when I have needed that extra push to be truly me amidst others and this has resulted in me being more authentic, more real and more willing to make new learnings in life. If that connection is not present then for me little growth is made.

³ Each participant was given the opportunity to re-select any photo from their relationship collection of images, and also from their learning collection of images, in the process of making links between relationship and learning. This is why Justine has chosen to use the same photo for relationship and connect with a different learning photo to give further meaning. Some other participants also re-selected photos they had previous selected.

When Justine was asked to connect this photo with a photo from her selection of learning photos she chose the following photo.



This piece of art work created by Justine represented learning for her. It spoke of “hands on” learning that allowed you to work alongside and with others in order to make new meanings and discoveries in learning.

I enjoy being in a group where we can experiment, where we can nurture and help each other to try new things, yet within who I am. I have discovered this in many informal learning situations where I go to learn a new skill. I can work on my own project but others alongside me will interact with me, encourage me, believe in my work and give me courage to experiment and expand what I have brought to the learning context. It's great I begin the time with one idea and come home with a much broader, expanded version of what I started with.

When I chose the photo that I would use to represent relationship, I chose the photo of myself and my son looking into each others eyes and being close.



I chose this photo as it represented the dynamics of relationship that I require to feel empowered. The ability to look into a person's eyes and feel as if they touch your heart is imperative for me in genuine relationship. It allows a person to speak into my life, to challenge me, offer me courage and hope and a springboard to venture into new things. In my journal I wrote:

Matthew has the unique ability to release confidence, courage and belief in me when at times I have wanted to give up or give in. He has held the light out there for me in the darkness and called me on, called me toward, and called me beyond my present capacity so that I can stand in a new place. His tender yet strong manner allows me to be vulnerable but also hear the heart of someone who believes in me and whose heart it is to spur me on.

When I chose a photo from the pile of learning images I chose to link the above photo with the photo of the group of people learning to belly dance.



This photo was taken at a training camp I was facilitating. The participants were about to embark on a cross cultural trip to Uganda. The teaching programme included experiential exercises

where the participants were outside of their comfort zone, quite vulnerable and functioning outside of their worldview. One of the exercises in this programme was to teach 'belly dancing'. The participants were asked to dress in belly dancing costumes and then as a group to learn and participate in this learning with an external tutor. All of the participants were scared, anxious and slightly threatened at being asked to dress in way that gave some measure of exposure to others in the group. The feedback gained from this exercise was able to be summed up in statements like *"The group did not mock me, laugh at me, or judge me for what I looked like, danced like or how I responded. Knowing it was a difficult moment for all of us, meant that we could all "pull together", encourage each other, believe in each other and cheer each other on"*.

This action of "pulling together" for a greater result in learning was reiterated by all participants. It was clear from their sharing that a connected relationship component in learning meant that empowering was likely to take place and that the learning outcome would be greatly enhanced as a result of the ability to empower others.

When Angela was asked to select a photo that represented relationship for her, she chose the photo of the bridge.



The bridge connects one piece of land to another, just as in relationship we are two different pieces of land yet connected through relationship. The bridge is built from both ends and joins in the middle, which represents the journey that is made in relationship. In my experience it is not made quickly and requires careful and insightful structuring to ensure balance, bridging of values, beliefs and assumptions and the strength to last a long time.

At this time in the interview Angela was reminded of experiences when the bridge had not been built intentionally in relationship and the bridge was no longer safe to cross in those relationships. She spoke quietly as she made connections with her past.

When Angela was asked to link this photo of relationship with a photo from her learning photos she chose the photo of the green hills with a path traversing the contours of the land.



This photo represented for Angela the journey that is made in learning that empowers and leads to a new vision of the future. She noted that at times she would like to settle on a hill and just embrace the view and live in the present surroundings. Angela also shared,

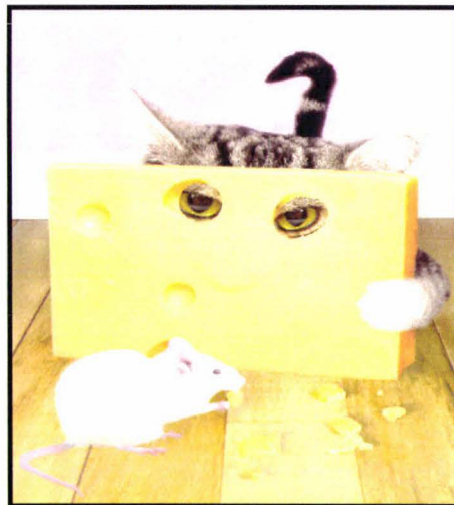
I realise that I need other people to come alongside me and navigate me to new places of learning and understanding. I have had to work through my own limitations of learning and restricting thoughts that have led me to believe I am "less than". My father was someone who told me always to be quiet around adults as I had nothing to contribute so when I used to enter into a learning situation with other adults I would remain quiet, passive and in fear of making a contribution. It was only as I worked through my personal issues and others came alongside me an empowered me to contribute that I broke the pattern of the past. When I did this my learning accelerated and my participation exceeded any other time in the past.

I chose to represent relationship through the photo of the three women. The three women are sitting at a table sharing drinks. The centre woman has her long hair shared with the women on either side of her. This to me represented the belief, vulnerability and support that come in relationship as we learn together.



(Schutte, 2004)

I linked the above photo with the photo of the cat and mouse separated by the cheese to represent learning. This image symbolised the power imbalances and the systems of control that are often found in learning which do not empower but rather restrict and restrain learning.



(Sharrar, 2004)

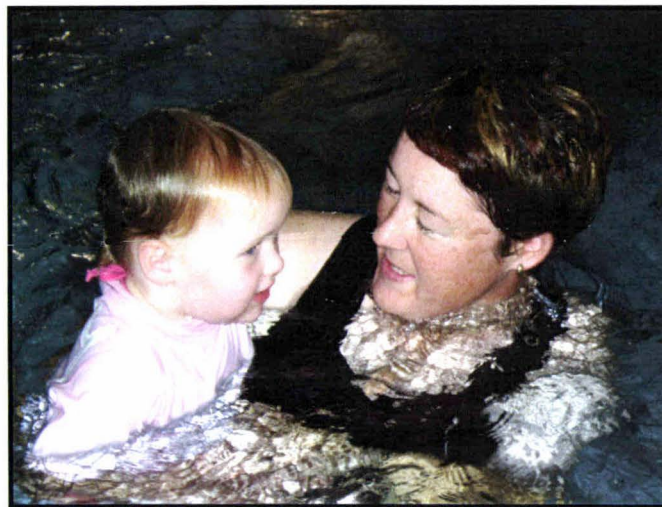
I chose this image as it reminded me of painful experiences of being shut down and alienated in institutions because of power imbalances. I often felt like the mouse that was daring to taste and grapple with what was being offered. The moment I questioned the quality, or the taste of what I was receiving I was quickly ostracised, and ousted from the institution, in this particular case the church. In my journal I wrote:

I feel so alienated as a woman who thinks, who wants to understand and who challenges the dominant culture of the church. I feel I am OK as long as I only taste and experience the crumbs but the moment I begin to examine the large block of cheese which the

leaders are in tight control of, I am pounced on, eaten up and often spat out. It is meant to be a life giving place, yet it smells of death to me. This is the power of an institution, where do I go if I have big questions? Yes Margaret you go alone!

This was a painful moment as I recalled the experiences of abuse that surrounded my learning and being in the church. It stirred up and provoked memories of control and suppression that left me feeling alienated within an institution that was meant to empower, believe in and transform lives.

Coral was invited to indicate from her photos one she would choose to represent relationship. She chose the photo of the mother with the child swimming together.



Coral chose this photo which spoke of belief and support that empowered confidence for this individual in learning to swim. While this photo shows an adult teaching a child, Coral was certain that “belief and support” were to be found in adult relationships. Coral stated

It is critical in relationships to know you have someone you can count on when you feel out of your depth and there appears to be no bottom to what you are walking through or the context that you are in provokes feelings of vulnerability. Having someone beside you who shouts approval or shared their optimism amidst your doubts empowers you to continue on and to enjoy the moment of adventure in learning.

When Coral was asked to select a photo from her learning images to link with the photo above she chose the photo of the adults in the workplace at a board meeting.



Coral chose this photo because it spoke to her of the empowering relationship she had with her peers in the workplace. Coral had just prior to the interviews entered into a new career and was on a steep learning curve. Her confidence was at an all time low, having lost her previous job and re-entry into the workplace caused anxiety for her. She said in the interview,

These people know that I am on a steep learning curve and yet they ask for my contribution, they challenge me to think beyond what I have known and do not judge me. I find board meetings so empowering because I am not criticised, I can learn, grow and develop into a place of greater functioning.

The connection made between the photos of relationship and learning continually endorsed the properties of empowering as an emergent category in this research. At this point all participants were invited to a fourth interview using interactive drawing.

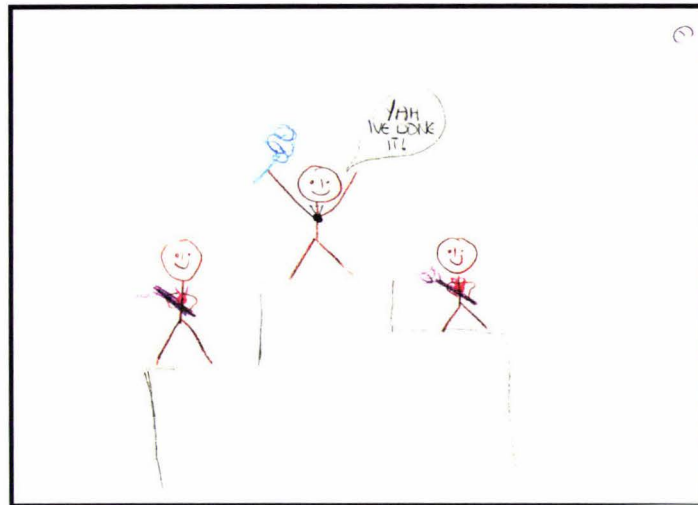
Interview Four

The fourth interview was conducted in order to cross validate the emergent theory that had emerged in the first three interviews. Participants were told of the six categories that had emerged in the process of the interviews and the coding process. Participants were confident about the emergence of these particular categories. It was recognised that these categories were critical to these particular participants and these were not exhaustive for effective learning to occur.

Participants were asked to represent each category through Interactive Drawing. In this case the word was “empowering”. Participants each took a piece of A3 paper, and a box of crayons and

spent time reflecting upon the word before they put the crayon to paper to represent the word empowering. This time all participants entered into the process eagerly and with energy. It seemed by the researcher that giving the participants the invitation to represent empowering was in itself a moment of empowerment.

Gina drew the picture below to demonstrate what empowering meant for her personally.

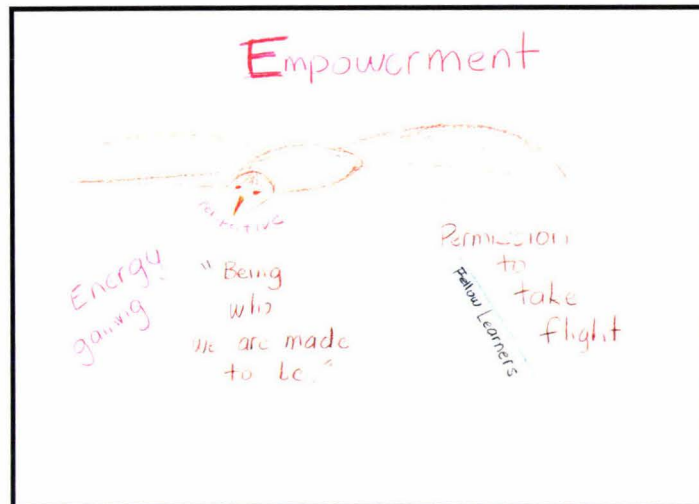


Gina spoke of the achievements that can be gained through the belief and support of others and the community nature of empowering others. Gina stated that

Empowering comes as I am given courage to keep learning and keep making discoveries, the moment I isolate myself from others I stop achieving. Empowering means I am given power to increase who I am, to release energy I was unaware of and to take hold of new learnings. When I am empowered learning becomes a place of excitement, adventure and exploration. When I have the privilege of empowering others, I see lights come on, I see the momentum of learning increase and people can reach their goals.

The characteristics of nurturing, life giving, power, of being able to experiment, of calling upon other people's resources, and feed forward were all descriptive words that were repeated throughout the interview process. The participants all noted the emotional release that was made when they were empowered; it appeared to contribute to cathartic moments in the learning context for participants. This was a powerful time of allowing participants to share positive learning experiences where they were giving permission to be who they were, but also to go beyond themselves.

Angela represented the word empowering through the following drawing.

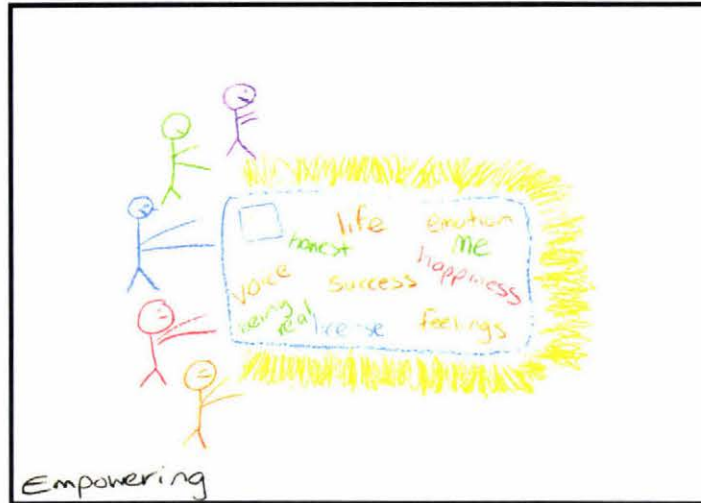


Angela drew a picture of a bird that was given permission to take flight and the call to “be who you are made to be”. When the bird was given permission to fly, the bird had fresh perspective and could soar to new levels. This drawing triggered a memory for Angela of being in Uganda on a teaching team. She shared

I remember sitting watching the leader of the team teach. I was conscious that this was a particularly difficult teaching to present given the cross-cultural setting and the dynamics of the learning environment. The leader had shared these with us as a team prior to her teaching. We had spent time at the team meeting giving her permission, giving her encouragement, offering our belief and support in who she was amidst a very patriarchal model of leadership. When she began to teach that day it was as if every Ugandan person was on the edge of their seat, eagerly waiting for the next word. Each word that was being spoken was being treasured by the people in the learning situation, and lights were being turned on amidst what had been confusion. This appeared to be the outcome of empowering someone to be who they are, giving courage amidst vulnerability and seeing the release of teaching that went beyond the limitations of the context. It is this kind of empowering that I yearn for and want to see released.

As Angela spoke in the interview, it was with passion, vibrancy, and enthusiasm. Her body moved itself expressively as she tried to capture through her hands the moment of “flying” that she had witnessed as someone had been empowered.

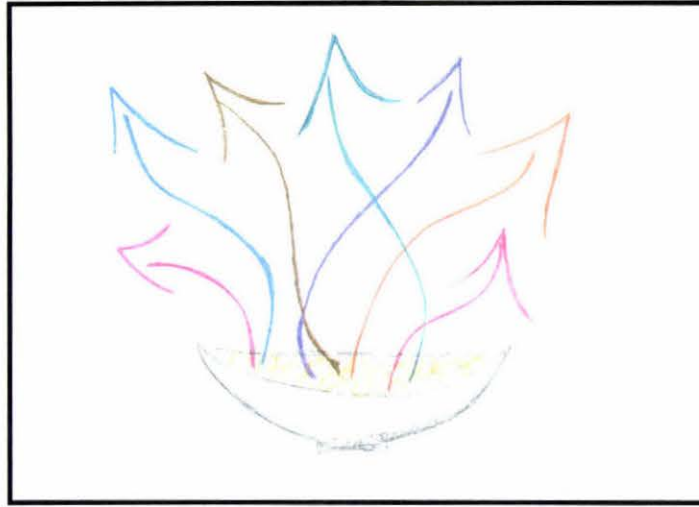
When Justine was asked to represent empowering through interactive drawing she drew the following image.



Her work represents a group of people that allow honesty, being real, and emotions to be present through learning. She said

If a person is given permission to have voice, then it adds life to the group. It allows people to express who they are and be accepted. The blue line in the drawing represents the values and ground rules that are agreed to in groups which promote a culture of empowering others. The yellow is the energy that is released, (emotional and physical) because empowering is present. For me, I need validation of who I am in learning, if I don't receive this then I feel disempowered, it is a waste of time being in this context. I want to learn and grow but if I am not validated by my peers or the teacher then I "dial out" or "the lights are on but nobody is at home".

When I represented empowering through the process of interactive drawing I represented this in the following way.



The dish represents the communal aspect of relationships and learning that was a resource for all individuals to discover their own self efficacy amidst the permission to experiment. Individuals self-expression, self-concept and identity grow and develop as people are given permission to take their learning in the direction that they need to for their own personal development. As I drew this I was reminded of beginning study in adult education, and in my journal I wrote the following.

When I began adult education I was immersed into thinking and questioning that challenged every worldview, assumption and value that I had previously ingrained in my being. As I began to process the discoveries alongside my peers a new shape and form of self began to emerge. This shape was not always welcomed by others outside the learning context as I was beginning to have a voice in ways I previously did not have. I began to grow as a person and develop a new way of expressing myself that was not welcome in some contexts. I did however pursue my learning because I was aware that my own self-efficacy was taking shape and I was being empowered to think beyond rigid walls of control. It was within the flexible walls of adult learning amidst a supportive community of peers that connections were being made that would shape the journey of my future.

Each participant echoed the words of belief, support, control, power and ownership of learning when we discussed the dynamic of empowering in a learning context. The outcome is the release of creativity within a learning experience.

Conclusion

This section has identified the necessity of empowering in learning and relationships. It was recognised that empowering comes from a bonding in relationship that is critical in the learning process. It was clearly the experience of all women that there is a vital relationship in learning that provides both a safety container to experiment alongside a melting pot which gives permission to grapple with knowledge. The properties of empowering were cross validated through the process of interactive drawing and the photo elicitation process. Empowering is a core category for these participants in learning.

DISCOVERY

Interview One

Individual participants entered the initial interview stage with a selection of photos which for them represented relationship. The words used to describe “relationships” are shown in the table below. These descriptive words indicated the emerging category of discovery.

Relationship
Movement
Alive
Creative
Uncharted destination

Table 15: Descriptive Words for Discovery in Relationship

The participants placed meaning upon the dynamic nature of relationship using the words movement, alive, creative and uncharted destination. These words were often supported by the combination of eye movement and hand movement to demonstrate the physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual movement of the journey of relationship as experienced by the participants. I was aware from the interview that all of the participants had physically moved from towns to cities, or regions within their life and the grief of having changing relationships was often shared. Memories of past relationships that had been made in different learning contexts which had changed were also discussed. The journey of relationships was often discussed at length, but can be summed up in Angela’s words.

Relationships change, you begin as strangers, you then proceed to being acquaintances, then you have the potential to move to being friends, then from the place of friends there is the possibility to move to a place of family in its broadest context. I have people who I have met in learning environments who I now embrace as family, they have impacted upon my soul and to cease being in relationship with them would break my heart.
(Angela)

Interview Two

Participants were invited to select from their images photos that represented learning. Each participant confidently shared the learnings they had made as they had sought to collect images

of learning. The descriptive words used by the participants' as they spoke of learning are recorded in the Table below.

Learning
Movement
Creative
Changes transform you
Flexibility

Table 16: Descriptive Words for Discovery in Learning

Each participant discussed their own personal development and attitude towards learning. They spoke of learning to ask questions, to challenge their own and others thinking of having guessing and hunches and the creativity that can be released in learning when the teacher is not rigid. This growth has led to uncharted destinations and movement in the learning process for all participants. Gina spoke for the whole group when she said

having curiosity has meant that I can work towards resolving some of my internal conflict that I had with some issues that were ambiguous. Curiosity has no guaranteed outcome in learning and often brings about unexpected learnings.

All participants talked about teachers or lecturers who were focussed on subject content where learning was transferred from one expert to learners who are less knowledgeable and said that in these learning environments critical thinking, discovery and collaboration were often discounted and not encouraged. When this occurred for participants there was an element of dissatisfaction and frustration in their prior learning. Participants identified that making personal discoveries and being allowed to grapple with concepts and knowledge was riskier and at times uncomfortable it does allow for greater transformation and integration.

Interview Three

Each participant arrived at the interview ready to make the connections between the relationship photos and the learning photos that they had taken previously. Each participant followed the process of making a choice from the relationship pile of photos and then linking this with a photo from the learning photos. This time in the interview allowed participants the liberty to make associations that were significant for them. I again remained distant in the processing to permit

the participants to make linkages without any influence from the researcher. There was an element of excitement and vigour as the participants moved to make these connections.

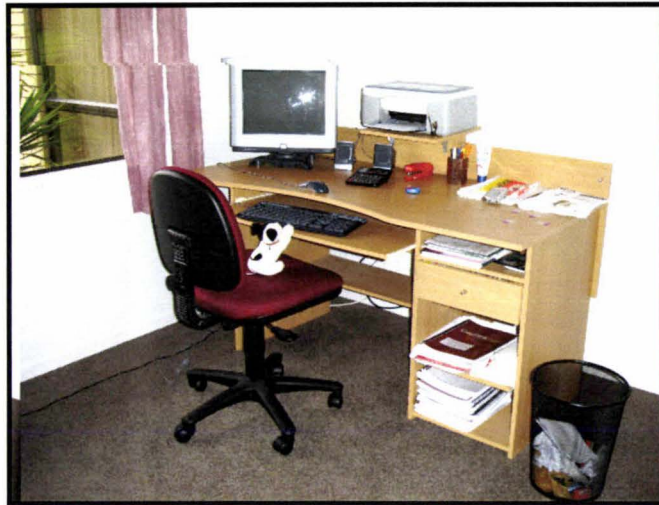
Gina began the process by choosing the photo of the roses in her garden which is shown below.



