Creating living standards of judgment for practice-based research in the professions through our question, How do i~we improve our educational practices?

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Abstract

In the 2005 BERA Presidential Address Whitty (2005) highlights the importance of making a clear distinction between education and educational research. Furlong and Oancea (2005) have highlighted the importance of developing a clear understanding of appropriate standards of judgment for evaluating the quality of practice and practice-based research. Using a living theory perspective this paper makes a clear distinction between education research and educational research. Education research is research grounded in the theories and methods of such forms and fields of knowledge as the philosophy, sociology, psychology, history, politics, economics, management and leadership of education. Educational research, from a living educational theory perspective, is grounded in the explanations produced by practitioner-researchers for their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations. Drawing on the idea of inclusionality as a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that is connective, reflective and co-creative (Rayner, 2005), new living standards of judgement are proposed for educational researchers who are concerned to generate educational theories that can explain the educational influences of individuals in their own learning in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations.

There are four ideas we would like to explore with you.

The first is inclusionality, by this we mean a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries, that are connective, reflexive and co creative.

The second, is the i~we relationship. By this we are meaning a relationally dynamic responsive relationship within which the integrity of each individual is not violated. 'We' is used to communicate a sustained connectivity with the other.

The third is the idea that a new epistemology with its living standards of judgement can be generated from inclusional enquiries.

The fourth is the idea of representation. By this we mean that we need forms of expression and communication that adequately represent our explanations for our own learning in our inclusional enquiries.

Scholarly Context

In 1995 Donald Schon (1995) called for the generation of a new epistemology for the new scholarship and explained why he believed that this epistemology would emerge from action research. In her 2001 Presidential Address to AERA Catherine Snow emphasized the need to develop agreed-upon procedures for transforming knowledge based on personal experiences of practice into 'public' knowledge, analogous to the way a researcher's private knowledge is made public through peer-review and publication. (Snow, 2001, p. 9). In 2005 Furlong and Oancea

(2005) highlighted the importance of developing a clear understanding of appropriate standards of judgment for evaluating the quality of practice and practice-based research. Whitehead (1989a) produced an evidence-based demonstration to show how individuals could generate their own living educational theories in enquiries of the kind, 'How do I improve what I am doing?' A living educational theory (Whitehead, 1989b, Whitehead and McNiff, 2006 and McNiff and Whitehead, 2005, 2006) is an individual's explanation for their educational influences in their own learning, in the learning of others and in the learning of social formations. Laidlaw (1996) demonstrated how the standards of judgement used in the generation of living educational theories were themselves living and could be clarified and communicated through the use of an action research methodology.

Wallace (2003) has developed insights from this methodology into an approach known as Thinking Actively in a Social Context (TASC). We will include this approach into the integration of action reflection cycles of: experiencing concerns when ontological values are not lived as fully as possible in practice; imagining what to do and forming an action plan; acting and gathering data on which to make a judgment on the validity and effectiveness of values, skills and understandings; evaluating effectiveness; modifying concerns, ideas and actions in the light of the evaluations; responding to a validation group response to an explanation of educational influence in learning, in a process of democratic evaluation and creative compliance (Macdonald, 1976, 1987). We do not want to give the false impression that the systemic form of our enquiries follow the systematic linear path of these Action Reflection Cycles. However as we reflect on the form of enquiry that is emerging through the exercise of our capacities for methodological inventiveness (Dadds & Hart, 2001), we recognise that the systemic form of our enquiries can be comprehended through this form of Action Reflection Cycle. As we submit our accounts for public recognition and criticism we work with the idea of democratic evaluation that it should be the power of the better argument that holds sway in the process of accountability. We are also aware that our practice and research takes place within a social context with a hierarchy of power relations that can influence what accounts as legitimate knowledge. We work with MacDonald's idea of creative compliance in acknowledging that so far, no matter how an existing set of power relations work against our interests, we have found creative spaces within which we continue to work towards a more fulfilling and productive existence.