This photo of the roses represented for Gina the freshness and the journey of relationships. Some of the roses are tiny buds which she is waiting to discover and find what they will look like. Other roses are more weathered, more fully developed and mature and yet unique. Gina said when she was interviewed,

Relationships are alive and they grow. I have had relationships with people who when I first met did not appear to be anything special, but as the relationship changed and grew I made discoveries about them that connected with my soul. Relationship is not a surface thing, you have to go beyond the layers and discover what is really there in a person.

When Gina was asked to choose a photo from her learning photos to link with the photo of the roses she chose a photo of her study desk.



This photo represented a new course that Gina had begun studying by distance learning. The photo for Gina spoke of the fresh discoveries she was making and the development of herself that was entirely new. Gina took a deep breath during the interview and said,

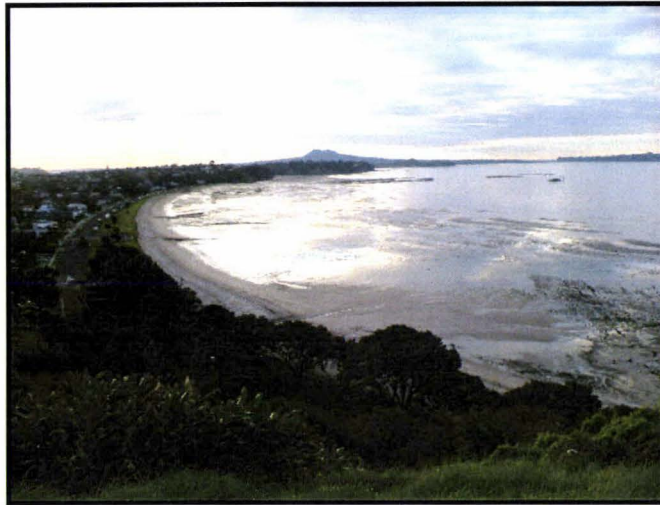
I am making discoveries and am in the process of self-empowerment as I begin this course. I am discovering I have acquired a fresh sense of autonomy as a learner which in the past was restricted by family conditions and experiences.

When Angela was asked to choose a photo which represented relationship for her she returned to the photo of the bridge. This photo had depths of meaning for Angela that she seemed to want to embrace and highlight at this moment in her life.



Angela chose this photo because it symbolised the movement found in relationship from the present to somewhere unknown. It was clear to her that when relationship was formed the destination of the relationship was unknown and while it is important to be intentional about relationship the outcome could not be predicted.

When Angela was asked to choose a learning photo to link this with she chose the following photo of the ocean shoreline and lands unknown in the distance.



The photo of the shoreline represented learning for Angela in that is land to be explored, in the present it is unknown and every step brings a new horizon into view. In her experience she had moved from being a person who believed that $1 + 1 = 2$ to now being a learner who is open to exploration, open to making new meanings and coming to new places of discovery. This initially had been a painful time as Angela describes:

I was so used to sitting passively in learning expecting the teacher to tell me all the answers and to just regurgitate the appropriate responses. When I was first confronted with a method of teaching that encouraged me to be active in the learning process, my world went into chaos. I was initially angry at the teacher as I was being asked to “do the work” when I believed that they were paid to tell me the answers. I was frustrated by open-ended learning that allowed you to go in undefined directions. It took time for me to make the shift that I could make discoveries amidst a learning environment that were valid and worthy. I have moved to a new point of believing that the old style of teaching is now quite abusive and can misappropriate power.

Angela went on to share that it is now her experience that her personal view of self was achieved by understanding her existence as an expression of an unknown and developing story. She had to constantly revise the narration of her life, which included not only what she had been, but also the discovery of the anticipation of what she would become through the learning process. This was an exciting journey for her that was congruent with her facial expressions of joy and delight.

When I chose a photo from the relationship selection of images I chose the following photo of the two people standing with the sun behind them and their shadow much bigger on the grass.



(Nagasaki 1989)

I chose this image as I have experienced relationship as “one mind in two bodies” which is expressed through the words on the photo. Relationship is about discovery, it is about moving beyond self in relationship and joining with another person. This invites me on a journey into a bigger world which is expressed through the shadow in the image.

I linked this relationship photo with the following photo on learning. This photo is taken standing in a tunnel, looking out across to a bridge. The bridge is reflected in the lake below the bridge.



I chose this photo looking through the tunnel to the bridge as it represents the moving beyond self in learning to a new world of discovery. This is an alive dynamic that can occur when relationships join in learning. In my journal I wrote,

Relationships offer me the opportunity to examine alternative interpretations of our world and experiences by reflecting upon and experiencing another's point of view. The more reflective and open I am to the perspectives of others, then the richer I am as a person.

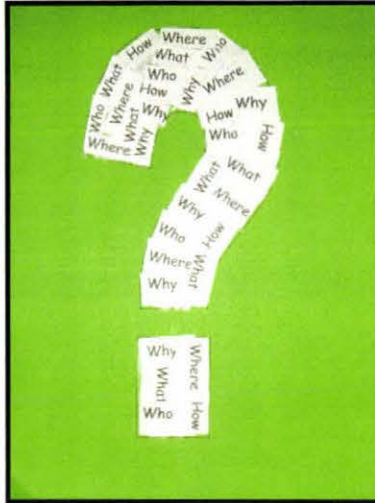
Justine was asked to select an image from the photos she had taken which represented learning for her. She chose the photo of the things that brought her comfort demonstrating the relationship of safety.



Justine spent some time sharing the meaning of each of the items in the photo, but the underlying message was that safety, trust and her level of comfort either gave or denied her opportunity for learning and being in relationship. At this point in the interview Justine's voice changed to a harsh and sharp tone, she looked at me, was aware of the change in her tone and explained this. She said,

I was in a situation where I was personally growing and learning and some things happened that I lost trust and felt particularly unsafe within a learning context. I feel so angry that I have been denied the prospect of learning and opening myself up to making discoveries. I am a creative person and I feel like a wet blanket has been put over my life and my sense of being alive in that context is not present.

Justine then proceeded to choose a photo from the learning selection of photos. She chose the photo of the question mark, with the words encapsulated in it of "who, what, how, where and why".



The photo represented for Justine the unknown place of learning in her life. In making the linkage between this image and the image of the items that made her feel safe and protected she said,

I live in the juxtaposition of needing to feel safe in a supportive environment to embark on a journey of discovery in learning. I know that I have to move outside of my safety if I am to make new discoveries, but I also know the risk. Discovery is important to me in my profession as a child educator. I am always asking the children to make new discoveries, so I need to take some of my own medicine!

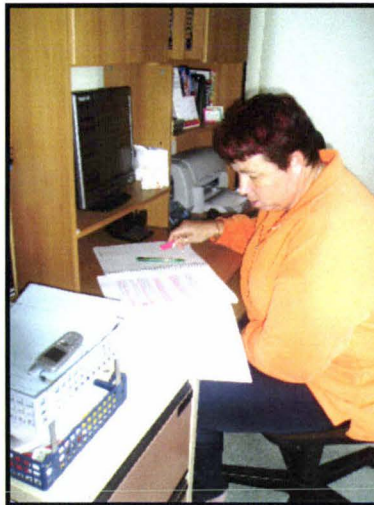
When Coral was asked to select a photo which described for her relationship she chose the photo of the person sitting alone engrossed in the book.



For Coral this represented that relationship is also with learning content, and can be with physical objects. It was not necessary for Coral to see relationship purely as defined as between two people. Coral described relationship with her book in this way:

a good book can begin as a number of pages, but as I begin to read I form relationship with the content on the pages and the encounter with the book can take me to a new place of discovery.

When Coral was asked to select a photo from the learning photos she chose the photo of her sitting at her desk studying.



This photo signified for Coral the flexibility in learning for her. This could take place at home, at work, in formal institutions but flexibility was not limited to the physical place of learning. Coral described flexibility in learning as

The walls of my life keep being stretched in learning, it's like the elasticity of my understanding, values and knowledge must remain flexible. It is a process of continual movement as I come face to face with views that challenge who I am. Learning has the potential to transform you so keeping an attitude of openness is critical for me in learning.

Coral concluded that learning was not complete until she had acted upon the changed assumptions, beliefs and values that had come from the new discoveries in learning. This is consistent with other participants who determined that learning that allowed transformation to occur, could in fact be a painful process. The pain occurred as participants opened themselves to an examination of their beliefs which bring discomfort amidst discovery.

Discovery for the participants in this study is an active process in which they constructed new ideas and concepts about the meaning of learning based upon their past experiences and knowledge within a supportive community where they could be authenticity themselves.

Fourth Interview

The fourth interview was conducted in order to cross validate the emerging category of discovery. Participants engaged in the process of interactive drawing by using A3 paper and crayons to represent the word discovery.

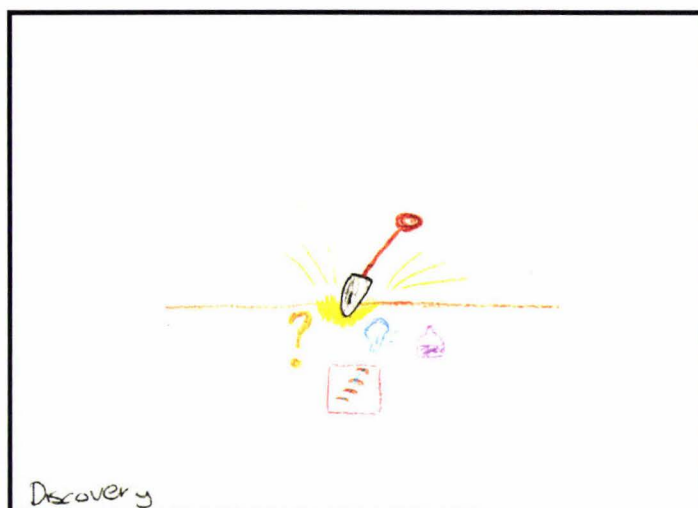
Gina was very eager to represent discovery and very quickly came to an image that spoke to her of discovery.



Gina represented the light appearing for a person after a period of chaos in learning. This demonstrated for Gina the movement, and the need to go deeper through a process of change when we make discoveries in learning. She described it in this way

When you are flying in a plane sometimes you come across very fluffy cloud that you can see blue sky appearing through the mist. Other times you have to fly through clouds that are thick, dark and very turbulent and you spend some time bouncing around in this eager to find clear sky. Learning can be like flying through dark, thick clouds which can be scary and turbulent. Throughout the thick clouds you are eagerly anticipating the clear sky of understanding. Often in learning there is no other way than to go through the turbulent clouds in order to gain the clear sky of understanding and discovery.

When Justine was asked to represent discovery she took some time before she picked up the crayons and began to express herself on the paper. She chose to represent a spade that was digging below the surface into what is unknown and finding treasure.



Justine spoke of the learner needing to remain open to what they might find below the surface and being careful not to discard something because of the first impressions you make of it.

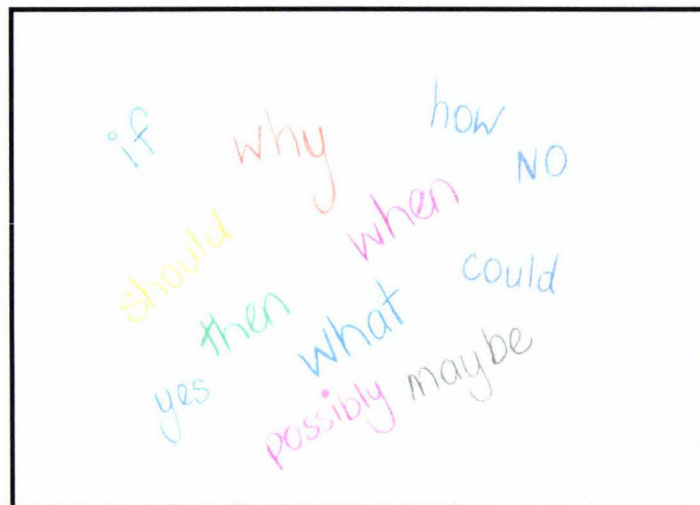
When Angela was asked to enter into the process of interactive drawing around the word discovery she was full of excitement and vitality. There was strength and spirit to what she was representing and she moved her body in time with her drawing which demonstrated the energy behind this representation of discovery.



Angela represented a Koro fern representing the movement, the life changing power of discovery and the truth that brings transformation in learning. She verbally expressed herself in this way:

Discovery is about going deeper together in order to find truth. Within each of us we hold truth that we need to discover in each other. When we look together there is more to learn. I remember being asked to go to a tutorial having read an article. I was clear in my mind what I had articulated in response to the article. When we met as a tutorial group I made the discovery that I was “way off beam” and had misinterpreted the article. It was only as we grappled with the meaning of the article as a group that the other members showed me the truth. This gave me the opportunity to examine how I had got to the meaning I had made and readjust my thinking and understanding. It was a moment of discovery about the importance of relationship in learning.

When I represented discovery through interactive drawing I took my blank A3 paper and wrote a number of inquiry words onto the page.



The words that for me allow discoveries to be made are “if, why, how, when, could, maybe, possibly, yes, no, then and what”. These words allow learning to be unchartered, give permission to be creative in learning and bring about an openness of mind, heart and soul. Learning for me is often about starting with a blank canvas and as the words are questioned and interacted with, the canvas begins to take on an energy and form not earlier present.

The transforming power of learning was expressed by all participants as they were interviewed in regard to discovery. The key principle expressed by the participants was that learning will occur when participants interact with significant others and material of essence critical to their own context.

Conclusion

Discovery occurred in the relationship of a supportive group of learners. This process of discovery led participants into the consideration of alternative, less constrained “worlds” and into a new possibility of becoming (Polinghorne, 1988). The movement of the journey through change, the digging for new possibilities, and the transforming process of discovery reinforced the emergence of discovery as a core category through the grounded theory process.

Chapter Six

DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter integrates the findings discussed in the previous chapter with the insight of literature. This study has used grounded theory research methodology where the extensive research of literature is undertaken and woven into the emergent theory through a process of constant comparison (Glaser, 1998). The literature that provided a background to this research was discussed in chapter two. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a perspective of literature which further strengthens the emergent theory and signifies the contribution that this research makes in adult education.

This chapter is divided into six sections and is concerned with the theoretical categories of S.A.C.R.E.D. (Synergy, Authenticity, Connectedness, Reflection, Empowering and Discovery) Each section has the same format. Firstly there is an introduction and table that provides the overview for this category. Secondly the discussion brings together the findings of the participants with the literature.

Synergy

The participants believed that the relational dimension had the potential to create synergy in learning. This dimension of relationship included mutuality, collaboration and discovery in the process of learning. The properties which they believed contributed to the exponential learning experience that comprised synergy are detailed below in Table 17. This table provides an overview of the participants' responses gained through the interview process and is placed alongside the literature sources that focus the emergence of this category.

Category	Properties	Participants Coding	Literature
Synergy	Exploration	J,C,A	(Brookfield, 1986)
	Curiosity	M,G,J	(Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998; Reio & Wiswell, 2000)
	New directions and discoveries	M,C,A	(Brookfield, 1986)
	Possibilities and Ideas	J,M,C,A	(Ferrer, De La Cruz, Cabaces, Reynaldo, & Dasig, 2002; Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004; Parkes, Schneider, & Bochner, 1999)
	Interactive	J,G,C,A,M	(Cole & Knowles, 2001; S. Duck, 1993; Lave & Wenger, 1999)
	Experiential	G,M,J,A	(Kolb & Fry, 1975; Yorks & Kasl, 2002)
	Potential unleashed and realised	G,J,M	(Davis, 1971; Delors, 1996; Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004; Parkes, Schneider, & Bochner, 1999)
	Unexpected outcomes from being together	G,J,M,A	(Chukwu, 1995; Cole & Knowles, 2001; Davis, 1971; Harris, 2003; Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 1998; Reio & Wiswell, 2000)
	Draw upon collective resources	J,A,M,G	(Bird, 2001; Chukwu, 1995; Duck, 1993; hooks, 2002; Mashek & Aron, 2004)
	Exponential	M,G,C	(Bird, 2001; Cole & Knowles, 2001)
	Togetherness,	J,A	(Bird, 2001; Cole & Knowles, 2001) (hooks, 1993, 2000a, 2002, 2003b)
	Team	J,C	(Ferrer, De La Cruz, Cabaces, Reynaldo, & Dasig, 2002)
	Individual in Relationship	J, A, G,M	(Delors, 1996; Lave & Wenger, 1999; Parkes, Schneider, & Bochner, 1999)
Complimentary	C,M,M,	(Ferrer, De La Cruz, Cabaces, Reynaldo, & Dasig, 2002)	

Table 17: Links between findings and literature – synergy

Synergy is the enhanced result of two or more people, groups or organisations working together. In other words one plus one equals three. It comes from the Greek word “synergia” which means joint work and co-operative action (synergy, 2005). Synergy is the outcome of many interacting parts where the “collaborative combination of skills, knowledge and experience can produce unexpected insights” (Harris, 2003, p.86).

Participants found that if they had the opportunity to learn from peers in a group of learners then knowledge could be considered as belonging to the whole community rather than any particular individual. The collaboration and working together on a common purpose drew out of the combined resources in the learning community and released synergy in learning (Bird, 2001).

Synergy occurs when individuals adopt a spirit of mutuality where learners can feel accepted, respected and supported (Brookfield, 1986). Learning takes place naturally through association with peers and much of the motivation to learn and explore comes from this association based in acceptance and respect.

The accessing of the dynamic of mutuality was critical in the process of learning for these participants. Mutuality is defined as “the bidirectional movement of feelings, thoughts, and activity between persons in relationship...that transcends the immediate and reciprocal exchange of benefits. The recognition of mutuality in a learning environment brings shared understanding” (Duck, 1993, p. 168).

The concept of resources held within an individual includes their material goods, knowledge (conceptual, informational, procedural) and “social assets which when shared mutually in a learning context have the potential to facilitate the achievement of learning goals within any group” (Mashek & Aron, 2004, p. 27). Synergy occurs when mutuality exists that allows each individual access to the resources held by any individual within the group. Lave and Wegner (1999) assert that learning and knowing are embedded in the relationships and interactions of people engaged in activities within their social and culturally structured world.

Ferrer (2002) developed the spiral of learning (Figure 5) which demonstrates that tacit, individual knowledge and experiences are made accessible through person to person collaboration, sharing, discussion, and networking, which describes mutuality. Each cycle in this spiral is highlighted by the collective synthesis of individual insights and knowledge that transforms individual learning experiences and energises further exchanges. This results in an ever-widening spiral of learning between the individuals and then the learning group.

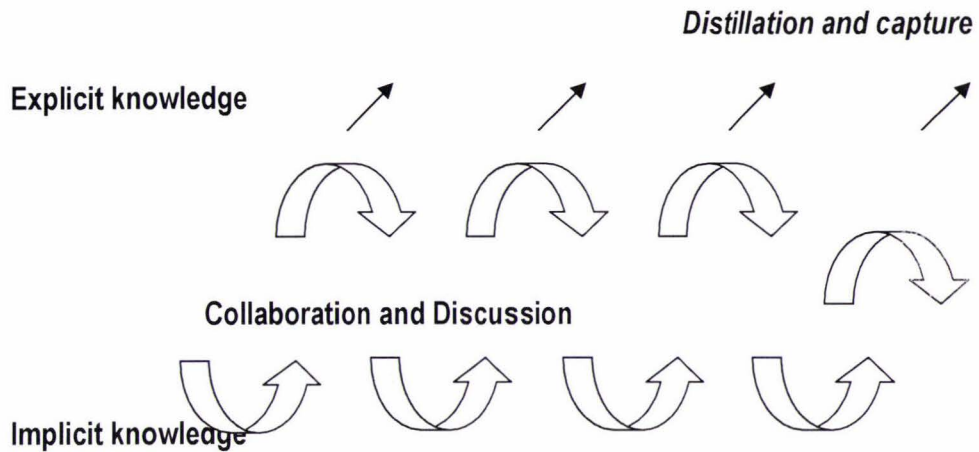


Figure 5: Spiral of Learning
 (Ferrer, De La Cruz, Cabaces, Reynaldo, & Dasig, 2002)

Mutuality is also the interchangeability of roles between the learners and their shared affinity regarding the “purpose, process and results” (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p.113). From the interview process when participants felt encouraged, supported and nurtured, they were more prepared to enter into sometimes painful and threatening experiences. This meant the risky process of revealing themselves to themselves and to others led to synergy being released (Parkes, Schneider, & Bochner, 1999).

When people are given the opportunity to learn together which involves them in unaccustomed forms of action, then differences and even conflicts between individuals pale and sometimes disappear. A new form of identity is created when the process of synergy enables people to transcend the routine of their personal lives and attach value to what they have in common as against what divides them (Delors, 1996).

Participants identified curiosity as a property of synergy. Curiosity may be viewed as an intrinsic motivator. Knowles (1998) developed a model of adult learning which included a number of assumptions. The sixth assumption underlying the model is the notion that intrinsic and extrinsic motivators are important considerations in adult learning.

A study in which 233 service employees were administered four curiosity instruments found that “adult curiosity directly influences the ever important learning association with the socialisation process and indirectly influences both the technical and interpersonal dimensions of job

performance” (Reio & Wiswell, 2000 p.26). Internal motivators such as curiosity are viewed as the most potent motivators for nurturing the adult learning experience (Reio & Wiswell, 2000).

It was evident from the interviews of each participant in this study that when they joined themselves to another in learning, they became greater than themselves and the combined group dynamic was greater than the sum of the individuals. Individuals moved from a place of being individuals who were present with another, to being individuals who were co-present with others, opening the very core of who they were to each other. Synergy brought a sense of refuelling, greatness and strength for Justine.

Synergy comes from a place of life and unconditional acceptance amidst people who want to make discoveries. (Justine)

The properties of refuelling, strength and the sharing insight, of unexpected outcomes from being together and drawing upon the collective resources were discovered in the interview process. Joining with others allows movement out of isolation and powerlessness and allows energy to flow in connection (Jordan, Walker, & Hartling, 2004). If people work together co-operatively, the realisation is made that individual efforts can often be improved through the combined effort of what each has to contribute to the learning context (Davis, 1971).

For hooks, learning must create space for change, invention and be a catalyst for drawing out the uniqueness of each participant (hooks, 1994). The participants believed that true learning came when synergy released the belief that “I am because we are, and we are because I am” (Chukwu, 1995, p. 3).

Conclusion

This section has identified the importance of the relational dimension in creating synergy in learning. This dimension of relationship includes mutuality, collaboration and discovery in the spiral of learning. The place of exploration and curiosity has been recognised. All of these properties contributed to the exponential learning experience that comprises synergy.

Authenticity

The authentic self is the person that can be found at our absolute core. Our authenticity is the “totality of a complex, organised, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions

that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence” (Purkey, 1988). It is the part of a person not defined by job, function or role. It is the composite of all skills, talents and wisdom and being. Individuals carry uniqueness deep inside themselves, “like pearls hidden in their shells” (Burkitt, 1990, p.114), which when revealed to others reveals authenticity.

Participants identified that the following properties were critical for the discovery of authenticity. These properties contributed to the identification of the category of authenticity.

Table 18 provides an overview of the participants responses gained through the interview process and is placed alongside the literature sources that focus the emergence of this category.

Core Category	Properties	Evidenced by	Literature
Authenticity	Identity	A, G,M,J,G	(Burkitt, 1990; Gee, 2001; Ivanic, 1997; Jarvis, 2006; Rogers, 1996; Sampson, 1993)
	What’s Important to me Uniqueness	A, G, J, M	(Corey, Corey, & Callanan, 1998; McGraw, 2003; Mead, 1934; Purkey, 1988; Sampson, 1993; Vella, 1995)
	Option to be different	M, G, J	(Burkitt, 1990; Jarvis, 2006; Perlman, 1979; Piver, 2004; Sarup, 1998)
	Genuine	M, G, J, M, C	(Huitt, 2004; Piver, 2004; Rogers, 1996; Shanti, 2002)
	Bone fide	M, A, G	(Brigham, 1986; Franken, 1994; Huitt, 2004; Shanti, 2002)
	Vulnerable	G,M,A,J	(McGraw, 2003; Shanti, 2002; Smith, 1996)
	Painful	A,M,J	(Brigham, 1986; Burkitt, 1990; Franken, 1994; Sarup, 1998; Smith, 1996)
	Holistic	J,G,M	(Jarvis, 2006; Sampson, 1993)
	Core Values remain amidst others	G,J,M	(Burkitt, 1990; Cooper, 1983; Corey, Corey, & Callanan, 1998; Jarvis, 2006; Mead, 1934; Vella, 1995)
	Who I am	A,G,M,M.,C	(Burkitt, 1990; Gee, 2001; Ivanic, 1997; Jarvis, 2006; Purkey, 1988; Rogers, 1996; Sampson, 1993; Ward, 2003)
	Uniqueness	M,G,J	(Burkitt, 1990; Gee, 2001; Ivanic, 1997; P. Jarvis, 2006; Purkey, 1988; Rogers, 1996; Sampson, 1993; Sarup, 1998; Shanti, 2002)
	Embracing my capacity	G,J,A	(Jarvis, 2006; McGraw, 2003; Piver, 2004; Rogers, 1996; Sarup, 1998)
Me amidst We	M,G,C,J,A	(Burkitt, 1990; Chukwu, 1995)	

Table 18: Links between findings and literature – authenticity

Gee (2001) identified two understandings of discovering the authentic self. There is the autobiographical self that embraces prior social and oral history of one's constructed past and personal experiences (cited in Ivanic, 1997). This autobiographical self evolves and is an ongoing narrative of self-definition and authenticity. The oral history brings emphasis to the contexts of culture and situations as well as group affiliations and interactions. If both parts of self are not revealed the genuine nature of learning and the measure of authenticity in the learning context is inhibited (Shanti, 2002). Both Angela and Justine identified these two dimensions when they spoke of continually shaping their own lives by bringing together their present learnings and understanding with their own historic past.

Authenticity requires that we dare to be ourselves, no matter how frightening or strange that self may prove to be. Authenticity can lead to a higher degree of mutual trust, which empowers relationships and fuels the desire to take risks and be the author of something new (Ward, 2003).

Consistent with Sarup (1998) three other participants stated that authenticity required looking at one's self and how this identity has been shaped by one's own past and life experiences. This formed identity was shaped by one's personal set of values and beliefs about their reality (Gee, 2001; Ivanic, 1997).

Sampson (1993) in contrast to the participants and other writers (Gee, 2001; Ivanic, 1997) argue that individuals have a container that contains all the important features that comprise a person – everything that a person owns – and that this is distinct, separate and cut off from all that is not part of the person, located outside of the container. This can be a protective means of functioning that protects and separates' individuals from others and appears to drive a deep wedge between our feelings and our ability to express them in public (Burkitt, 1990). This allows the authentic self to be divided from its own internal world and their external world. When this process occurs in learning, the participants found from their experience that learning was limited.

Authenticity requires that we connect with the ever-deeper layers of our felt-experience (McGraw, 2003). Psychologist Carl Rogers drew the same conclusion through psychological observation: "The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change" (Rogers, 1989, p.18). People seek to develop relationships with other people in a learning situation whom they feel they can trust, and the basis for trust is authenticity. Authenticity can be an indicator for the level of freedom we have found in being true to ourselves irrespective of how others might see

us, or other external pressures (Jarvis, 2006). hooks deems that the process of discovering our own self concept is essential in learning (hooks, 1993).

Our authenticity and concept of our self is developed and constructed through the interaction with the environment and then reflecting upon this interaction (Huit, 2004). The notion of environment includes interaction through diverse ways i.e. with people, literature, media and or history, in formal and informal learning contexts. It is through the process of self-reflection that people can come to view themselves in a new and more powerful way and it is through this that individual's can develop themselves authentically (Franken, 1994).

Greater authenticity leads to a higher degree of mutual trust, which empowers relationships and fuels the desire to take risks and be the author of something more than an individual. The figure below illustrates this (Ward, 2003).

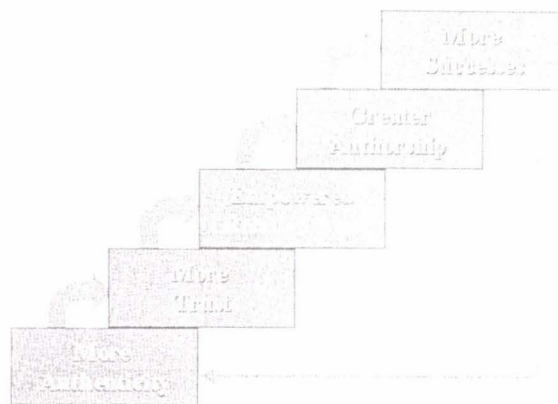


Figure 6: Authenticity Unlocks Synergy (Ward, 2003)

Participants expressed the understanding that authenticity was the basis for sustained success that meant a greater connection with self and one's context, and it started with being true to self by removing a mask. The building of a mask allowed individuals to negotiate the dangerous world of social encounters should they feel threatened or in danger, but did not allow the revealing of the authentic self in a learning environment, hence learning was blocked (Smith, 1996). This defensiveness or protective communication of self comes from an individual's personal scripting (Covey, 1989). This results in a lack of authentic learning individually and probably for the group.

The interviews highlighted the concept that authenticity is not what is contained within, but what transpires through interaction with others (Mead, 1934; Vella, 1995). This way of being can be difficult to grasp for those with an individualistic worldview. A person's individuality is understood

to be expressed and in tandem with social organisation and mutuality of being with in relationship with others.

Relationship in learning can be a “catalyst, an enabling dynamism in the support, nurture and freeing of people’s energies” (Perlman, 1979 p.2). Participants believed that if they were real, and genuine and offered other participants the experience of love and nurture within a learning environment that this would enhance mutual authenticity and improve the quality of individual learning and most likely the group learning experience.

Conclusion

It has been found that authenticity is a holistic activity in which learning and relationship are interconnected with life experience and personal values. When trust is built through authentic relationship the risk of new learning can take place. Authenticity is not static but is dynamic as demonstrated in Wards model of authenticity (Ward, 2003). The authentic person will live and learn in “full awareness of the possibilities of action, belief and purpose that are open to them” (Cooper, 1983, p.19).

Connectedness

Connectedness is the relationship people potentially have with others. Participants reflected that this was fostered when relationships were positive, when people had the skills and opportunity to make friends and interact constructively with others. Feeling safe and secure also meant that the participants increased their tendency to develop positive relationships. The question has been raised “why is connectedness so difficult to achieve when we know – with considerable certainty – that it is connectedness that allows us best to pursue our mission, the mission of knowing, teaching and learning” (Palmer, 1999, p.2). The answer to this question lies within our culture of individuality, rather than in community (Chukwu, 1995). Connectedness is a feeling in the bones of being a part of something larger than oneself. The “something larger” could be a learning outcome, a learning context, or a learning group. It is the essence of connectedness that sustains a learning environment.

Participants identified the following properties that were important for connectedness to occur in relationship and learning. These properties contributed to the identification of the category of connectedness. Table 19 provides an overview of the participants’ responses gained through the

interview process and is placed alongside the literature sources that focus the emergence of this category.

Core Category	Properties	Participants Codings	Literature
Connectedness	One with another	C,A,G,M	(Bulbeck, 1997; Funk, 2004; Hallowell, 2003; Jamieson, 2002; Knapp, 2005; Lorde, 1984; Mashek & Aron, 2004; Perlman, 1979; Prager, 1995; Reis & Shaver, 1988; Smith, 1996)
	Heart beating as one	G, G,J	(Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarul, 1986; Bulbeck, 1997; Funk, 2004; Hill, 2004; Jamieson, 2002; Knapp, 2005; Lorde, 1984; Mashek & Aron, 2004; Perlman, 1979; Prager, 1995; Reis & Shaver, 1988; Smith, 1996)
	Celebration of each other	M	(Hallowell, 2003; Turner, 1985)
	Meeting of hearts, mind, soul	M,M,G,J,A	(Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarul, 1986; Hill, 2004)
	Emotions joined	M,G,C, A	(Hill, 2004; Ryan & David, 2003)
	Bond	G,C,J,A,M	(Bulbeck, 1997; Funk, 2004; hooks, 1993, 2000a, 2003b; Jamieson, 2002; Knapp, 2005; Lorde, 1984; Mashek & Aron, 2004; Perlman, 1979; Prager, 1995; Reis & Shaver, 1988; Ryan & David, 2003; Smith, 1996; Turner, 1985)
	Opening of mind to others	M,A,J	(Hallowell, 2003; Ryan & David, 2003)
	Celebrating learning milestones	G,G,J	(Ryan & David, 2003)
	Encouraging others to discover	A,J,C	(Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarul, 1986; Ryan & David, 2003)
	Offers hope	M,J,G	(Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarul, 1986)
	Drawing out the resources of others to join with my resources	M,G,C,A	(Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarul, 1986; Hallowell, 2003; hooks, 1993, 2000a, 2003b; Ryan & David, 2003; Turner, 1985)
	Each person shaped by learning	M,C,G	(Hallowell, 2003; Turner, 1985)
Common goal	M,C,A,G	(Turner, 1985)	

Table 19: Links between findings and literature – connectedness

Connectedness is the force that urges us to ally, to affiliate, to enter into mutual relationships, to take strength and grow through co-operative behaviour in learning. Often invisible connectedness sustains us (Hallowell, 2003). The possibility of connectedness reassures us that no matter how scary things may become, there is a hand for you in the dark (Hallowell, 2003). bell hooks (1990) believes that when we know love and the shared spirit, this is then truly divine communion.

The phenomenon of connectedness determined by Turner (1985) states that when cohesion, co-operation, altruism, empathy and shared norms are present learning is effective. This is the reported experience of the participants. The deep sense of mutual resonance in learning brings a feeling of joy, or elation, or perhaps a sense of peace and relaxation; it is experienced as a sense of connectedness (Hill, 2004).

Consistent with Hallowell (2003) participants reported that connectedness included both the content of the learning material and the connection with the learning group. This is congruent with the work of Belenky and Hayes (1986, 2001) who drew upon the work of Gilligan (1982) and identified that women are more likely to use a connected way of knowing which emphasised understanding, empathy, acceptance and collaboration and led to a deeper experience of learning. However a recent Australian study has found that while women were more likely to learn in relationship with others, the factor of greater significance was the social context and was not based just upon gender consideration (Ryan & David, 2003).

Connectedness is a sense of belonging, a sense of accompaniment. Hallowell suggests six types of connectedness (Hallowell, 2003). Familial connectedness between parent and child which, when maintained, preserves meaningful ties to rootedness, tradition and security in a person's world. Historical connectedness enables one to feel the presence of the past as in their own lives through customs, traditions and rituals. "Our memories are stitching and knitting all the time the fabulous tapestry of our associative inner lives so that we are, in our present lives, always connected through memory to the vastness of our pasts, in all the details and arresting vividness of the original events" (Hallowell, 2003, p.133). Hallowell maintains the belief that it is the rich and deep mysteries that keep us historically connected to what has come and gone, the comfort of reminiscing, and the knowledge of growth and the wisdom of perspective.

Social connectedness is our own connectedness with other people of ones choosing and with one's community. Informational connectedness supports being comfortable around information, of

feeling supported, fed and informed by it, rather than feeling threatened or smothered by information (Hallowell, 2003). Institutional connectedness is our relationship with institutions and organisations that we feel valued and appreciated by – this is seen through collaboration and not hierarchy. Transcendent connectedness is our relationship with what is beyond (Hallowell, 2003). It makes sense of being part of a cosmic universe and joins us with the unseen and unknown, with what is eternal. This connected way of knowing and learning is at the heart of learning experience.

Participants in this study would collaborate with Hallowell (2003) in suggesting that all those components when stranded together, to form connectedness, are required to be present in the learning context for the depth of mystery to be realised that is considered in this study.

The properties of engagement with others, emotional connectedness, offering hope, encouraging others to discover and celebrating learning milestones were echoed by the participants and this dimension of social connectedness is discussed by Hallowell (2003).

Conclusion

It is evident from the findings and the literature that when an individual feels secure in their sense of self in the social and learning context this releases belonging and gives connectedness in learning. Learning is stimulated when mutuality, acceptance and collaboration occur (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarul, 1986; Hayes, 2001). Participants experience correlation with the framework of connectedness identified by Hallowell (2003) including familial, historical, social, information and ideas, institutional and transcendent connectedness. The participants' findings and the literature gave significance to connectedness when it included engagement with others through openness of mind and heart, common goals and the sharing of experience. This further strengthened this core category of connectedness.

Reflection

From the interview process emerged the essential elements of synergy, authenticity, connectedness, empowering and discovery as requirements for the learning environment. It was essential to have these components reinforced through the process of reflection. Reinforcement in learning is the dynamic of experiencing skills, attitudes, knowledge in a diverse environment that engages participants through building safety, trust, commitment and authentic relationships (Vella, 2002).

Each participant chose the word reflection as a critical factor in relationships and also with learning. Reflection was chosen on the strength of the data collected by the participants. Table 20 provides an overview of the participants responses gained through the interview process and is placed alongside the literature sources that focus the emergence of this category.

Core Category	Properties	Participants Coding	Literature
Reflection	Commitment to the journey	J,G,M	(Mezirow, 2000; Le Cornu, 2005)
	Access to each other	J	(Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985; Le Cornu, 2005)
	Vision	G,A,J	(Kolb & Fry, 1975; Le Cornu, 2005; Marton & Booth, 1997)
	Non-Abusive	J	(Vella, 2002)
	Safety	G,M,J	(Vella, 2002)
	Rapport and trust	M,A,J	(hooks, 1993, 2000a, 2003b; Le Cornu, 2005; Vella, 2002)
	Help each other over obstacles	A,J,M	(Cinnamond & Zimpher, 1990 ; Kolb & Fry, 1975; Le Cornu, 2005; Mezirow, 1991)
	Gentleness as transitions of learning occur	J,A,M	(Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985; Le Cornu, 2005; Marton & Booth, 1997; Usher, 1993; Vella, 2002)
	Encouragement in cathartic moments	J,G,A,M	(Cinnamond & Zimpher, 1990; Marton & Booth, 1997; Mezirow, 1991; Jarvis, 1995)

Table 20: Links between findings and literature – reflection

Reflection can be defined as “active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends” (Dewey, 1990, p.118). Dewey the “father of reflection” suggested that there are five stages in the reflective process for a learner. Initially reflection occurs as suggestions are made, that enable the mind to leap towards a possible conclusion. This is followed by an academic discussion of the difficulty or the complexity of the issues before the learner. Built upon this is the belief that one idea builds upon another and this helps to initiate and direct the observations that learners are making. This enables a cognitive response to the ideas being pursued in the learning environment and once this has been established by the learners then they are in a position to test the new learnings (Dewey, 1990).

The difficulty with Dewey's understanding of reflection is that it remains individualistic where learners reflect on a particular experience individually (Cinnamond & Zimpher, 1990). This is totally in contrast with the meaning given of reflection by the participants in this study who believe that reflection is more effective in a community of learners rather than in isolation as an independent learner.

Dewey also gave limited attention to the place of emotions. It was the later work of Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) that drew upon the insights from the psychoanalytic traditions. This new insight defined reflection as learning where "people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it" (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985, p.19). The participants experience of reflection was greatly enhanced when they had the opportunity to consider a past experience, explore it with greater options and then evaluate this experience in the light of new data, which is consistent with Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985).

Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) reworked Dewey's framework of five components into three components:

1. The recall and detail of events and experiences from an individual's memory.
2. Connection with a learner's feelings using positive feelings and removing the limiting feelings.
3. Assessing the experience through the filter of previous knowledge and intentions with the integration of a new framework for understanding.

Schon (1987) contributed to the understanding of reflection by developing the concept of reflection in, and on action. This enables individuals to give time exploring behaviour, and dynamics of personal behaviour and community dynamics so that from the reflection questions are developed about the learning issue and the process of learning in the community. The distinction has been debated as to whether reflection is a formal or informal process (Usher, Bryant, & Johnston, 1997).

David Kolb (1984) developed a model of experiential learning from four elements: concrete experience, observation and reflection, formation of abstract concepts and testing in new situations. He used reflection as a means to change practices and theories as participants reflected on the observation and testing of new ideas. Boud, Keogh, & Walker (1985) however,

argue that Kolb (1984) pays insufficient attention to the workings of reflection because it was linked only to concrete experience.

Jarvis (1995) drew upon Kolb's model to work with a number of different adult groups to assess their experience of learning. In response to this he developed a model which promoted different routes in the learning experience. These included non-learning, non-reflective learning and reflective learning. There has been limited assessment of this model in adult learning.

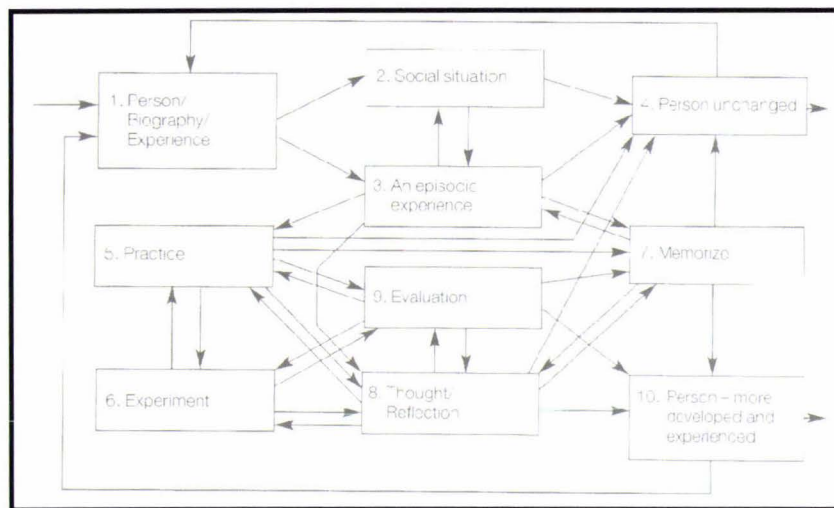


Figure 7: Jarvis model of adult learning (2004a, p.106)

Jarvis model adds flexibility to the model of adult learning, but still has vulnerability through the use of stages to track the process of adult learning. Nevertheless the participants experienced reflection in a multi-faceted way as in Jarvis's model as contrasted with Kolb.