The scholarly context includes some 20 living theory doctoral and other research degrees flowing through web-space from http://www.bath.ac.uk/~edsajw/living.shtml. These explanations of professional and workbased learning include accounts from the police, education and health services. The multi-media methods, used in representing living standards of judgement, in the presentation will draw on those used by Naidoo (2005) in her doctoral research programme on the emergence of a living theory of inclusional and responsive practice. They also draw on the living theory approaches used by Hartog (2004) in her self-study as a higher education tutor. They draw on: Lohr's (2006) inclusional insights from her thesis on Love at Work; Farren's (2005) generation of a pedagogy of the unique through a web of betweenness (O Donohue 2003); Delong's (2002) insights into the formation and sustaining of cultures of inquiry; Church's (2004) 'Creation of an uncompromised place to belong: why do I find myself in networks'. The methods for clarifying these living standards include the use of Dadds' and Hart's (2001) idea of methodological inventiveness and draw on Dadds' (2006) idea of empathetic validity in practitioner researcher. At the heart of the presentation is Rayner's (2006)

idea of inclusionality as a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that is connective, reflexive and co-creative. Huxtable (2006a & b) has contextualized her professional practice as a senior educational psychologist within this inclusional awareness. Whitehead, (2006) has explained how practitioner-researchers are generating a new epistemology in their living theory explanations of educational influences in learning. We will now explain how we are co-creating living standards of judgment for practice-based research in the professions as we retain the integrity of our individual enquiries in relation to our shared question, How do i~we improve our educational practices?

How do i~we improve our educational practices? Creating living standards of judgment for practice-based research in the professions.

What we are meaning by improvements in our educational practices is focused on finding appropriate forms of thought and representation that can communicate the nature of the living standards of judgement that characterise our i~we relationship within our inclusional educational enquiries.

We think that it is important for us ontologically to express and sustain an inclusional way of being in an impositional world. This way of being is beyond resilience and empathy; we experience these qualities within us and they help us to engage with a sense of respect for ourselves and the other. The inclusionality of our i~we relationship is also not the same as the 'I'm OK, you're OK', which has no core of a mutually co-creative intent; there is an interest in the other only as far as it is related to the 'I'. The inclusionality of our i~we relationships is expressed in our relational dynamic and responsive awareness of space and boundaries that are connective, reflexive and co-creative (Rayner, 2004).

We now want to see if we can communicate the meanings we are making as we search for appropriate forms of thought and representation that can communicate the nature of the living standards of judgement that characterise our i~we relationship.

The data we are analyzing are two papers we produced for a presentation at the 7th World Congress (WC) on Action Learning, Action Research and Process Management in Groningen on the 24th August 2006. You can access the two versions of our paper on How are we co-creating living standards of judgement in action-researching our professional practice?:

The 4000 word, 8 page paper for the conference proceedings is at:
http://www.jackwhitehead.com/monday/mhjwvalues15.htm
For the full multi-media account unrestricted by the 8 page restrictions see
http://www.jackwhitehead.com/monday/mhjwvalues14.htm

When we wrote the WC papers we started with a shared focus and conversations. This followed its own flow as ideas emerged. The final representational form this took, which we felt communicated our meanings, was in a multi media form. In response to the requirements of the WC the multi-media document comprising 8,500 of words, images and video was reduced to an academic text of 4,000 words on 8 sides of A4. We realized afterwards that in the editing, some important embodied meanings were lost – in the representational form lived the thought – the representation and the thought are held together.

A text, with its linear, neat precise form is needed as a vehicle to communicate, at times, but may not communicate adequately the flow-form of meaning that more closely resembles the way we think and learn. The very form of representation used moulds, enhances, provokes… the thoughts that inform the communication. There is no simple causal relationship but an interrelated flow.

Look at the two forms of representation and without actually reading the words first ask with us what your responses are; we are claiming that the very 'human' values, whose meanings we were seeking to explore and reveal, are obliterated or masked within the traditional form of representation of academic text. Which form of representation communicates to you that warmth, that vibrancy, that life-affirming energy that we experience as being at the core of what it means to be us to be human? We are also claiming that the multi-media communication carries our meanings of the complexity of the flow-form of the relational dynamic and responsiveness of our practice, while the version restricted to words on paper loses these meanings.

Now let us come to the i~we. ***How do i~we improve our educational practices? Creating living standards of judgment for practice-based research in the professions.***

The ~ denotes an inclusional space between the i and the we – a space that is relationally dynamic, a space where there is a productive chaotic flow, a space in which there is our relational dynamic and responsive practice. We can see this practice being communicated in the movement of our multi-media presentation. Can you sense this relational dynamic and responsive practice from the 8 A4 pages of text? We cannot.