Marton and Booth (1997) challenged Jarvis' distinction between, the inner world of the person and the outer world of society and culture amidst the learning process. Marton and Booth (1997) propose that learning occurs holistically with an inseparability of person and knowledge, whereby, "learning takes place, knowledge is born, by a change in something in the world as experienced by a person" (p. 139). Hooks (2003a) invites people to discover the power of the soul in reflection and the combining force of their inner and outer world. Two participants spoke at length about reflection of their inner world and their outer world and the process of change that occurred in their identity as a result of reflection.

As learning involves reflectively transforming the beliefs, attitudes, opinions and emotional reactions of our inner world, constructing what we give meaning to, the process of reflection can bring transformation to our inner world of meaning and our outer world of action (Mezirow, 1991).

Reflecting upon Jarvis, Le Cornu (2005) proposes a holistic model of experiential learning that shifts from a horizontal to a vertical direction, with a greater emphasis on personal awareness and the place of reflection. Le Cornu (2005) establishes her model within an environment of personal growth and time. Le Cornu (2005) validates the work of Marton and Booth (1997) with their phenomenographical approach and brings together the three aspects of the person's own biography and experience, the communal situation and the episodic experience and brings these into one dynamic space. This reflects the dynamic flow between the person, their experience and their social context.

A second significant modification that Le Conru (2005) makes concerns the place of reflection. Within Jarvis' model reflection is stage 8 in the learning process. It is advocated that reflection is part of every part of the learning process. Le Conru (2005) proposes to reposition the place of reflection with a more dynamic centrality in the learning model.

The final change Le Conru (2005) makes is to move away from the concept of non-learning to two new outcomes of either a more experienced person (not stipulating what kind of change has occurred) or a more "existentially changed" (p.177) person which completes the integration of learning.

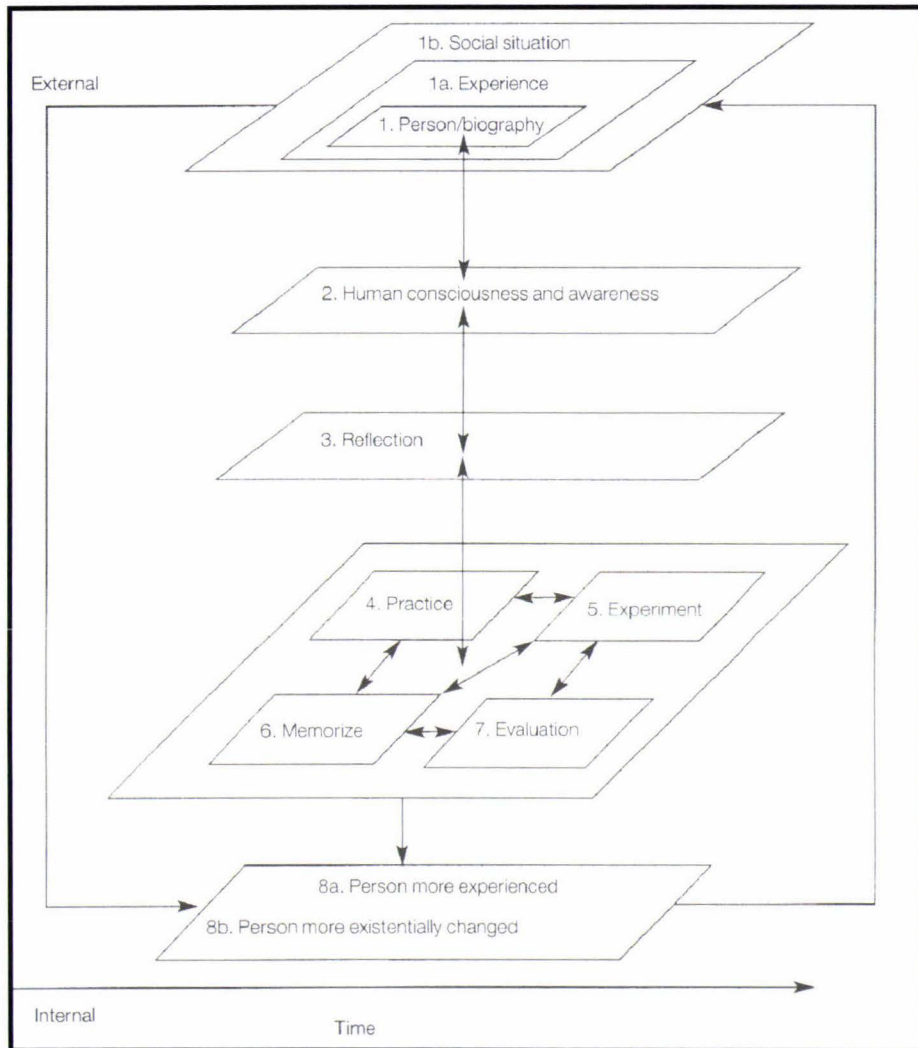


Figure 8: A holistic model of the processes of learning (Le Cornu, 2005, p. 178)

The dilemma of this newly developed model as expressed by Le Cornu (2005), is that it has not been tested or critiqued. However in this study the participants would align themselves with the work of Le Cornu (2005), Marton and Booth (1997), Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985) in placing reflection as a central component of learning bringing a holistic approach.

Reflection involves a review of the way we have consciously, coherently and purposefully applied ideas and our way of being in the past and now reflecting, strategising and implementing new learnings to gain new levels of potential (Mezirow, 1991).

This work of the participants in interactive drawing represented the individuals own personal self awareness and human consciousness that was brought to reflection alongside the collective nature of reflection in a group setting. This fits with the holistic model of Le Conru (2005). The revealing of self in the process of reflection recognises that an individual brings their own unique experiences, their own life story and social contexts of learning.

The participants revealed that when the authentic learner was aware of their past and present this enabled the process of reflection to provide momentum for the person, which brought about change. This process of reflection is in harmony with Le Conru's (2005) holistic model of learning. This is the existentially changed learner that Le Conru (2005) identifies that collaborates with the participants in this study.

However one participant in this study became aware of their past and present obstacles to learning and in the process of reflection withdrew from the research. This concurs with Le Conru's (2005) model of a more knowledgeable person who is not existentially changed in the process of learning.

Conclusion

Participants found that connection with others and the place of emotions were important components of reflection. Participants' experiences of reflection were set in an experiential context (Kolb, 1984) in which their inner and outer worlds could not be separated (Marton & Booth, 1997). There was a dynamic interchange between a person's history, social context and experience which placed reflection centrally in the learning model (Le Cornu, 2005). The process of placing literature alongside the findings reinforced the place of vision, trust, mutuality and safety as characteristics for safe interpersonal reflection. The participants believed that personal growth in the learning context occurred as they embraced the process of reflection.

Empowerment

Bandura (1982) was strategic in developing the concept of empowerment in learning. This is the belief in a person's effectiveness, in his or her ability to cope with a specific situation. Bandura's theory of empowerment emphasises the expectancies that people have of themselves and others

in the learning process (Drury, 2003). Empowerment builds a sense of self-confidence, synergy and vision amongst participants in a learning environment.

Empowerment for the participants as a process rather than an outcome was spoken of during the photo elicitation interviews of participants. Empowerment is described as:

a series of experiences in which individuals learn to see a closer correspondence between their goals and a sense of how to achieve them, gain greater access to and control over resources and where people, organisations and communities gain mastery over their lives. (Zimmerman 1995, p.583)

Collaborating with this view is Kieffer (1984, p.27) that “empowerment is not a commodity to be acquired, but a transforming process constructed through action”.

Table 21 provides an overview of the participants responses gained through the interview process and is placed alongside the literature sources that focus the emergence of this category.

Core Category	Properties	Participants Coding	Literature
Empowerment	Respect for others	J,C,A,M	(Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Frye, 1992)
	Life giving to others Empowerment	J,C,A,G	(Bandura, 1982; Delors, 1996; hooks, 1993, 2000a, 2003b; McAdams, 2001; Rees, 1998; Zimmerman, 1995)
	Nurturing, protective value	J,M,G	(Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Harrison, & Holliday, 1998a; hooks, 1993, 2000a, 2003b; Smith King, Wenger, 1998)
	Safety	J,M,G,A	(Smith King, Harrison, & Holliday, 1998a; Wenger, 1998)
	Experimental	G,J,M	(Bandura, 1982; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Drury, 2005; McAdams, 2001)
	Feed Forward	G,J,G	(Zimmerman, 1995)
	Calling upon other people resources	J,C,G,M	(Bandura, 1982; Drury, 2005)
	Belief and support	A,C,J,M	(Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Frye, 1992; hooks, 1993, 2000a, 2003b; Smith King, Harrison, & Holliday, 1998a),
	Courage amidst vulnerability	J,G,M,A,C	(hooks, 1993, 2000a, 2003b; McAdams, 2001)
	Respect for others	J,G,M,C	(Frye, 1992; Smith King, Harrison, & Holliday, 1998a)

Table 21: Links between findings and literature – empowerment

For the participants in this study, the statement by Marilyn Frye (1992) brings together their meaning of the importance of relationship in promoting empowerment.

To make a difference... women have to do impossible things and think impossible thoughts, and that is only done in community. Without a community of sense, an individual cannot keep hold of her radical insights, she becomes confused, she forgets what she knew. (p. 75)

Wenger asserts that empowerment does not occur in isolation, but rather within a sense of community. Empowerment occurs when people learn by participating in groups that practice particular skills that are valued by that group (Wenger, 1998). Empowerment can develop self-confidence or what Bandura (1982) calls our "self-efficacy". This can be defined as a belief in "behavioural competence" in a particular learning situation (McAdams, 2001, p. 207).

Empowerment brings a change in the state of mind and challenges the assumptions that are being held by people. This process of examination, reflection and revision of these assumptions in a learning context can lead to empowerment. The experience of dialogue and solidarity combined with a new emerging understanding of self can lead to a new social and political consciousness that has the potential to lead to greater action and often leads to addressing patriarchal systemic issues (Rees, 1998). All participants in the study raised the importance of nurturing, protecting and value which they linked to providing courage amongst vulnerability amidst belief and support.

Empowerment enables participants to decide what actions they would take to materialise the outcomes they desire. This vision can happen through a complex chain of cause and effect that happens over periods of time. Instead of relying on others as the sole source of what actions to take, empowered participants possess a cognitive capacity that enables them to construct the future. This shared vision will involve thinking through, identifying and taking specific actions in order to achieve the desired outcome of learning (Drury, 2005).

Empowerment is a vital component of the learning process and must be activated because each individual needs to be able to shape their own learning process. Empowerment is motivational and gives room for new discoveries to be made as Angela discovered in the interviewing process.

In the 1996 UNESCO report, *“Learning, The Treasure Within”* four pillars of empowerment in life long learning were addressed (Delors, 1996). One of the pillars was “learning to be” which recognised the ability to act with greater autonomy, judgement and personal responsibility. It was acknowledged that a person’s education must realise the person’s potential: memory, reasoning, aesthetic sense, physical capacities and communication skills which led to empowerment. This is consistent with Angela’s understanding and experience of empowerment of what it means to “be” fully present with another in the process of learning.

Justine’s experience of empowerment was in harmony with the theory that empowerment exists when people are willing and motivated to accept responsibility for their learning journey (US Army Corps of Engineers, 2006).

Conger and Kanungo (1988) define a motivational understanding of empowerment that is motivating through enhancing personal efficacy. This process of empowerment builds into an individual an increase in a personal belief in their ability. In Coral’s experience the peer support of others increased her own personal efficacy and resulted in empowerment in her learning context.

Gina identified with the principle that there are barriers that need to be removed that can cause powerlessness, and a low sense of self belief before feelings of empowerment, confidence and self-assurance can begin to emerge in the learning process (Conger & Kanungo, 1988).

The properties of permission giving and courage amidst vulnerability discovered by Justine, Gina and I correlated with Frye (1992) when she states, “We call each other to creative acts of courage, imagination and memory, but they are literally impossible without a community of women which recognises and authorises women’s initiatives” (p.77). These are extremely strong words by Frye, but this reflects the significance of community in creating empowerment for women to put into practice the results of their learning.

Empowerment promotes learning as it gives each individual a sense of ownership, autonomy, control and self-direction while pursuing an outcome of learning (Smith King, Harrison, & Holliday, 1998b) which for the participants came from a foundation of belief and support and permission giving created in the learning context.

Conclusion

Participants affirmed the principle that empowerment is a process not simply an outcome (Bandura, 1982; Zimmerman, 1995). This process is constructed in authentic relationships and a sense of community (Frye, 1992). Such an environment creates an increased self efficacy and self belief that allowed participants to risk the process of “pruning” to release new growth in learning. Empowerment in this dimension leads to actions to achieve desired outcomes and construct a new future (Drury, 2005). The literature and participants’ findings reinforced permission giving, belief and support and relationship that led to a willingness to experiment in learning. The result of this is empowerment.

Discovery

Discovery in learning is “an approach to instruction through which participants interact with their environment by exploring and manipulating objects, wrestling with questions and controversies, or performing experiments” (Ormrod, 1995, p.442). This understanding is consistent with what was discovered by the participants.

In 1938 Dewey stated that “there is an intimate and necessary relation between the process of actual experience and education” (Dewey, 1938, p.20). The theory is that learners are more likely to remember concepts they discover for themselves.

Each participant discussed the “development of an attitude toward learning and inquiry, toward guessing and hunches, toward the possibility of solving problems” (Bruner, 1966, p. 96), all of which led to uncharted destinations and movement in the learning process. The participants highlighted that learning which allowed discovery gave permission for “curiosity to resolve uncertainty and ambiguity” (Bruner, 1961, p.27). This dimension of discovery learning brought an unexpected process of transformation.

Table 22 provides an overview of the participants responses gained through the interview process and is placed alongside the literature sources that focus the emergence of this category.

Core Category	Properties	Participants Coding	Literature
Discovery	Movement	G,A,J,C,M	(Boyd, 1989; Bruner, 1966; Polinghorne, 1988)
	Alive	G,A,M	(Kegan, 1994; Mezirow, 2000; Ormrod, 1995; Polinghorne, 1988)
	Creative	A,J,G,M	(Bruner, 1966; Howard, McGee, Schwartz, & Purcell, 2000; Ormrod, 1995)
	Uncharted Destination	C,J,A,G,M	(Boyd, 1989; Bruner, 1966; Howard, McGee, Schwartz, & Purcell, 2000)
	Changes transform you	C,G,M,A,J	(Dewey, 1990; hooks, 1993, 2000a, 2003b; Kegan, 1994; McGuckin & Burke, 2002; Mezirow, 2000; Polinghorne, 1988)
	Flexibility	J,G,M	(Howard, McGee, Schwartz, & Purcell, 2000; Ormrod, 1995; Polinghorne, 1988)

Table 22: Links between findings and literature – discovery

The participants discovered that instead of focusing on subject content where learning was transferred from one expert to learners who are less knowledgeable, they preferred a learning environment in which there was a sense of community that permitted “critical thinking, discovery and collaboration” (Howard, McGee, Schwartz, & Purcell, 2000, p. 457).

Participants concluded that learning was not complete until they had acted upon the changed assumptions, beliefs and values that had come from the new discoveries in learning. This is consistent with the work of Mezirow (1991) who determined that learning that allows transformation can be a painful process bringing discomfort amidst discovery, as a learner opens themselves to an examination of their beliefs.

Relationships offer the opportunity to examine alternative interpretations of history and experiences by reflecting upon and experiencing another’s point of view. The more “reflective and open we are to the perspectives of others; the richer our imagination of alternative contexts for understanding will be” (Mezirow, 2000, p.20).

Participants also revealed that it was in making discoveries that the process of self-empowerment took on new dimensions. They acquired fresh autonomy as a learner from the past constrained by historical conditions and experiences (Kegan, 1994).

It was Angela’s experience that her self concept was strengthened by understanding her existence as an expression of an unknown and developing story. The journey included constantly

revising the narration of her own life, not only what she had been, but also the discovery or in anticipation of what she would become (Polinghorne, 1988). For the reshaping of an individuals knowledge to occur the participants required the learning environment to be supportive and open.

Boyd, (1989) believes that a supportive group allowed for “experimentation, exploration and disclosure, basic to the realisation of personal transformation” (p.461). Discovery for the participants in this study is an active process. They constructed new ideas and concepts about the meaning of learning based upon their past experiences and knowledge. This process occurred within a supportive community where they could be authentically themselves. The key principle is that learning occurs when participants interact with significance and material that is critical to their own context. This concurs with the work of McGuckin (2002). Participants believed that if they remained flexible and open to make discoveries they would have the possibility of experiencing and authoring a new future (Polinghorne, 1988).

Conclusion

The relationship of a supportive group can release empowerment (Kegan, 1994) collaboration and critical thinking (Howard, McGee, Schwartz, & Purcell, 2000). This process led participants’ to consider alternative, less constrained “worlds” and new possibilities of becoming (Polinghorne, 1988). The movement of the journey through change, the digging for new possibilities, and the transforming process of discovery reinforced the emergence of discovery as a core category through the grounded theory process.

Chapter Conclusion

In this chapter I have discussed the research findings and linked these with the literature for the components of S.A.C.R.E.D in order to weave the literature into the findings. In accordance with grounded theory methodology I have not attempted to verify the emerging theory but have allowed the interaction of the literature with the participants findings to bring focus, clarity and sharpness (Glaser, 1998). This has further enhanced the emerging theory and the significance of these categories for the adult learner.

The participants found that each category was significant and did not want to eliminate any of the found components or give greater significance to any one category. It was the participants’ understanding that the combined dynamic of the six categories formed effective learning which

was established in relationship. To separate the categories would be to minimise the phenomenon that occurred for the participants in learning which touched their soul in the apex of learning. The next chapter will discuss the apex of learning for the participants which is embodied in the acronym S.A.C.R.E.D.

Chapter Seven

S.A.C.R.E.D.

Introduction

Throughout the process of photo elicitation interviewing and interactive drawing six key categories emerged from the data. These have been discussed in the previous chapters. Chapter Five discussed the findings and the data gathered as each participant was interviewed. Chapter Six made links with the participants' findings and the literature which brought clarity to the emergent theory. As the researcher, I sat with the six categories (Synergy, Authenticity, Connectedness, Reflection, Empowerment and Discovery) asking them to speak to me of what if any interrelationship they had in learning. It was at two o'clock one morning that in the darkness I realised that these categories formed an acronym S.A.C.R.E.D. I then invited the participants to consider the meaning of this acronym in relationship to learning using the process of interactive drawing. Following this, I interviewed each participant.

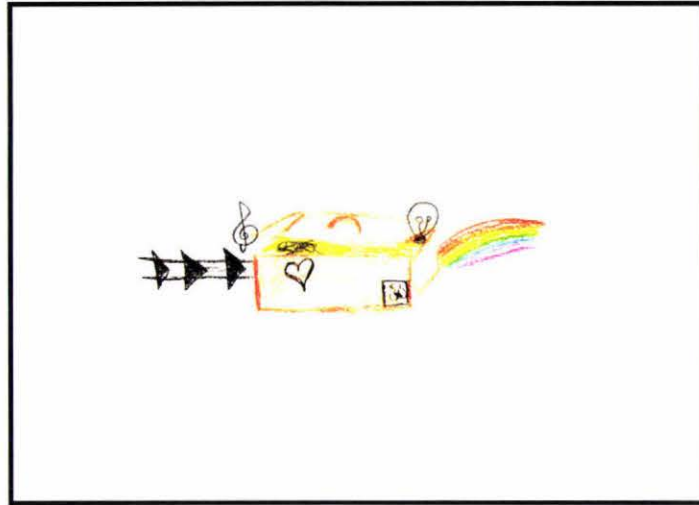
This chapter will discuss the holistic meaning of the acronym S.A.C.R.E.D. as discovered and experienced by the participants. The participant's data represented in this section gives visual meaning to sacred as represented by each person.

Findings

Participants arrived at this interview eager to see the development of the research into something bigger than the individual categories, which was a common theme throughout the research. They appeared gripped by the combination of the categories and the intangible dynamic that was difficult to describe in words, but was real and authentic for each participant. When they spoke of the combining power of the six categories, they used words like "mysterious, divine, energy, supreme, force, dynamism, spirit and aha moments".

As the researcher I sensed that a dimension bigger than the researcher and the participant understood or could classify was being discovered. I sensed that there was a mystery in learning that was about to become present.

When Justine was invited to represent "SACRED in learning" through the process of interactive drawing she was very careful in her choice of colours and in the sizing of her drawing.

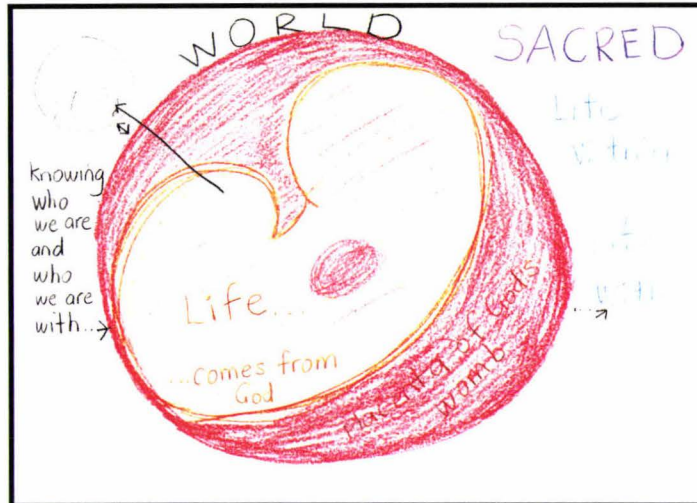


Justine began by drawing three dark arrows which signified the movement towards a particular moment of learning. She shared:

the dark arrows represent something that was not yet enlightened, that was entering a process of discovery. As the arrows or people entered into the learning process which was symbolised by the box they found something that was pure (yellow) and something that touched a person's heart and soul. The learning was full of moments when the light bulb would turn on for the learner and emotion and energy was released. The rainbow signifies what happens to me as a whole person when I am transformed. It is important for me that there are three arrows, because learning for me is effective when I can join with others and I don't know how or why but it's like a sacred moment occurs when I am empowered to make discoveries.

In discussing her drawing, Justine expressed that the drawing was small because when this sacred moment of learning occurs, she feels very small and almost insignificant compared to a power that is present that is much bigger than herself in that particular moment. However the result is that she is in fact a bigger person in herself.

When Angela was invited to represent "SACRED in learning" she was quietly eager to represent the birthing life that comes from God and in relationship with others as individuals sought to discover who they are and who they are within learning.



Angela began vigorously by drawing the red circle which represented the placenta of God's womb and quickly drew a foetus encompassed in the womb. She then wrote across the foetus the words "Life comes from God" and then externally she wrote "Life within and Life with". Outside of the placenta she wrote the word "world". Finally she wrote "knowing who we are and who we are with".

When Angela was asked to describe her work, she was very deliberate in discussing each component of the acronym in relation to her drawing. She said:

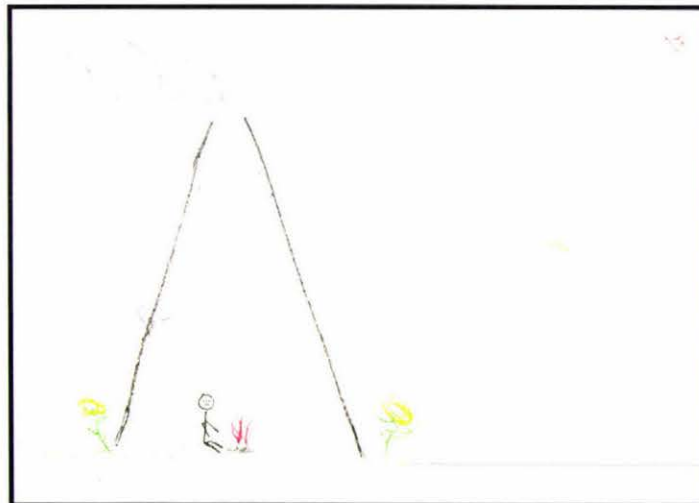
synergy comes from being connected and knowing who we are and who we are with. This sense of knowing releases a dynamic that is bigger than me. The authenticity for a learner comes when we can bring together the internal world (our life within) with our external world (life with) and then as we interact with the world, or those we are in relationship with we can be genuine and risk being ourselves. Connectedness is about knowing who you are and being connected to a power that is more than just me. This can be vertically with God, or horizontally with others in the learning context. Reflection occurs when we are personally aware of who we are and take time to think through what we are being presented with in learning whether that be learning material or other learner's perspectives. Empowerment occurs as I allow blood to flow in relationship that pumps my heart and gives life. Discovery happens when I remain open, give myself permission to explore and to experience that which is in the world and then allow this to change or strengthen my inner being and my external being in relationship with other. When all of these different parts come together there is an almost tangible existence of a force and energy that encompasses all in the learning environment but has the power to

change all of us. The key is to remain open to its presence. It's hard to define what it is in words, but when it happens you know it happens.

When Angela spoke it was as if I was sitting listening to someone who was seeing something in her mind's eye that she had experienced many times. However as I watched her body she appeared to be trying to grasp hold of a concept that was just out of reach, and her eyes were searching in her mind's eye for a light in the darkness. It was a profound moment of watching someone try to describe a phenomenon that was indescribable and yet real.

When Gina was interviewed and invited to represent the concept of "SACRED in learning" she was hesitant and wanted to clearly identify that this was not a religious or Christian based concept that she was going to articulate or symbolise. Gina recognised her spirituality but was keen to make it clear that SACRED for her was not based upon institutional church or a religious context.

Gina took a deep breath and continued to draw a tepee and her sitting inside this with the tent door open.

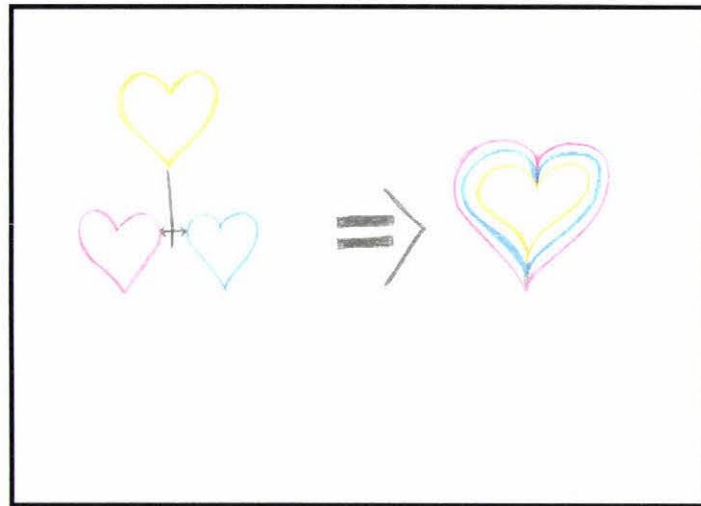


Gina represented SACRED in learning as sitting quietly close to a fire. The fire represented the heat and heart of learning, that warmed the soul, refuelled her spirit and allowed her to make discoveries and be conscious of who she is and who she is becoming. Gina shared:

I recognise the need for others in the learning environment to sharpen who I am, to impart, to encourage and to nurture and challenge and in these moments a spark in the core of my being is ignited. However, I am also aware of the need to process and take

the learning to a new level and the momentum of learning continues as I withdraw into a sacred space where I can reflect, be empowered, make further discoveries and I can feel connected to myself and in myself in a greater degree. The individual categories of synergy, authenticity, connectedness, reflection, empowerment and discovery are significant within relationship with others, but for me I also value the ongoing momentum of taking these to a new level with myself in a sacred space. This is when the divine, meets my soul and I am changed.

When I took a piece of paper and represented SACRED in learning I took some time and I would look out the window in search of an image that I had come to believe was unable to be contained or measured. I settled on the following drawing.



I represented people as a red heart and a blue heart and demonstrated connectedness by joining the two hearts together. I then drew a gold heart to represent a power that was authentic, real and could intervene in the learning context when the six categories were present. I wrote in my journal the following,

The interaction between the gold and red and blue hearts meant a movement symbolised by the black arrow. The result was the combined hearts representing the depth of connection that occurred as the "sacred" power was present. The union and the presencing of this power bought transformation to learning that changed direction, challenged assumptions, locked in new beliefs and forged new understanding, but more importantly touched the soul of a person. I cannot manipulate this to happen, I cannot devise a scheme in learning for this to occur, but I know that when these categories are

present and are nurtured a dynamic occurs that is beyond words, beyond sight, but is present in a mysterious way.

Discussion

The acronym S.A.C.R.E.D evolved in this study to be critical in the understanding of what was required by the participants for learning that transformed who they were and how they learned in their contexts. The acronym has moved from mere components of something greater, to become the mystery that is birthed, the mystery that is encapsulated, the mystery which transcends all that can be orchestrated by teacher or learner.

The participants in this study moved relationship and learning from separate complexities into the same space, revealing a deep sense of connection between relationship and learning. They did not see relationship and learning as separate, but rather as interconnected and encompassing of each other and in fact the interconnection birthed a greater mystery.

When they joined the categories of relationship and learning (synergy, authenticity, connectedness, reflection, empowerment and discover) the depth of passion, and fervour of emotion was expressed, which indicated that there was a dynamic much larger than the key components of the acronym. When participants tried to describe, analyse and calculate S.A.C.R.E.D. they were speaking of something that was just out of their grasp, of searching in their minds eye in the darkness for a light, and were frustrated at the limitations of words to describe the phenomenon which can only be described as a mystery.

Speaking of the spiritual, hooks refers "to the recognition within everyone that there is a place of mystery in our lives where forces that are beyond human desire or will alter circumstances and/or guide and direct us" (hooks, 2000a, p.77).

Their expressiveness pointed towards an inability to limit the connection of synergy, authenticity, connectedness, reflection, empowerment and discovery to an acronym, or in fact to be able to define what exactly happened in the moment when these parts came together for the participants in learning. For the participants it was unexplainable, and to attempt to constrain this in text, words and on pages within a thesis, would in fact do injustice to the meaning of S.A.C.R.E.D.

It could be described as mysterious, as powerful, as bigger than the individuals in the learning, as transforming, but at the heart of their expressions was the S.A.C.R.E.D. nature of this moment in learning that touched their soul.

The S.A.C.R.E.D. moment required individuals in learning to move from “I – Me” to “I – Thou” articulated initially by Buber (1970). Buber’s work is then commented upon by various authors (Friedman, 1981; Kaufmann, 1970; Knapp, 2005). A recent work also acknowledges this concept (Jarvis, 2006) and extends this to include the person to self in the learning process.

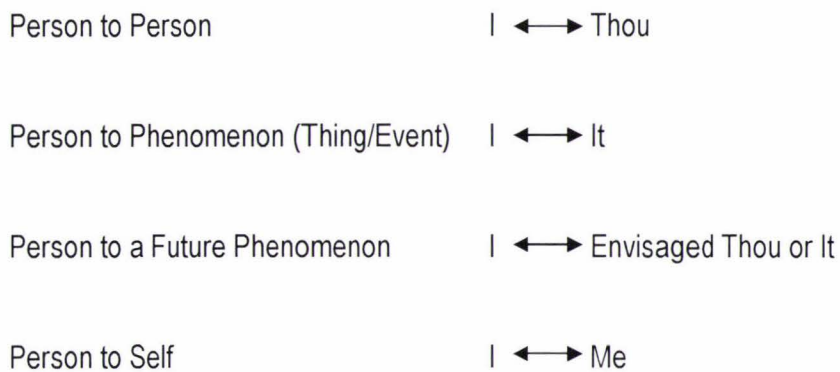


Figure 9: The person-in-the-world (Jarvis, 2006, p. 15)

Jarvis portrays in the description of “I – Thou” the presence of the spiritual which was encompassed by the work of Buber (1970). Jarvis portrays the “I –Thou” as the connection between two humans. Buber (1970)describes the depth of the “I-Thou” as spoken with the whole being; it is more of an event and happening, always mutual and yielding and it is eternal and embodied in the spiritual. It has a reciprocity that is mutual beyond togetherness. It is an encounter that births unconditional trust, “a memorable common fruitfulness and a mutual unconditional trust” (Funk, 2004, p.7).

Three participants in this study would concur with Buber when he describes the “I-Thou” encounter as:

an eternal, primal phenomenon, present here and now, of that which we term revelation? It is the phenomenon that a man does not pass, for the moment of the supreme meeting, as the same being as he entered into it. The moment of meeting is not an “experience” that stirs in the receptive soul and grows to perfect blessedness; rather, in that moment

something happens to the man. At times it is like a light breath, at times like a wrestling bout, but always it happens. The man who emerges from the act that so involves his being has now in his being something more that has grown in him, of which he did not know before and whose origin he is not rightly able to indicate. (Buber, 1970, p.120)

It is this understanding of the sacred mystery of learning that this research indicates is present in the true learning of women in this study.

In Justine's drawing she represented S.A.C.R.E.D. as the joining with other people with heart, soul and mind that enabled the 'moment of meeting' described by Buber (1970). This brought radical transformation and connected her in a new way spiritually. However she also included the transcendent dimension of spirituality which is represented by the rainbow.

The experience of knowing and being known, understanding and being understood that is foundational and central to S.A.C.R.E.D. discovered by all participants.

The meaningfulness of connectedness and mutuality that was reported by the participants and is represented in Justine's drawing is seen as central to processes of interaction. Connectedness in Duck's (1994) view is inseparable from the shared meanings that relationship patterns create in their ongoing interactions. The S.A.C.R.E.D. territory of such connectedness involved "peeling away layers of defences to reveal the true feelings and vulnerabilities" (Prager, 1995, p. 47) in the relationships amidst learning.

Connectedness expressed by the participants required validation by others in the learning experience. When validation was combined with the process of reflection where participants felt understood, accepted and supported this gave precedence to the point of "S.A.C.R.E.D." as discovered by the participants.

bell hooks discusses the sacred dimension of learning when she uses the term "communion" (hooks, 2002). Communion for hooks is when individuals recognise their humanity, their "equality, their gifts and sharing of experiences, wisely seeking companions to share mutual regard and recognition – this communion of souls will sustain and abide" (hooks, 2002, p. 244).

hooks calls for women in particular to locate themselves in community, to experience reverent connections with others and to enter into a place of communion where their authentic self can be discovered and the synergy and mutuality of relationship can propel individuals into a new place of transformation in learning and living (hooks, 2000a, 2003b). hooks claims that if individuals push past their wounded and rejected self in the learning context and open their hearts to others in the circle of learning they can discover a new sense of freedom in their personhood and in community (hooks, 2002).

Communion, through connectedness, allows the dynamics of moving in the S.A.C.R.E.D. mystery, alert to possibilities and the joy of being open to whatever the moment may create in us and through us (hooks, 1993, 2000a). A commitment to communion, and to the sacred "honours principles of inter-being and interconnectedness" (hooks, 2002, p.77).

The work of bell hooks moves beyond the work of Buber in that she recognises the individual's humanity and authentic need for connectedness beyond merely the meeting of the sacred in another human being. The sacred communion that bell hooks describes is outside of formal religion whether that be Christian, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism or New Age spirituality. She alleges that traditional spirituality maintains a separateness and individual gain rather than promoting the discovery of the interdependence of life (hooks, 2000a).

I represented S.A.C.R.E.D. as the meeting of humans and the meeting with spiritual dimensions. This demonstrates a movement and integration that births the envisioned "I-Thou" (Jarvis, 2006). However, this new depth of personhood from the learning experience includes a further dimension of communion of bell hooks (2000a, 2002), and the connection with spirituality that is transcendent.

Angela represented the birthing life that comes from God and in relationship with others as individuals sought to discover who they are and who they are with. She represented her internal life and life in relationship with the world and others. This depth of life comes from being authentic, being connected and being empowered in relationship with others to make discoveries of self. This for Angela is S.A.C.R.E.D. This reflects aspects of the work of hooks (2000a, 2002) and Buber (1970).

The participants represent the reality of the spiritual in the process of learning outside of organised religion (English & Gillen, 2000). They discovered the realm of S.A.C.R.E.D. and the importance of S.A.C.R.E.D. outside of the formal learning environment in the realm of informal learning (Davis, 2003).

One participant represented S.A.C.R.E.D. as an “I – Me” moment. The desire of Gina in the S.A.C.R.E.D. is to draw upon the memories and wisdom of her previous life experiences and learning that enable her to learn and grow. Gina represented S.A.C.R.E.D. as the moment when she has withdrawn into her S.A.C.R.E.D. space to reflect, engage in planning and thinking about the action to come as a result of the learning experience (Jarvis, 2006).

For all of the participants the understanding of S.A.C.R.E.D. was integral to their experience of learning. Three participants experienced this in relationship with others and with spiritual dimensions. One of the participants experienced this more in relationship with herself as she drew aside to her S.A.C.R.E.D. space. This represents the diversity of experience within the manifest presence of S.A.C.R.E.D, at the same time giving integrity to the “S.A.C.R.E.D” in learning. It must be remembered as educators that the spiritual dimension is a part of the human condition and life experience (Wickett, 2005).

Conclusion

The mystery that is birthed in the experience of learning occurs in the exponential interaction between S.A.C.R.E.D. that is synergy, authenticity, connectedness, reflection, empowerment and discovery. It is both an “I-Thou” (Buber, 1970) and an “I-Me” (Jarvis, 2006) phenomenon. For all of the participants it included a transcendent dimension of spirituality not limited by formal religion or dogma (hooks, 2000a). S.A.C.R.E.D. occurred most readily in the informal learning experiences of the women (Davis, 2003). S.A.C.R.E.D. cannot be constrained but has a diversity of meaning and experience for the individual woman which encompasses a spiritual expression.

Chapter Eight

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overview

This study was based upon my pursuit for a greater understanding of what makes effective learning for adult learners. I sought to discover if there was a connection between relationships and learning and to discover the dynamics if this existed. This study followed the grounded theory methodology (Charmaz, 1994, 2003, 2005, 2000; Davis, 2003; Glaser, 1992, 1994, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) and employed the use of photo elicitation interviewing (Harper, 2002) for data collection. Interactive Drawing (Withers, 2005) was used for the purposes of clarifying and sharpening the emerging theory.

I entered this research with a growing understanding of my philosophy of teaching and learning. My search for a greater understanding of relationships in learning led me to examine the work of bell hooks at the beginning of this research process. However I did not have a prior hypothesis begging to be argued, but rather some questions of interest which were:

1. What relationship/s do learners have with each other in the moment of learning?
2. What effect do/does relationship/s have on the learners to learn?
3. If there is relationship/s, then how does this affect my philosophy of learning and teaching?

The Research

The participants in this study were adult women who have diverse experiences in formal and informal learning, who are all in some way active in a learning context. Data was collected through interviews and participant's photos through photo elicitation interviewing. The data using grounded theory was compared, coded and sorted. This data was cross validated through the use of Interactive Drawing and interview.

Six theoretical categories emerged from the coding data. These categories formed the acronym of S.A.C.R.E.D. Each letter indicates a group that emerged in the coding process which had properties that were innate in the learning process.

Synergy

Participants drew upon the resources, perspectives and identities of others in the learning community to find synergy in learning. The multidirectional movement of emotions, thoughts and action between people in the learning context allowed the transcendent nature of synergy to emerge (Duck, 1994). As participants allowed other learners to interrupt their personal lives and attach value to what they had in common a new form of identity emerged in the learning process (Delors, 1996). Curiosity was viewed as an intrinsic motivator for nurturing synergy in the adult learning experience (Davis, 2003). The dynamic process of collaboration and mutuality between individuals in the process of discovery was critical to the learning outcome, and hinged on whether learners felt respected, supported and accepted (Brookfield, 1987). Individuals moved from a state of being present with other learners to being co-present on a learning journey when synergy emerged.

Authenticity

Authenticity presents itself when individuals are willing to reveal the richness of their identity with another who also is willing to engage in this process of revelation of self. The process of authenticity is an ongoing process of self-definition and evolves as learners embrace their own past and personal experiences which have pre-shaped the learner (Gee, 2001). Authenticity is not enclosed within the limitations of an individual's body but rather is manifested through connection with others in the learning context. It is suggested that the measure of authenticity a person exhibits is a measure of the level of liberty an individual has found in being true to their self, regardless of others' perceptions (Jarvis, 2006). Authenticity enables trust to be present which transformed and empowered participants in the learning context (Ward, 2003). Authenticity fuels the yearning to capture moments of risk and be the creator of something fresh in learning.

Connectedness

Connectedness forced individuals to ally, to affiliate, to enter into mutual relationships, to take strength and grow through co-operative behaviour amidst learning. Connected ways of knowing which prioritised understanding, empathy and collaboration led to a deeper experience of learning (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarul, 1986). Connectedness birthed belonging and rooted individuals with their past and future, while learning in the present (Hallowell, 2003). This dimension of connectedness not only connected individuals horizontal with other learners but also allowed for connectedness within a vertical sphere joining learners with what is unseen, unknown but eternal. The components of connectedness allowed a rich tapestry of life; past, present and

future, seen and unseen, known and unknown to be essential to the learning process (Hallowell, 2003).

Reflection

Learners allowed reflection to transform beliefs, attitudes, opinions and emotional reactions of their inner world, making up what they give meaning to. The process of reflection brought transformation to their inner world of meaning and their outer world of action (Mezirow, 1991). Reflection allowed for the emotional memory to connect with the individual to enable personal growth within a framework of learning (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985). Learners viewed reflection as being central to a holistic approach of learning which gave value to reflecting, strategising and the implementation of new learnings. This enabled greater degrees of personal transformation to be present. Reflection was a process of self discovery for individuals, who recognised their unique experiences, their own life stories and their social context amidst an environment of trust, safety, rapport and trust (Le Cornu, 2005). Momentum was gained when individual learners made visible their authenticity in relationship with others in the process of reflection.

Empowerment

Empowerment built a sense of self-confidence, synergy and vision amongst participants in a learning environment. Courage, imagination, thoughts and initiatives once believed impossible were realised in a community of learners where empowerment was a value of the participants. Empowerment was not an object to be contained, but was a process constructed through action (Kieffer, 1984). Empowerment when connected with others developed the individual learner's concept of self and their sense of learning competence (McAdams, 2001).

Discovery

Individuals engaging in an active process in which they constructed new ideas and concepts, engaged in meaning making, reflecting upon their past experiences and knowledge allowing possibilities to be discovered in the learning process. When individuals discovered ambiguity and uncertainty this aroused curiosity and a process of exploration began to emerge (Bruner, 1961, 1966). The process of discovery can give rise to discomfort as individuals examine their personal beliefs and authenticity amidst a community of learners (Mezirow, 1991). As individual learners connect with other learners and give occasion for different understandings to emerge and mould with a learners a rich meaning could be constructed giving the learner a fresh autonomy unconstrained by the limitations of the individuals past and experiences (Kegan, 1994).

S.A.C.R.E.D. – The mystery of learning in relation to hooks.