It was interesting to find in writing this present paper we became stuck. We found that what we had produced was not enabling us to understand ourselves, let alone communicate with anyone else, what we knew we were living in the growing awareness of the i~we relationship of inclusionality. The process of creating this paper to that point was of one of us writing the first part of the paper and sending it to the other to add the next section to. You might recognize this form of collaboration – *these are the sections that need doing – you do this bit, I will do this bit and then one of us will draw it together and make sure it makes sense, a couple of redrafting versions exchanged and job done!* That form of writing does not allow new understandings to emerge. We want to communicate in a narrative flow while understanding that the educational processes in an inclusional space are not so neat and sequential.

The use of i~we in our questions represents our inclusional enquiries. By this we mean that we are working with our relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that are connective, reflexive and co-creative (Rayner, 2006). Flowing with our boundaries is a flow of life-affirming energy we both express in our work. We also seek to sustain boundaries that do not violate the integrity and identity of the other while remaining permeable to each others' educational influences in our learning.

Is it within the i~we that the dance between different focii occurs? Is it a change of relationship or the dancing within? We can hold onto the idea for instance of i~we between us irrespective of when Marie turns to Jack as supervisor or colleague with superior understandings – in fact it is the ability to feel confident to do that that seems to be part of it.

There does not feel to be a severing of the relationship. In seeking to improve our educational practices we are both interested in enhancing the flow of our inclusional values, skills and understandings. In the correspondence below we are sharing ideas in a way that is helping us to understand how to benefit more fully from Jack's traditional scholarly analytic response to text, a response that he feels severs his relationship in which he is communicating his holding a relationship of valuing the other. We are sharing ideas about Marie's insistence that the traditional form of supervisor's responsibility should be subordinate to a inclusional value of relationship. Here is a dialogical form of communication in which we are developing a shared understanding of the complexity of our educational relationship while sustaining our commitment to inclusionality. Jack is fascinated by Marie's last point in the dialogue below:

Anyhow – there is a flow of energy I take from my professional life into my personal even if I try to keep the negatives out of both. Why is it that it is accepted for a celebration to be shared? It is just about OK to talk about a birth but not a death.

Jack's fascination is focused on a question about sustaining a flow of life-affirming energy in the face of experiences that can serve to diminish this energy and push an individual towards an abyss of disablement. In responding to a lack of recognition through the disciplinary power of an organisation, Jack is continuing to enquire in a way that maintains or enhances a sustaining flow of life-affirming energy with the inclusional recognition of mutuality between family, friends, colleagues and other practitioner-researchers, while developing a creative response to this lack of institutional recognition.

Jack's work is concerned about the representation of thought and how he can engage in an inclusional living theory research with a question how can he respond inclusionally to a lack of recognition of his contribution to knowledge.

We agreed a mutually of intent to co-create a paper. We started with a traditional form of representation with a beginning, middle and end where we each put forward our individual enquiries. We got stuck in the third part where we tried to bring them together. In working within our relationship of inclusionality we found ourselves developing a different dialogical understanding from within discourses in which we share and develop our ideas together. In such dialogues we are seeing ourselves expressing our relationally dynamic and responsive values which, in the process of clarifying their meanings in the course of their emergence in practice, we are forming our living epistemological standards of judgement.

How do i~we improve our educational practices?

The use of i~we in our questions represents our inclusional enquiries. By this we mean that we are working with our relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries that are connective, reflexive and co-creative (Rayner, 2006). Flowing with our boundaries is a flow of life-affirming energy we both express in our work. We also seek to sustain boundaries that do not violate the integrity and identity of the other while remaining permeable to each others' educational influences in our learning. Huxtable is researching her professional life as a senior educational psychologist with a local authority. She has a particular interest in extending the educational opportunities of pupils' in relation to their special gifts and talents, through her influence in organizing professional development opportunities for teachers and support staff. Whitehead is reseaching his life in education with a focus on expressing and communicating an

educational epistemology of inclusionality that is appropriate for the generation and evaluation of living educational theories.

In researching our question, 'How are we creating living standards of judgment for practice-based research in the professions?' we use insights from the following three epistemologies in generating our living educational theories.