The emergence of the acronym S.A.C.R.E.D. birthed the concept that in the interaction and interdependence of the categories there is a mystery which can only be defined as sacred. bell hooks would also agree with the participants that there is a mystery of communion in learning for women (hooks, 2002). bell hooks believes that when we know love and the shared spirit this is then truly divine communion (hooks, 1990). This depth of this relationship between relationship and learning was mystical; it spoke of a communion that was sacred (hooks, 2002).

This reinforces the category of connectedness in this study. She also deems essential in learning the process of discovering our own self concept (hooks, 1993). This aligns with the discovery of our personal authenticity.

hooks urges women to bond together in a way that empowers and brings transformation in the learning context (hooks, 2001). This supports the category of empowerment.

hooks also invites people to discover the power of the soul in reflection (hooks, 2003a). People discover this by daring to trust others as they reflect upon attitudes and beliefs. This reflection means we can discover new levels of living the truth of our essential humanness. This is another pillar in our category of reflection.

The dimension of S.A.C.R.E.D. cannot be contained by text. There is an essential mystery to the dynamic of interaction between the various categories of synergy, authenticity, connectedness, reflection, empowerment and discovery. To some extent the understanding of “I -Thou” of Buber (1970) captures the spirituality of relationship which is embodied in learning. However for some people the “I - Me” written about by Jarvis (2006) also allows for the mystery to transform the self. Nevertheless the majority of participants spoke of the transcendent dimension of spirituality which is diverse in its expression and unconstrained by religious tradition. It was this aspect that the women defined as the key of the learning moment.

Recommendations

In outlining the recommendations of this research I am aware that mystery is a powerful human experience which cannot be reduced to a formula and should not be ignored in the teaching and learning of adults (Palmer, 1990).

I recommend the following,

1. This study could be extended to a wider number of participants to bring greater understanding to the content and meaning of the acronym and the interdependence of the components of the acronym in the process of learning.
2. This study could be extended and undertaken in cross cultural settings researching the dynamics of culture alongside the emergent theory of S.A.C.R.E.D.
3. This study could be extended to men, to identify if the core categories of the acronym are relevant and vital in their learning experience.
4. This study could be undertaken with both genders to compare and contrast the validity of the acronym and the potential mystery of sacred as found in their learning experience.
5. The sample size could be increased with women to include women of different age bands and cultures in both formal and informal learning contexts.

It is critical that continued work be completed to further define the connections and to ensure that the mystery is not lost in learning.

Concluding Comments

This study began with the intention of seeking to question if there was any connection between learning and relationships. The participants themselves in this study made their own connections through the research methods which then helped to grow the grounded theory. This was then cross validated with interactive drawing.

It was the passion and depth of emotion that was heard as the participants shared that caused the data to move from codes to categories forming an acronym of mystery – S.A.C.R.E.D. It was

more than words but in fact I encountered the participants' soul as they revealed themselves and made meaning of each part of the acronym. I found the "mystery entering us and our lives were challenged and changed" (Palmer, 1990 p. 7).

The core categories of authenticity, synergy, connectedness, empowerment and discovery demonstrated the relationship that learners have with each other in the moment of learning. The research process revealed the interdependent properties required for women to learn effectively. It also revealed that there was a dimension that could not be quantified or constrained to words alone when being described.

The combined and interdependent effect of these categories in learning results in transformation, change and learning outcomes beyond the participants' initial expectations. It is the combination rather than the isolation of these categories that enhances learning.

My philosophy of learning and teaching has been confirmed and strengthened. Teaching and learning must give validity to the unseen and unheard and yet be fully present in the teaching and learning experience. The unseen and unheard strand in my philosophy of learning has to now be strengthened to carry the weight and presence of S.A.C.R.E.D as this is central for women learners.

This study has helped to stimulate, challenge and strengthen my growing philosophy of learning and teaching. It has been a privilege to work with women who have opened up their lives and allowed me to hear voices of their soul and to journey with them as they have been able to articulate and give voice to their intuition. I believe that the understandings discovered through this research will enhance my professional practice as an adult educator and has the potential to make a contribution to our understanding of adult education in Aotearoa New Zealand and beyond.

Reference List

- Aoki, T. (1991). *Inspiring Curriculum and Pedagogy*. Calgary: University of Alberta.
- Association; N. C. o. C. A. T. (2005). Art Therapy Definitions. from www.nccata.org
- Babchuk, W. A. (1996). *Glaser or Strauss?: Grounded theory and adult education*. Paper presented at the Adult Continuing Education Conference, Lincoln. www.ancers.nsu.edu/research.
- Bandura, A. (1982). Self-efficacy mechanism in human agency. *American Psychologist*, 37, 122-147.
- Banks, M. (2001). *Visual Methods in Social Research*. London: Sage.
- Bateman, W. L. (1990). *Open to Question: The art of teaching and learning by enquiry*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Beilin, R. (2005). Photo-elicitation and the agricultural landscape: "seeing" and "telling" about farming, community and place. *Visual Studies*, 20(1).
- Belenky, M., Clinchy, B., Goldberger, N., & Tarul, J. (1986). *Women's Ways of Knowing: The development of self, voice and mind*. London: Basic books.
- Bird, L. (2001). *Virtual Learning in the Workplace: the power of communities of practice*. Paper presented at the ASCILITE Conference, Coventry, England.
- Blaxter, L., Hughes, C., & Tight, M. (1999). *How To Research*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Boud, D., Keogh, R., & Walker, D. (1985). Promoting reflection in learning: a model. In D. Boud, R. Keogh & D. Walker (Eds.), *Reflection: Turning Experience Into Learning*. London: Kogan Page.
- Boud, D., & Walker, D. (1992). In the midst of experience: developing a model to aid learners and facilitators. In J. Mulligan & C. Griffin (Eds.), *Empowerment Through Experiential Learning*. London: Kogan Page.
- Boyd, R. D. (1989). Facilitating Personal Transformation in Small Groups. *Small Group Behaviour*, 20(4), 459-474.
- Brigham, J. (1986). *Social Psychology*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co.
- Brockett, R., & Merriam, S. (1997). *The Profession and Practice of Adult Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brookfield, S. (1986). *Understanding and Facilitating Adult Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- Brookfield, S. (1987). *Developing Critical Thinkers: Challenging adults to explore alternative ways of thinking and acting*. England: Open University Press.
- Bruner, J. S. (1966). *Towards a Theory of Instruction*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, S. (1961). The Act of Discovery. *Harvard Educational Review*, 31(1), 21-32.
- Buber, M. (1970). *I and Thou* (W. Kaufmann, Trans. Second Edition ed.). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Bulbeck, C. (1997). *Living Feminism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Burke, B. (2004, February 14, 2004). bell hooks on education. from www.infed.org/thinkers/hooks.htm
- Burkitt, I. (1990). *Social Selves: Theories of the social formation of personality*. London: Sage.
- Charmaz, K. (1994). The Grounded Theory Method: An explication and interpretation. In B. G. Glaser (Ed.), *More Grounded Theory Methodology: A reader*. Mill Valley, California: Sociology Press, pp.95-115.
- Charmaz, K. (1995). Grounded Theory. In J. A. Smith, R. Harre & L. Van Langenhove (Eds.), *Rethinking methods in psychology*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications pp.27-50.
- Charmaz, K. (2003). Grounded Theory. In J. A. Smith (Ed.), *Qualitative Psychology: A practical guide to research methods*. London: Sage Publications, pp81-110.
- Charmaz, K. (2005). Grounded Theory in the 21st Century. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Third Edition ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp.507-535.
- Charmaz, K. (Ed.). (2000). *Grounded Theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Chukwu, C. N. (1995). *Introduction to Philosophy in an African Perspective*. Eldoret: Zapf Chancery Tertiary Level Publications.
- Cinnamond, J. H., & Zimpher, N. L. (1990). Reflectivity as a function of community. In R. T. Clift, W. R. Houston & M. C. Pugach (Eds.), *Encouraging Reflective Practice in Education. An analysis of issues and programs*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Clark-Ibanez, M. (2004). Framing the Social World with Photo-Elicitation Interviews. *American Behavioural Scientist*, 47(12), 1507-1527.
- Cole, A. L., & Knowles, G. J. (2001). *Lives in Context: The Art of Life History*. Walnut Creek, California: AltaMira Press.
- Collier, J., & Collier, M. (1967). *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press.

- Collier, J., & Collier, M. (1986). *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method*. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press
- Commissioner, H. a. D. (1994). *Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers Rights*. www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/wpg_index/About-Glossary+of+Ministry+terms
- Conger, J. A., & Kanungo, R. N. (1988). The Empowerment Process: Integrating Theory and Practice. *Academy of Management Review*, July.
- Cooper, D. (1983). *Authenticity and Learning*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Corey, G., Corey, M., & Callanan, P. (1998). *Issues and Ethics in the Helping Professions* (5th ed.). Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole.
- Covey, S. R. (1989). *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Cresswell, J. (2002). *Educational Research: planning, conducting and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Ohio: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Cronin, O. (Ed.). (1998). *Psychology and Photographic Theory*. London: Falmer Press.
- Danson, A. (2002). Two of a kind. Photograph, M.I.L.K. Licensing Ltd, London.
- Davidson, C., & Tolich, M. (2003). *Social Science Research in New Zealand* (2nd Edition ed.). Auckland: Longman.
- Davis, D. C. (1971). *The Process of Improved Learning Opportunities* (Commission on the Reorganisation of Secondary Education). State of Vermont, Washington: National Education Association.
- Davis, D. C. (2003, November). *Encounter with God: Pedagogical Implication of the Human Experience for Religious Education in the Church*. Paper presented at the Joint Conference of the Religious Education Association and the Association of Professors and Researchers, Chicago.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.). (2000). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage Publications Inc.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience in Education*. New York, Macmillan.
- Dick, B. (2002). Grounded Theory: a thumbnail sketch. *Action Research*, from <http://www.scu.edu.ac/schools/gcm/ar/arp/grounded.html>
- Dodson, A. (2001). Black Issues Book Review. *Black Issues*, 3(12), 64.
- Drury, S. (2003). Empowerment Strategies. *Leadership Theory for Pastors*
- Drury, S. (2005). Empowerment Strategies. *Leadership Theory for Pastors*, from <http://www.drurywriting.com/sharon/26.Empowerment.Strategies.htm>

- Duck, S. (1993). *Individuals in Relationships* (Vol. 1). New York: Sage Publications.
- Duck, S. W. (1994). *Meaningful Relationships: Talking, sense and relating*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- English, L. M., & Gillen, A. (2000). Addressing the Spiritual Dimensions of Adult Learning: What educators can do. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 85.
- Fang, W. I., & Elwein, M. C. (1990). Photography and Ethics in Evaluation. *Evaluation Review*, 14(1), 100-107.
- Fenwick, T. J. (2000). Expanding Conceptions of Experiential Learning: A Review of the Five Contemporary Perspectives on Cognition. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 50(4), 243-272.
- Ferrer, E. M., De La Cruz, P. T., Cabaces, R., Reynaldo, M., & Dasig, A. (2002). Building a Learning Community, from <http://www.cbcrmllearning.org/pdf/Building%20a%20learning%20community.doc>
- Fox, D. (1983). Personal Theories of Teaching. *Studies in Higher Education*, 8(2), 151-163.
- Franken, R. (1994). *Human motivation* (Third Edition ed.). Pacific Grove, California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of The Oppressed*. London: Penguin.
- Freire, P. (1970, revised translation 1996). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. London: Penguin.
- Friedman, M. (1981). *Martin Buber's Life and Work*. New York: Clarke, Irwin and Co Ltd.
- Frye, M. (1992). White Woman Feminist. In M. Frye (Ed.), *Willful Virgin: Essays in Feminism*. Freedom, CA: Crossing Press.
- Funk, M. M. (2004). Martin Buber's I and Thou. *Monastic Interreligious Dialogue*, 73(October).
- Gee, J. P. (2001). Identity as an Analytic Lens for Research in Education. *Review of Research in Education*, 20, 100-125.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and Self-Identity*. California: Stanford Press.
- Gilligan, C. (1982). In *A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (1992). *Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis*. Mill Valley, California: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (1994). Generating Formal Theory. In B. G. Glaser (Ed.), *More Grounded Theory Methodology: A reader*. Mill Valley, California: Sociology Press, pp.268-286.

- Glaser, B. G. (1998). *Doing Grounded Theory: Issues and Discussions*. Mill Valley, California: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (2001). *The Grounded Theory Perspective*. Mill Valley, California: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (2002). Constructivist Grounded Theory? *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 3(3).
- Glaser, B. G. (2003). *The Grounded Theory Perspective II: Descriptions remodelling of grounded theory methodology*. Mill Valley: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G. (2005). *The Grounded Theory Perspective III: Theoretical Coding*. Mill Valley, California: Sociology Press.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
- Government, N. Z. (1993). *The Privacy Act*. Retrieved. from.
- Hallowell, E. M. (2003). Community, Connectedness.. Related to Teaching, Learning and Technology.
- Harper, D. (2002). Talking about pictures a case for photo elicitation. *Visual Studies*, 17(1).
- Harper, D. (Ed.). (2000). *Reimagining Visual Methods: Galileo to Neuromancer* (Second ed.): Sage.
- Harrington, C. (1998). The Use of Reflexive Photography in the Study of the Freshman Year
- Harris, C. (2003). *Building Innovative Teams*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Hayes, E. R. (2001). A new look at women's learning. *New Directions For Adult And Continuing Education*, 89 (Spring 2001), 35-42.
- Heisley, D. D., & Levy, S. J. (1991). Autodriving: A Photoelicitation technique. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18(3), 257-271.
- Hill, S. (2004). What is Resonance? , from <http://www.resonance.org.uk/resonance.html>
- hooks, b. (1981). *Ain't I A Woman: Black Women and Feminism*. Boston: South End Press.
- hooks, b. (1984). *Feminist Theory: From margin to center* (First ed.). Cambridge, MA: South End Press.
- hooks, b. (1989). *Talking Back: Thinking Feminist, Thinking Black*. Boston: South End Press.
- hooks, b. (1990). *Yearning: Race, Gender and Cultural Politics*. Boston: South End Press.
- hooks, b. (1992). *Black Looks: Race and Representation*. New York: South End Press.

- hooks, b. (1993). *Sisters of the Yam: Black Women and Self-Recovery*. New York: South End Press.
- hooks, b. (1994a). *Teaching to Transgress*. London: Routledge.
- hooks, h. (1994b). *Outlaw Culture: Resisting Representations*. New York: Routledge.
- hooks, b. (1995). *Killing Rage: ending racism*. New York: Henry Holt and Company Inc.
- hooks, b. (1996). *Bone Black: Memories of Girlhood*. New York: Henry Holt and Company Inc.
- hooks, b. (2000a). *All about love: new visions*. New York: Perennial Publishers.
- hooks, b. (2000b). *Feminist Theory: From Margin To Center* (Second ed.). Cambridge, Massachusetts: South End Press.
- hooks, b. (2000c). Learning in the shadow of race and class. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 47(12), p.14.
- hooks, b. (2000d). *Where We Stand: Class Matters*. New York: Routledge.
- hooks, b. (2001). *Salvation: black people and love*. Los Angeles: Morrow.
- hooks, b. (2002). *communion: a female search for love*. New York: Harper Collins.
- hooks, b. (2003a). *Rock My Soul: Black People and Self Esteem*. New York: Atria Books.
- hooks, b. (2003b). *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy Of Hope*. London: Routledge.
- hooks, b. (2004a). *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity*. London: Routledge.
- hooks, b. (2004b). *The Will To Change: Men Masculinity and Love*. New York: Atria Books.
- Howard, B. C., McGee, S., Schwartz, N., & Purcell, S. (2000). The Experience of Constructivism: Transforming teacher epistemology. *Journal of Research on Computing in Education*, 32(4), 455-465.
- Huitt, W. A. (2004). Self-concept and self-esteem. *Educational Psychology Interactive*.
- Hurworth, R. (2003). Photo-Interviewing for Research. *Social Research Update*(Spring).
- Ivanic, R. (1997). *Writing and Identity: The discorsal construction of identity in academic writing*. Amsterdam Philadelphia: John Betjamins Publishing Company.
- Jamieson, L. (2002). *Intimacy: Personal Relationships in Modern Societies*. Cambridge: Polity.
- Jarvis, P. (1992). *Paradoxes of Learning: on becoming an individual in society*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Jarvis, P. (1995). *Adult and Continuing Education*. London: Routledge.

- Jarvis, P. (2001). *Learning in Later Life*. London: Kogan Page.
- Jarvis, P. (2004). *Adult and Continuing Education: Theory and Practice*, 3rd Edition, London: Routledge.
- Jarvis, P. (2006). *Towards a Comprehensive Theory of Human Learning: Lifelong learning and the learning society* (Vol. 1). London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group.
- Jones, P. (2005). *The Arts Therapies*. East Sussex: Brunner-Routledge.
- Jordan, J. V., Walker, M., & Hartling, L. M. (Eds.). (2004). *The Complexity of Connection*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Kaufmann, W. (1970). *I and Thou: Martin Buber*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Kegan, R. (1994). *In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
- Kieffer, C. (1984). Citizen empowerment: A developmental perspective. In J. Rappaport (Ed.), *Studies in Empowerment: Steps toward understanding and action* (pp. 9-36). New York: Haworth Press.
- Knapp, C. E. (2005). "I -Thou" Relationship, Place-Based Education, and Aldo Leopold. *Journal of Experiential Education*.
- Knowles, M. (1972). *The Modern Practice of Adult Education*. New York: Association Press.
- Knowles, M. S., Holton, E. F., & Swanson, R. A. (1998). *The Adult Learner: A neglected species* (Third Edition ed.). Houston, Texas: Gulf.
- Kolb, D. (1984). *Experiential Learning - Experience as the source of Learning and development*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Kolb, D. (1998). Experiential learning: from discourse model to conversation. *Lifelong Learning in Europe*, 3, 148-153.
- Kolb, D., & Fry, R. (Eds.). (1975). *Towards an Applied Theory of Experiential Learning*. London: Wiley.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1999). Learning and pedagogy in communities of practice. In J. Leach & B. Moon (Eds.), *Learners and Pedagogy* (pp. 21-33). London: Open University
- Le Cornu, A. (2005). Building on Jarvis: Towards a holistic model of the process of experiential learning. *Studies in the Education of Adults*, 37(2, Autumn), 166-181.
- Loeffler, T. A. (2004). *A picture is worth capturing meaning and facilitating connections in outdoor education students photographs*. Paper presented at the Latrobe Education, Canada.

- Loeffler, T. A. (2005). Looking deeply in: Using Photo Elicitation to explore the meanings of outdoor education experiences. *Journal of Experiential Education*(1), 70-75.
- Lorde, A. (1984). *Sister Outsider*. California: The Crossing Press.
- Macguire, J. (1998). *The Power of Personal Storytelling*. New York: Penguin Partman.
- Manion, L., Cohen, L., & Morrison, K. (2003). *Research Methods in Education* (5th ed.). London: Routledge.
- Marton, R., & Booth, S. (1997). *Learning and Awareness*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Mashek, D. J., & Aron, A. (2004). *Handbook of Closeness and Intimacy*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Maslow, A. H. (1970). *Religion values and peak experiences*. New York: Penguin.
- McAdams, D. (2001). *The Person*. Fort Worth, Texas: Harcourt College Publishers.
- McGraw, P. (2003). *Self Matters*. New York: Free Press.
- McGuckin, C., & Burke, D. (2002). Best evidence medical education in psychiatry training. *Australasian Psychiatry*, 10(4).
- Mead, G. H. (1934). Mind, Self and Society. In C. W. Morris (Ed.), *From the standpoint of a social behaviourist*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Mezirow, J. (1991). *Transformation of Adult Learning*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass Publishers.
- Mezirow, J. (2000). *Learning as Transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Miettinen, R. (2000). The concept of experiential learning and John Dewey's theory of reflective thought and action. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 19(1), 54-72.
- Mulligan, J. (1992). Internal processors in experiential learning. In J. Mulligan & C. Griffin (Eds.), *Empowerment through experiential learning*. London: Kogan Page.
- Mulligan, J. (1993). Activating internal processes in experiential learning. In D. Boud, R. Cohen & D. Walker (Eds.), *Using Experience For Learning*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Nagasaki, Y. (1989). Holding hands in the surf (Photograph). M.I.L.K. Licensing Ltd. London.
- Noddings, N. (2002). *Starting at Home: Caring and Social Policy*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Noddings, N. (2003). *Caring: a feminine approach to ethics and moral education*. 2nd Edition: Los Angeles: University of California Press.

- O'Brien, M. (Ed.). (2001). *Doing Ethical Research Legally: research ethics and the law*. Auckland: Pearson Education New Zealand Ltd.
- Olesen, V. (2000). Feminisms and Qualitative Research at and into the millennium. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Inc, pp.215-257.
- Ormrod, J. (1995). *Educational Psychology: principles and applications*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Palmer, P. J. (1999). *Learning Communities: Reweaving the Culture of Disconnection*. Paper presented at the Washington Centre Conference, May 1999, Washington.
- Palmer, P. (1990) Good teaching: a matter of living the mystery. *Change Magazine* Jan/Feb
- Parkes, M., Schneider, P., & Bochner, S. (1999). *Individualism, Collectivism and Self-Concept: Do collectivists construct the self in more contextual or simply more social terms?* Melbourne: Society of Australian Social Psychologists.
- Perlman, H. (1979). *Relationship, The Heart of Helping People*. London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Pink, S. (2001). *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, media and representation in research*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Pinkett, J. (2004). bell hooks (Gloria Watkins). *Essence Magazine* March), pp.20-22.
- Piver, S. (2004). *The Hard Questions for an Authentic Life : 100 Essential Questions for Tapping into Your Inner Wisdom* California, USA: Gotham.
- Polinghorne, D. (1988). *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Prager, K. (1995). *The Psychology of Intimacy*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Pratt, D. (1998). *Five Perspectives on Teaching in Adult and Higher Education*. Florida: Krieger Publishing Company.
- Pratt, D. (2003). Five Perspectives in Adult Education. Personal Communication M. Waight, Hamilton.
- Prosser, J. (1998). The status of image based research. In J. Prosser (Ed.), *Image Based Research: A source book for qualitative researchers*. London: Farham Hills.
- Purkey, W. (1988). An overview of self-concept theory for counselors. from ED304630
- Ramsden, P. (1992). *Ways of Understanding Teaching; Theories of Teaching in Higher Education*. London: Routledge.

- Rees, S. (1998). Empowerment of youth. In L. Gutierrez, R. J. Parsons & E. O. Cox (Eds.), *Empowerment in social work practice: A workbook*. Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole.
- Reio, T. G., & Wiswell, A. (2000). Field Investigation of the Relationship Among Adult Curiosity, Workplace Learning and Job Performance. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 11(1 Spring), 5-30.
- Reis, H. T., & Shaver, P. (1988). Intimacy as an interpersonal process. In S. Duck (Ed.), *Handbook of Personal Relationships*. Chichester, England: Wiley, pp.367-389.
- Rogers, C. (1989). *On Becoming a Person: A therapists view of psychotherapy*: New York: Houghton.
- Rose, G. (2001). *Visual Methodologies: an introduction to the interpretation of visual materials*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Rubin, J. A. (2005). *Artful Therapy*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons Ltd.
- Rubin, J. A. (Ed.). (2001). *Approaches to Art Therapy*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons Ltd.
- Ryan, M. K., & David, B. (2003). Gender differences in ways of knowing: the context dependence of the attitudes toward thinking and learning survey- Brief Report. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research*.
- Sampson, E. E. (1993). *Celebrating the Other. A dialogic account of human nature*. Hemel Hempstead: Harvester/Wheatsheaf.
- Sarup, M. (1998). *Identity, Culture and the Post-modern World*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Schon, D. (1987). *Educating the Reflective Practitioner*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Schram, T. H. (2003). *Conceptualising Qualitative Inquiry: Mindwork for fieldwork in education and the social sciences*. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Schwartz, D. (1992). Visual Ethnography: using photography in qualitative research. *Qualitative Sociology*, 12(2), 119-153.
- Schutte, M. (2004) True Character, Photograph. Concept and Copy, Novata, California.
- Shanti, A. (2002, 3rd December, 2002). *Changing Culture, Changing Practice: Overseas born teachers in Victorian Educational Contexts*. Paper presented at the AARE Conference, Brisbane.
- Sharrar, C. 2004. Cool Cats, Photograph. Chris Armaral Photography, Boston.
- Smith King, N. J., Harrison, H. M., & Holliday, R. R. (1998). *Optimal Conditions for Learning Among Experienced and Inexperienced Special Religion Education (SRE) teachers*:

s.p.a.c.e. Paper presented at the Annual International Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education, Adelaide, South Australia.

- Smith, M. K. (1996). Selfhood. from <http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-self.htm>
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.
- Strauss, A., & Glaser, B. G. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co.
- Strickland, B. (2001). *Encyclopaedia of Psychology*. <<http://soc.enotes.com/gale-psychology-encyclopedia/margaret-naumburg>
- Synergy. (2005). *Computer Desktop Encyclopaedia*. from <http://www.answers.com/topic/synergy>.
- Turner, J. C. (1985). Social Categorisation and the self-concept: A social cognitive theory of group behaviour. In E. J. Lawler (Ed.), *Advances in group process: Theory and research* (Vol. 2, pp. 77-121). Greenwich: JAI Press.
- Ulman, E., & Dachinger, P. (1975). *Art Therapy in Theory and Practice*. New York: Schocken Books.
- US Army Corps of Engineers. (2006). Learning Organization Empowerment. from <http://www.hq.usace.army.mil/cepa/learning/17.htm>
- Usher, R. (1993). Experiential learning or learning from experience: Does it make a difference? In D. Boud, R. Cohen & D. Walker (Eds.), *Using experience for learning*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Usher, R., Bryant, I., & Johnston, R. (1997). *Adult Education and the Post-modern Challenge*. London: Routledge.
- Vella, J. (1995). *Training through Dialog: Promoting effective learning and change with adults*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc.
- Vella, J. (2002). *Learning to Listen Learning to Teach*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass
- Vince, R. (1998). Behind and beyond Kolb's learning cycle. *Journal of Management Education*, 22(3), 304-319.
- Waight, M. (2004). Paper 187.722. Adult Learning Myths and Realities.
- Wang, C., & Burris, M. A. (1994). Empowerment through photo novella: portraits of participation. *Health Education Quarterly*, 21(2), 171-186.
- Wang, C., & Redwood - Jones, V. (2001). Photovoice ethics: perspectives from Flint Photovoice. *Health Education and Behaviour*, 28(5), 560-572.

- Ward, B. (2003). The Authentic Leader: Losing the mask. from www.affinitymc.com/the_authentic_leader.htm
- Wardlaw, D. (1983). *Preaching Biblically: creating sermons in the shape of scripture*. Westminster: John Knox Press.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity (Learning in Doing: Social, Cognitive and Computational Perspectives)*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wickett, R. E. Y. (2005). The spiritual and human learning. In P. Jarvis & S. Parker (Eds.), *Human Learning: An holistic approach*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Wilkinson, T. M. (2001). *The Core Ideas of Research Ethics*. Auckland: Longman.
- Withers, R. (2005). Interactive Drawing Therapy. from www.interactivedrawingtherapy.com
- Wlodkowski, R. J. (1999). *Enhancing Adult Motivation To Learn*. San Francisco, California, USA: Jossey-Bass.
- Wulff, D. H. (2001). Consultation Using a Research Perspective. from <http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/ResearchPerspective.html>
- Wnuk, A. (1996). Roaring Reflection, Photograph. Lithio Studio, Novato, California.
- Yorks, L., & Kasl, E. (2002). Toward a theory and practice for whole-person learning: reconceptualising experience and the role of affect. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 52(3), 176-192.
- Zepke, N., & Leach, L. (2002). *Hidden Meanings and Unheard Voices, Contextualised Meaning Making*. Unpublished manuscript, Wellington.
- Zimmerman, M. (1995). Psychological empowerment: Issues and illustrations. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 23, 581-598.

APPENDIX LIST

Appendix	A	Information Sheet to Participants
	B	Consent Form
	C	Ethics Committee Approval
	D	Photo Elicitation Interview Questions
	E	Participants Visual Images of Relationship
	F	Participants Visual Images of Learning
	G	Coding Chart of Relationship
	H	Coding Chart of Learning
	I	Coding Chart of Visual Images
	J	Participants Interactive Drawing – Synergy
	K	Participants Interactive Drawing – Authenticity
	L	Participants Interactive Drawing – Connectedness
	M	Participants Interactive Drawing – Reflection
	N	Participants Interactive Drawing – Empowerment
	O	Participants Interactive Drawing – Discovery
	P	Participants Interactive Drawing - SACRED

APPENDIX A

INFORMATION SHEET TO PARTICIPANTS

Margaret Waight



Study

INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction

I am presently completing study towards a Masters of Education (Adult Education) through Massey University and am researching ingredients of Adult Education. My supervisor for this research is marg gilling of Massey University, Wellington.

I am presently employed by Leading Edge Foundation in the capacity of Director, Adult Educator, Trainer and Life Coach.

Participant Recruitment

For the purposes of this research I am inviting people who would be interested in working with me in my research area of Adult Education. The selection criteria for this study are that you are required to be a woman in the Waikato/Auckland region between the age of 30 and 65 years of age.

I will be working with a maximum of 5 women for this particular research.

Project Procedures

For this research I will be using photo elicitation and Interactive Drawing as a method for research. This particular method of research means that each participant will be invited to take photos and represent through drawing in order to speak of different aspects of my research topic.

Interviews will then be held individually to share the photos and to give this voice. These interviews will be audio taped for the purpose of collating information and to ensure that accuracy in what has been shared is noted in the transcript and then analysis.

The photos will be used as part of the reporting process, unless you otherwise specify. If you would prefer these not to be used as part of the reporting process, then once they have been used for the purpose of this study they will either be returned to you, or destroyed. This is your choice. The notes taken from the tapes and the tapes will be destroyed.

Your identity will remain confidential unless otherwise requested. In the writing up of the research I will only use first names, if permission is given by yourself to use your name.

Participant involvement

In consenting to be part of this research it will be required of you as follows:

1. To take photographs that represent two different themes as requested on two occasions. A maximum of 10 photos is required per occasion.
2. To then meet with me for 4 interviews of no more than 45 minutes per interview.
 - The first interview will be to invite you to share the photos and the significance of these.
 - The second interview will be to invite you to share the photos of the second theme and to discuss the significance of these.
 - The third interview will be to bring together all that you have shared and make connections together.
3. To represent through the process of Interactive Drawing the categories discovered in the initial interviews. This will be done in the 4th interview.

Participant's Rights

The following Statement of Rights must be included:

You are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

I also understand that I have the right to ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during the interview.

Support Processes

If at any time the research topic raises any issues for you I will be more than happy to help you find someone who can assist you.

Project Contacts

If you have any questions at all regarding the study then please do not hesitate to contact me on 078497499 or talk with my supervisor, marg gilling on 04 8012794 Extn 6662

Committee Approval Statement

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee, WGTN. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Chair, Massey University Campus Human Ethics Committee: Wellington, telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethicswn@massey.ac.nz

A copy of this approval letter from the Ethics Committee will be available for your information.

APPENDIX B

CONSENT FORM

Margaret Waight

██████████ ██████████
██████████
██████████

Study

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interview being recorded through note taking.

I wish/do not wish to have the notes returned to me.

I wish/do not wish to have my photos returned to me.

I wish/do not wish to have the photos included in the reporting of the research.

I wish/ do not wish to have my name used in the reporting of the research.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature:

Date:

.....

**Full Name -
printed**

.....

APPENDIX C
LETTER FROM ETHICS COMMITTEE



Massey University

1 August 2005

Margaret Waight



OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT
TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR
(ETHICS & EQUITY)
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North
New Zealand
T 64 6 350 5573
F 64 6 350 5622
humanethics@massey.ac.nz
www.massey.ac.nz

Dear Margaret

Re: The Mystery of Learning in Adult Education

Thank you for the Low Risk Notification that was received on 29 July 2005.

Your project has been recorded on the Low Risk Database which is reported in the Massey University Human Ethics Committee Annual Report.

Please notify me if situations subsequently occur which cause you to reconsider your initial ethical analysis that it is safe to proceed without approval by a campus human ethics committee.

Please ensure that the following statement is used on Information Sheets:

"This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher(s) named above are responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you wish to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Sylvia Rumball, Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Ethics & Equity), telephone 06 350 5249, email humanethicspn@massey.ac.nz".

Please note that if a sponsoring organisation, funding authority, or a journal in which you wish to publish requires evidence of committee approval (with an approval number), you will have to provide a full application to a Campus Human Ethics committee. You should also note that such an approval can only be provided prior to the commencement of the research.

Yours sincerely

Professor Sylvia V Rumball, Chair
Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor (Ethics & Equity)

cc Ms Marg Gillling
Department of Social and Policy
Studies in Education, Wellington

Prof Wayne Edwards, HoD
Department of Social and Policy
Studies in Education, PN

Ms Caroline Teague, Graduate School of Education

Massey University Human Ethics Committee
Accredited by the Health Research Council



APPENDIX D

PHOTO ELICITATION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Can you share with me the photos that you have that represent relationship?
- What is the meaning of each of these photos for you?

SECOND INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Can you share with me the photos that you have that represent learning?
- What is the meaning of each of these photos for you?

THIRD INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PHOTOS

- Can you share with me any connections that you can see between the photos of relationship and the photos of learning?
- What is the meaning of this connection for you?

FOURTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – INTERACTIVE DRAWING

- Can you represent for me the following words
 - Synergy
 - Authenticity
 - Connectedness
 - Reflection
 - Empowerment
 - Discovery
 - SACRED
- What is the meaning of your drawing for you?

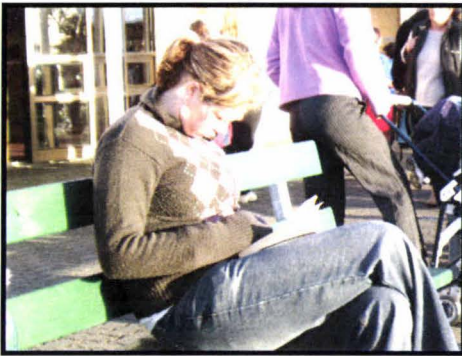
FOURTH INTERVIEW QUESTIONS – INTERACTIVE DRAWING

- Can you represent for me the word SACRED?
- What is the meaning of your drawing for you?

APPENDIX E

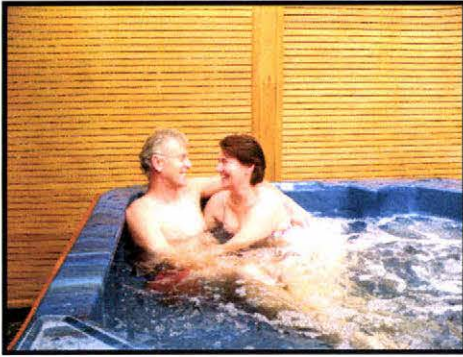
PARTICIPANTS VISUAL IMAGES OF RELATIONSHIP

CORAL



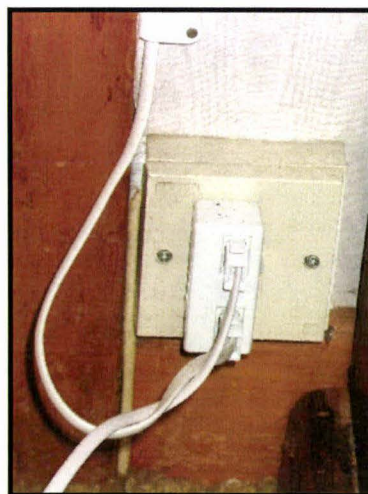
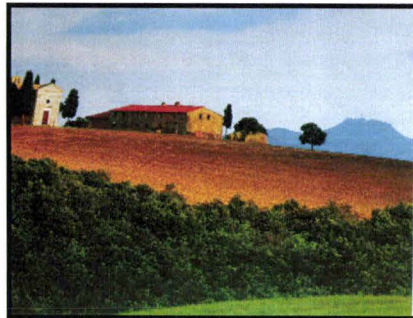
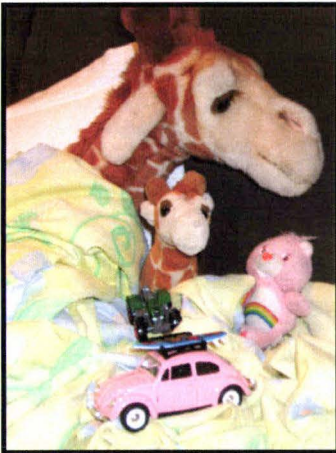
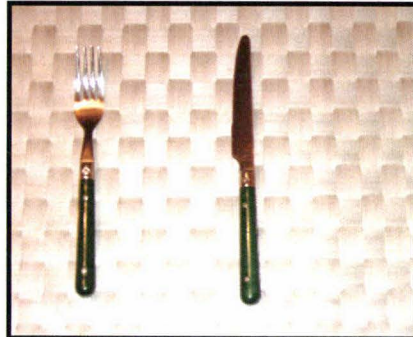
PARTICIPANTS VISUAL IMAGES OF RELATIONSHIP

ANGELA



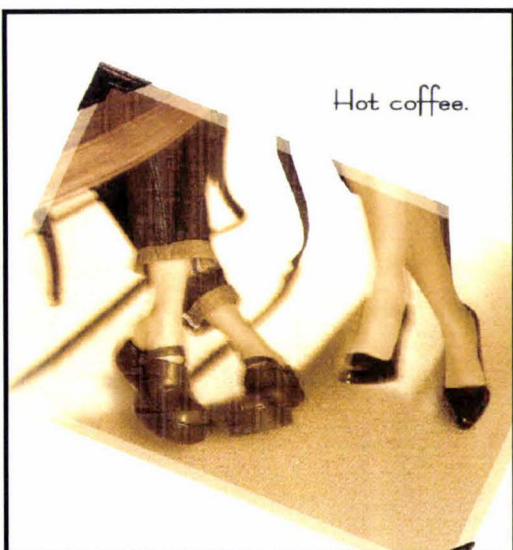
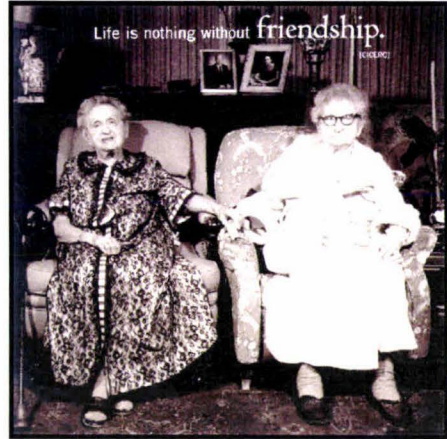
PARTICIPANTS VISUAL IMAGES OF RELATIONSHIP

JUSTINE



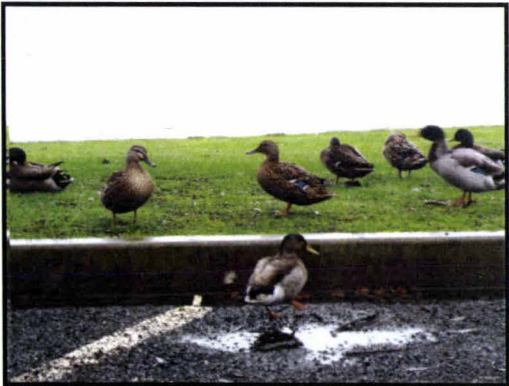
PARTICIPANTS VISUAL IMAGES OF RELATIONSHIP

MARGARET



PARTICIPANTS TOTAL VISUAL IMAGES OF RELATIONSHIP

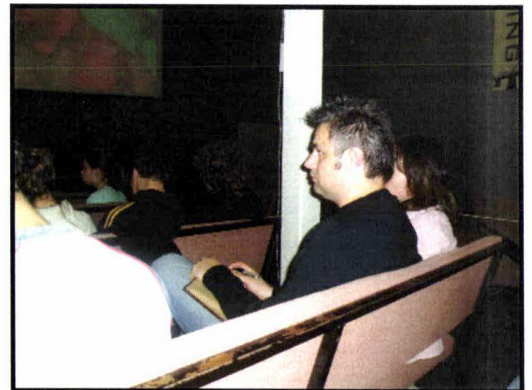
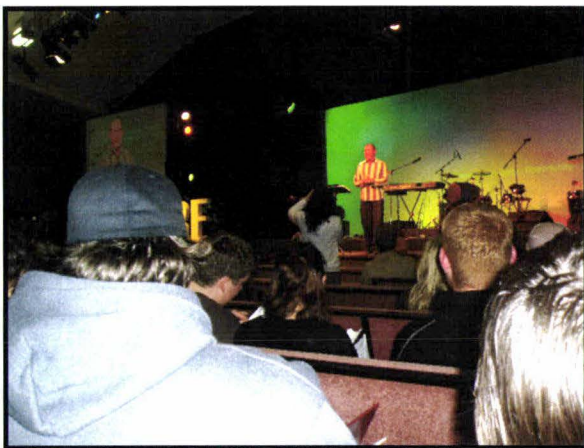
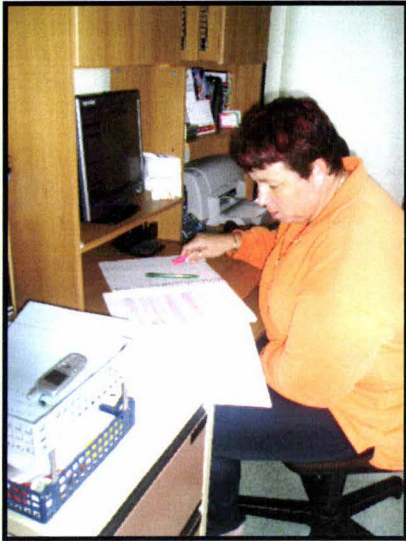
GINA



APPENDIX F

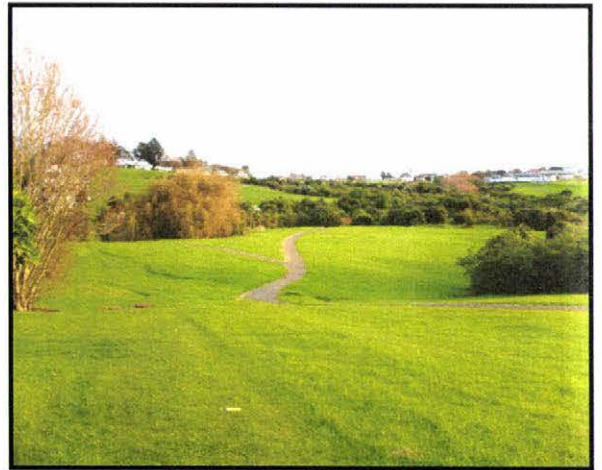
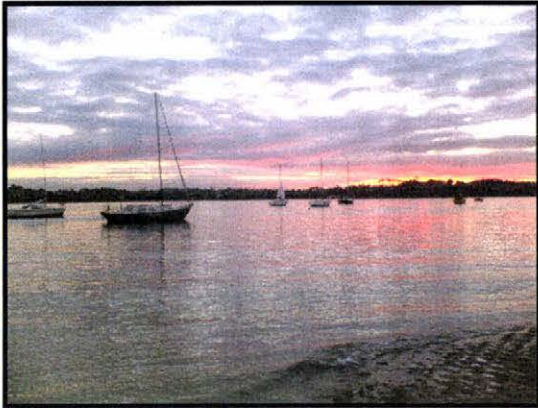
PARTICIPANTS VISUAL IMAGES OF LEARNING