The first epistemology is grounded in the logic of Aristotle with his Law of Contradiction, which claims that two mutually exclusive statements cannot both be true simultaneously, and his Law of Excluded Middle which claims that everything is either A of Not-A. This logic characterises the propositional theories the dominate what counts as legitimate knowledge in the Academy. All my academic life I have drawn insights that I value from the grand narratives of propositional theory of the kind offered by Erich Fromm through his productive life. I continue to draw valued insights from these theories and have acknowledged the influence of theorists such as Polanyi (1958) and Habermas (1976, 1987) amongst many others.

The second epistemology is grounded in the Marxist dialectic as set out by Ilyenkov (1977) in his inspirational work on dialectical logic. Contradiction is the nucleus of dialectics and change is explained in terms of the Law of Identity of Opposites and the Law of the Negation of the Negation. I have drawn insights from Marcuse's work in which logic is taken to be the form that reason takes in understanding the real as rational. In asking, researching and answering questions of the kind, 'How do I improve my practice?' I could see and feel myself, with the help of video-tapes of my practice, a living contradiction as I held together my values together with their negation in my practice. I have explicated my dialectical epistemology in my doctoral thesis (Whitehead, 1999)

The third epistemology is grounded in the living logic of inclusionality (Rayner 2006), Naidoo (2005) has developed the inclusional and responsive standard of judgement of passion for compassion in the development of her emergent living theory of inclusional and responsive practice. The living logic of inclusionality can be understood with the help of multi-media explanations of educational influences in learning that show our educational relationships as interconnecting and branching channels and boundaries of communication.

The explanations we generate for our learning together contain living standards of judgement for practice-based research. These living standards are grounded in our expressions of our ontological values as we clarify and co-create their meanings in the course of our individual and shared practices. We will now include our individual enquiries about how we are improving our educational practices to emphasise that these individual enquiries can be understood as existing within the dynamic relational awarenesses of our responsive practices that we are expressing through your i~we relationship. Keeping an 'i' focus in our individual enquiries is important to both of us in connecting with our i~we relationship because we want to emphasise the importance of retaining our individual sense of integrity and responsibility while also recognizing the importance of our social relationships.

Jack's response to his question: How do I improve my educational practices?

The educational practice at the heart of my educational research concerns the validation and legitimation of an epistemology of inclusionality for the generating and testing of living educational theories. My current interests focus on issues of representation and enquiry. The

practices I am seeking to improve in relation to representation and enquiry can be understood from my experience of holding together a tension between the power of truth and the truth of power in my workplace.

For reasons described elsewhere (Whitehead, 2006) that are related to the support I received from others in 1976 to counter an attempt to terminate my employment and to obtain a tenured contract until 2009, I have not sought promotion until earlier this year. Promotion means losing tenure and as my tenure represents for me the political and moral integrity of those who countered the threat to my employment, rather than economic security, I have held on to tenure. Then, in 2005 I found myself thinking that the University's recognition of my contribution to educational knowledge could serve to enhance the educational influence of the flow of living educational theories. With the support of colleagues who believed that promotion was long over due I applied for a Readership this year. My application was rejected on the grounds that I had yet to make a case for the appropriate contribution to the advancement of knowledge and that in order to develop this case it will be necessary for me to focus on producing articles which can be disseminated via established and renowned international refereed journals.

Now, the practice I want to improve is my research capacity to represent my experience of this rejection in a way that acknowledges an embodied struggle to channel emotional responses of rage and disgust into an enhanced flow of the life-affirming energy, values, skills and understandings of well-being and productive work.

I found myself in a similar situation in 1991 after a draft report from a Senate Working Party on a matter of Academic Freedom had concluded that my academic freedom had not been breached, following the Working Party's analysis of issues surrounding a letter I had received from the Secretary and Registrar claiming that my activities and writings were a challenge to the present and proper organisation of the University and not consistent with the duties the University wished me to pursue in teaching or research. Following my response to this draft at a meeting of the Working Party the report for Senate was amended to acknowledge that while my academic freedom had not been breached this was because of my persistence in the face of pressure while a less determined individual might well have been discouraged and therefore constrained. Here is a video-clip showing my re-enactment of my response to the working party. It comes at the end of my meeting when feeling utterly defeated and dejected at the lack of recognition in the report on the pressure I had been subjected to I moved to leave the room. Then, as I was leaving I felt a surge of energy, not uncontrolled rage, certainly passionate but disciplined and controlled. Here is the video-clip of my re-enactment.

http://www.jackwhitehead.com/ajwacfr.mov

The significance for my research of this 'performance text' and my enquiry into improving my educational practice concerns both representation and enquiry. I want to find appropriate ways of representing the realities of a lack or recognition or even abuse within unequal power relations. I want to improve my capacity for sustained enquiry in questioning the truth of power when faced with such a lack of recognition.