CORAL



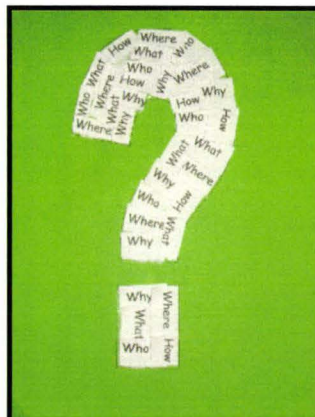
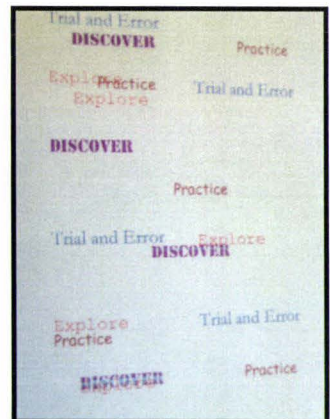
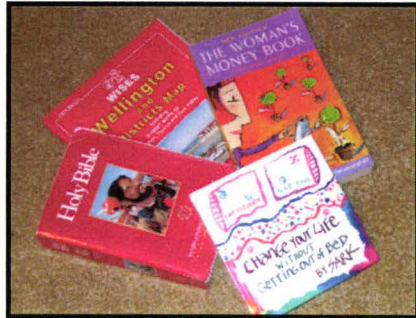
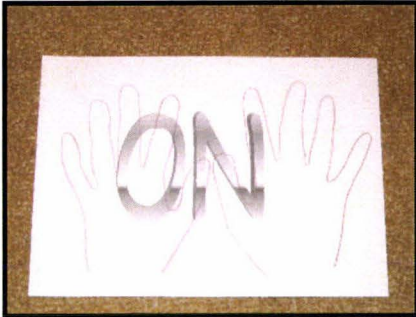
PARTICIPANTS VISUAL IMAGES OF LEARNING

ANGELA



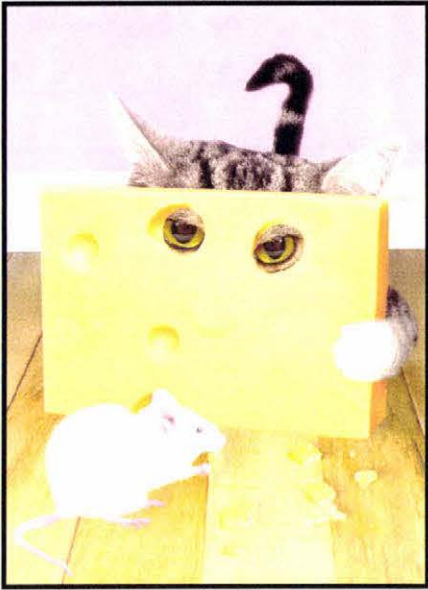
PARTICIPANTS VISUAL IMAGES OF LEARNING

JUSTINE



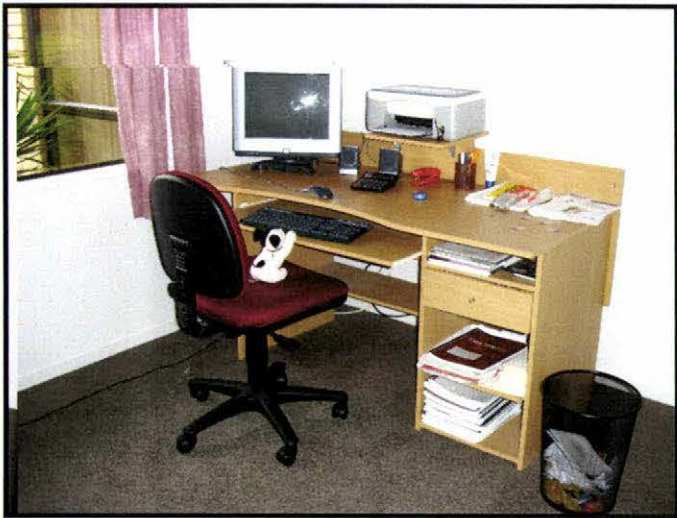
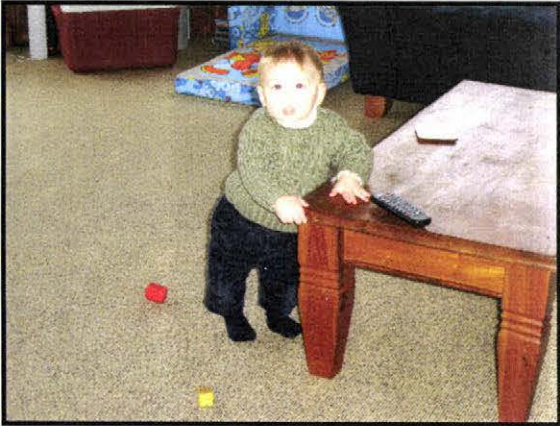
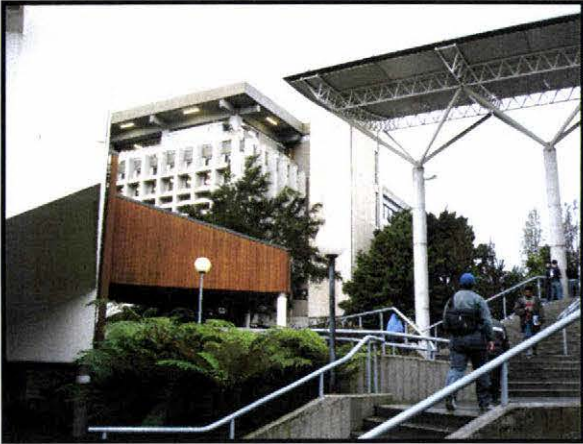
PARTICIPANTS VISUAL IMAGES OF LEARNING

MARGARET



PARTICIPANTS VISUAL IMAGES OF LEARNING

GINA



APPENDIX G
CODING CHART OF RELATIONSHIP

Core Category	Properties	Evidenced by
Authenticity	Who I am , Identity What's Important to me Uniqueness Option to be different Genuine Bone fide Vulnerable Painful	A, G,M,M,J,G A, G, J, M M, G, J M, G, J, M, C M, A, G G,M,A,J A,M,J J,G,M
Connectedness	One with another Heart beating as one Celebration of each other Meeting of hearts, mind, soul Emotions joined Bond	C,A,G,M G, G,J M M,M,G,J,A M,G,C G,C,J,A,M
Synergy	Exponential Togetherness Team Individual in Relationship Complimentary Interaction	M,G,C J,A J,C J, A, G,M C,M,M, M,C
Reflection	Commitment to the journey Access to each other Trust dimensions Vision Non-Abusive	J,G,M J M,A,J G,A J
Empowerment	Respect for others Life giving to others Empowerment Nurturing, protective value Safety	J,C,A,M J,C,A,G J,M,G J,M,G,A G,J,M
Discovery	Movement Alive Creative Un chartered Destination	G,A,J,C G,A,M A,J C,J,A,G,M

APPENDIX H
CODING CHART OF LEARNING

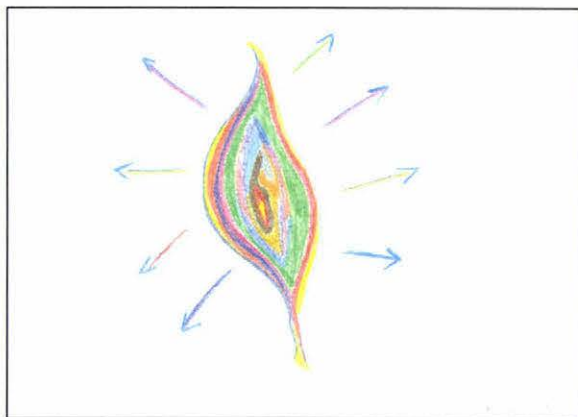
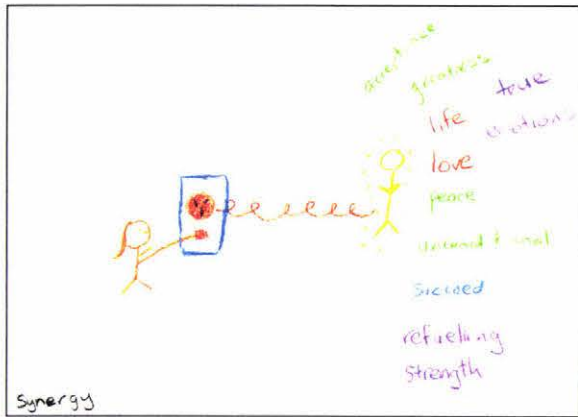
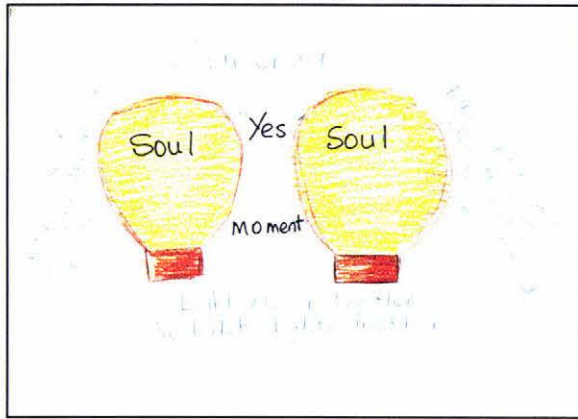
Core Category	Properties	Evidenced by
Authenticity	Holistic Core Values remain amidst others Who I am Uniqueness Embracing my capacity Me amidst We Inner growth	G,J,M A,G,M,M.,C, M,G,J G,J,A M,G,C,J,A M,A,G,C A,G,J
Connectedness	Opening of mind to others Celebrating learning milestones Emotional Connection Encouraging others to discover Offers hope Drawing out the resources of others to join with my resources Each person shaped by learning Common goal Sharing of experiences	M,A,J G,G,J M,A A,J,C M,J,G M,G,C,A M,C,G M,C,A,G J,C,M,G C,J,G
Synergy	Exploration Curiosity New directions and discoveries Possibilities and Ideas Interactive Experiential Potential unleashed and realised Unexpected outcomes from being together Draw upon collective resources	J,C,A M,G,J M,C,A J,M,C,A J,G,C,A G,M,J,A G,J,M G,J,M,A J,A,M,G
Reflection	Vision Safety Rapport and trust Help each other over obstacles Gentleness as transitions of learning occur Encouragement in cathartic moments	G,J,A G,M,J M,A,J A,J,M J,A,M J,G,A,M
Empowerment	Experimental Feed Forward Calling upon other people resources Belief and support Courage amidst vulnerability	G,J,G J,C,G,M A,C,J,M J,G,M,A,C J,G,M,C
Discovery	Movement Creative Changes transform you Flexibility	A,J,M,G J,G,M C,G,M,A,J J,G,M

APPENDIX I

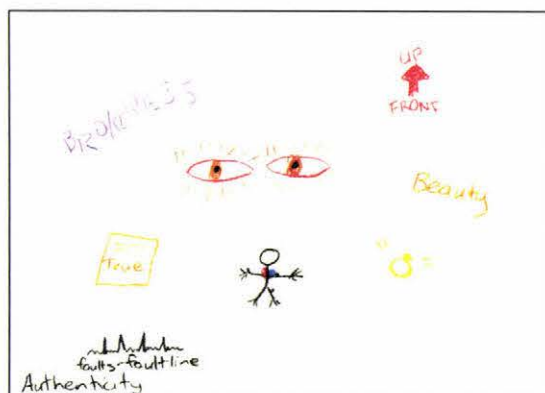
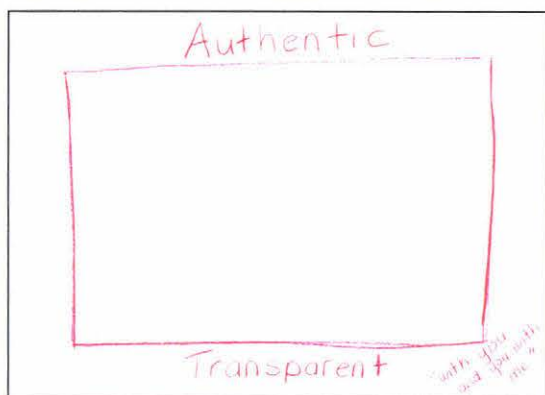
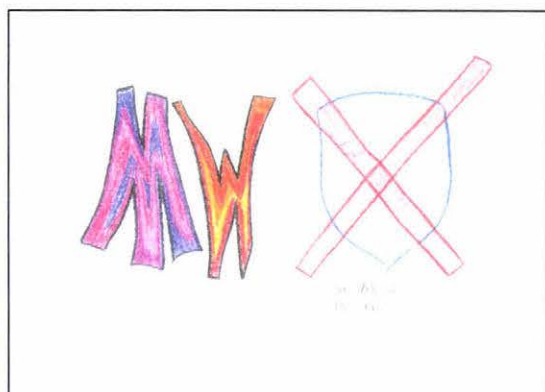
CODING CHART OF VISUAL IMAGES

Authenticity	A,J,G,M
Connectedness	A,J,G,M
Synergy	A,J,G,C
Reflection	A,G,M,J,C
Empowerment	G,M,A,C
Discovery	A,M,G

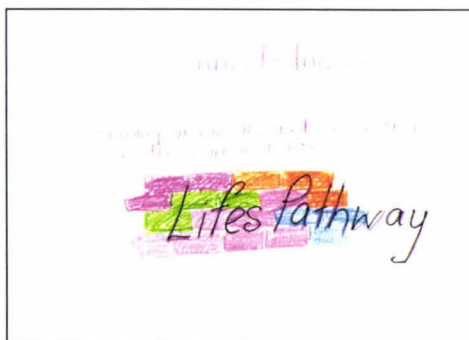
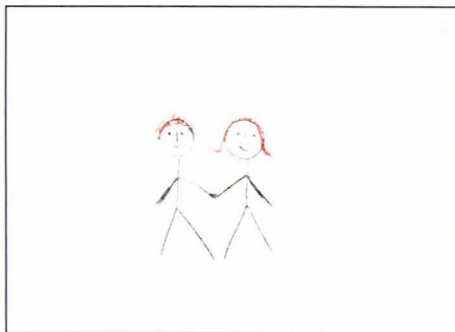
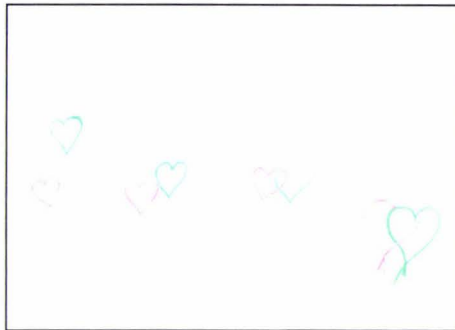
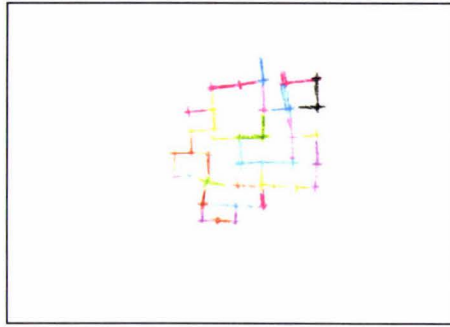
APPENDIX J Participants Interactive Drawing - SYNERGY



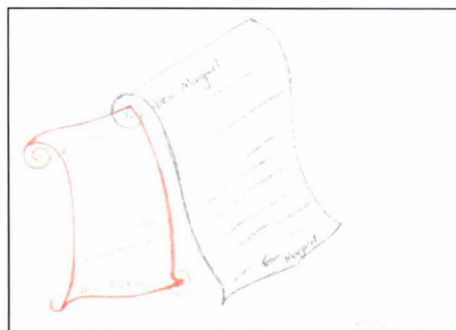
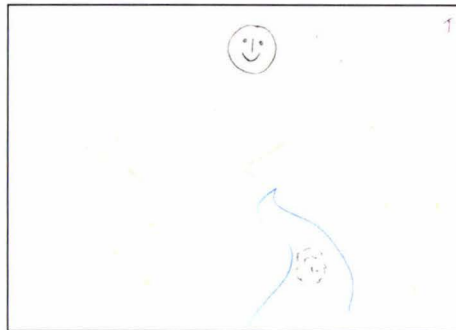
APPENDIX K Participants Interactive Drawing – AUTHENTICITY



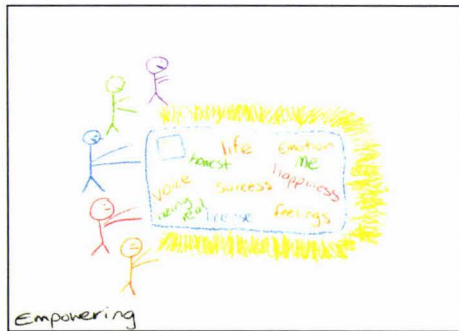
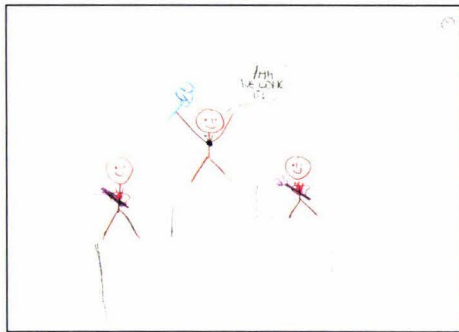
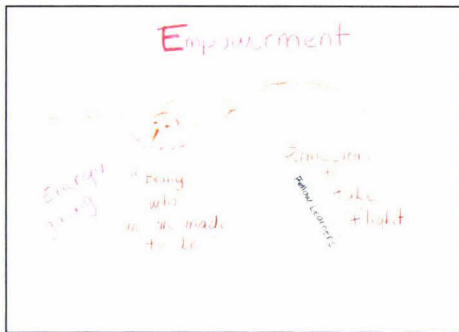
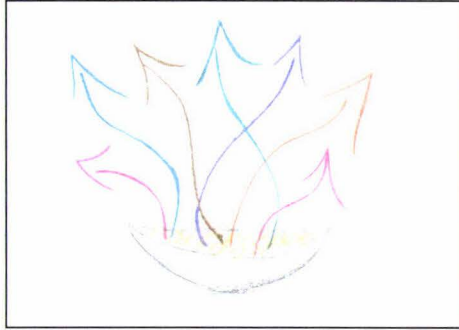
APPENDIX L Participants Interactive Drawing – CONNECTEDNESS



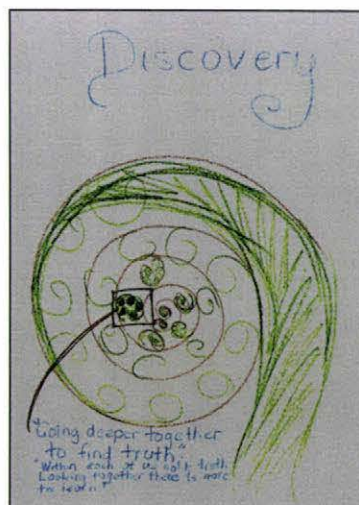
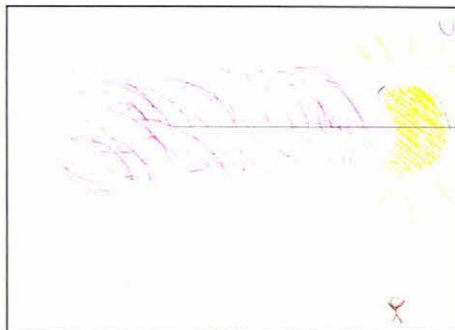
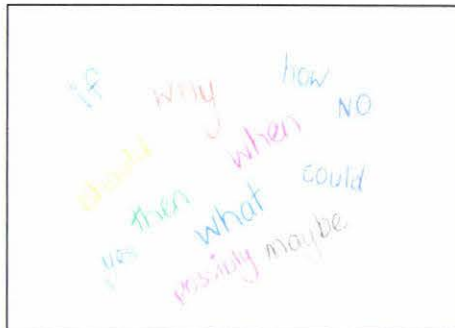
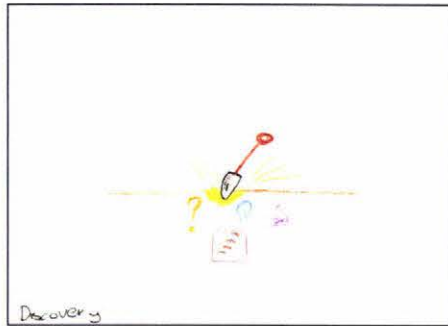
APPENDIX M Participants Interactive Drawing – REFLECTION



APPENDIX N Participants Interactive Drawing – EMPOWERMENT



APPENDIX O Participants Interactive Drawing – DISCOVERY



APPENDIX P Participants Interactive Drawing – SACRED