The final report to Senate in 1991 acknowledged that my academic freedom had not been breached because of my persistence in the face of pressure that might have discouraged and therefore constrained a less determined individual. My responses to the recent events I am describing here are evoking the need for a similar kind of persistence in the face of the pressures

that link my promotion to the requirement that I focus on producing articles which can be disseminated via established an renowned international refereed journals.

The research practice I want to improve is focused on the recognition of the educational significance of responding to rejections of recognition and other threats to my identity in a way that acknowledges the emotions associated with the rejections while supporting enhancements in the flow of life-affirming energy and productive life of well-being. I am thinking here of improving representations in research accounts of the ways in which the emotional energy, that is associated with rejections of recognition and that can push one into an abyss of disability, can be channelled into enhancing the flow of the life-affirming energy of well being. I am thinking of this flow of well-being in my educational influence in my own learning in the learning of others and in the learning of socio-cultural formations. Here is something I wrote in my doctoral thesis in 1999 that may help you to understand my meaning of the significance of recognition in relation to my research programme at the University of Bath.

"Human beings seek recognition of their own worth, or of the people, things, or principles that they invest with worth. The desire for recognition, and the accompanying emotions of anger, shame and pride, are parts of the human personality critical to political life. According to Hegel, they are what drives the whole historical process. (Fukuyama, 1992, p. xvii)

Let me see if I can communicate more clearly the nature of the spiritual quality of recognition I am seeking to represent in my research as I make my first return in thirty years to these (gendered) words of Martin Buber:

The teacher who wants to help the pupil to realize his best potentialities must intend him as this particular person, both in his potentiality and in his actuality. More precisely, he must know him not as a mere sum of qualities, aspirations, and inhibitions; he must apprehend him, and affirm him as a whole. But this he can only do if he encounters him as a partner in a bipolar situation. And to give his influence unity and meaning, he must live through this situation in all its aspects not only from his own point of view but also from that of his partner. He must practice the kind of realization that I call embracing. It is essential that he should awaken the I-You relationship in the pupil, too, who should intend and affirm his educator as this particular person; and yet the educational relationship could not endure if the pupil also practiced the art of embracing by living through the shared situation from the educator's point of view. Whether the I-You relationship comes to an end or assumes the altogether different character of a friendship, it becomes clear that the specifically educational relationship is incompatible with complete mutuality. (Buber, p. 178, 1970)"

In seeking recognition in the 'I-You' relationship and in the thymotic sense of 'spiritness' (Fukuyama, 1992, p. xvi) I want to overcome a tendency to megalothymia in the sense of a search to be recognised as superior to others. I am seeking recognition by the Academy that my own contribution to knowledge of my subject education, can be publicly acknowledged as worthy of being seen, alongside the contributions of my research students, as showing originality of mind and critical judgement." (Whitehead, 1999).

In another paper to this session at BERA, Marian Dadds will emphasise the importance of Empathetic Validity in Educational Research (Dadds & Whitehead, 2006). In what follows I think that your understandings of the meanings I am seeking to communicate will require the

exercise of your capacity for empathy. Here is the tension, concern and question that is now helping to move on my educational enquiry. To communicate the meanings of emotion in my educational influences in my own learning I need to find a form of representation that can carry these meanings. The meanings are embodied in who I am, what I do and how I think. I am expressing some of these meanings in the here and now of this presentation. As soon as I try to represent what I am doing I am conscious of Patti Lather's point about ironic validity:

My tension is focused on my responses to a group of people who can support both the truth of power and the power of truth in a similar way to myself. Such a group have decided not to recognise my contribution to knowledge as being appropriate for promotion to a Readership. Their recognition is dependent upon my contribution to knowledge being represented in articles which can be dissemination via established and renowned international refereed journals. I think most researchers in the audience or who are reading this paper will recognise the desire and pressure to publish in these journals, not least because money allocated from the Research Assessment Exercise has been closely related to such publications. However, I see my contribution to knowledge as being embodied in the Library of the University of Bath and other Universities in the form of over 20 doctoral theses, most of which are now flowing through web-space from http://people.bath.ac.uk/edsajw/living.shtml . It isn't that I haven't published in these Journals. I have. However, for the last five years I have become convinced that the language and logic of solely text-on-paper based journals cannot carry the meanings I wish to communicate. It is a matter concerning the three epistemologies above. I think the text-based journals are appropriate for carrying the meanings in propositional forms of discourse. They are less suited to dialectical forms of representation that contain contradictions and unsuitable for inclusional forms of representation of the kind I use in my multi-media accounts of my educational influence. Hence my tension in being required to focus on producing articles that can be disseminated via established and renowned international refereed journals. It was as recent as 2004 that the University of Bath changed its regulations to permit the submission of e-media for research degrees. It is my contention that multi-media journals have not yet had time to establish themselves as having equivalent status to 'established and renowned international refereed journals'. My concern is that the kind of pressure I am being subjected to, to focus attention on producing articles for the 'established and renowned international refereed journals' feels similar to the pressure I felt in relation to my academic freedom in 1987-1991. In the earlier video-clip I express the embodied responses whose meanings I believe you can appreciate and comprehend through your capacity for empathy. I am thinking of your expression of empathy as I respond to the feeling of defeat and rejection, with a passionate expression of my defence of and commitment to, justice, responsibility and freedom.

Hence, from my tension and concern my enquiry is moving on with the question, *'How can I improve my practice in enhancing recognition of the contributions to knowledge and educational influences in learning of living educational theories?'* This is a question open to the possibilities in your suggestions for taking this enquiry forward.

In relation to the question we are addressing, 'How do i~we improve our educational practices? Creating living standards of judgment for practice-based research in the professions', I wish to make the following point about the importance of i~we relations. When I received the e-mail notifying me of the rejection of my application for promotion I was in South Africa, on my way to a meeting to discuss a research paper by a South African researcher who wanted some advice about taking forward her action research. I'd stopped off

to look at my e-mail before the meeting. In the video-tape of the meeting I show no emotional response to the rejection. I do show attention to the other, pleasure in our conversation and respond in a way that she believes to be helpful. I make this point because there is something in the quality of i~we relations that is included in the I-You relation described above, that has enabled me, so far, to move with the flow of life-affirming energy of well-being, and to resist a move into the abyss of disablement, that I associate with allowing rage, loathing or despair to dominate my responses.

The response I am now seeking to make is through exploring the question, 'How can I respond inclusionally to the issues I am raising about representation and enquiry?'

In offering this joint paper in which Marie is exploring the genesis of her form of educational psychology I feel easy about sharing the above enquiry. This ease has much to do with Marie's insistence that she is recognized within a relationship of mutually and equality, rather than from within a 'supervisor-student' relationship. Through Marie's influence I have changed my perception of my educational relationships. Until this year, I have adhered to Buber's notion that the educative relation is not one of full mutuality. According to Buber, when the student can recognize the educator from his own point of view the relationship of mutuality is no longer possible and the educational relationship is either burst asunder or changes into friendship. All the researchers I work with have superior knowledge to myself in their chosen professional contexts. I think I acknowledge this knowledge as I communicate my desire to help in bringing this embodied knowledge into the public domain. I am now working with a sense of i~we relationships in which the relational dynamic is characterized by the co-creation of living standards of judgement. What I think we are offering as we each show the uniqueness of our contributions is that these contributions are emerging from within the space, boundaries and awareness of inclusionality of our educational relationships that are mutually co-creative and also retain my professional responsibility as a supervisor of Marie's research programme.

Marie's response to her question: How do I improve my educational practices?

Over the years of working as an educational psychologist I have experienced increasing tensions between working with the knowledge emanating from my field and practices which values systematic, rather than systemic ways of knowing, decontextualises learning, imposes an understanding of a person on them, and denies them as creators of valued knowledge and their own learning. Through researching my present practice, coordinating the APEX (Able Pupils Extending Opportunities) project my understanding of what educational psychology is and how I can practice more meaningfully and productively as an educational psychologist, has shifted.

I find quotes like these:

'Everyone has an aptitude for something. The trick is to recognize it, to honor it, to work with it.' Shekerjian (1991)

'I have learnt to never underestimate my skills of craft and learning, because nothing is impossible to a child with imagination.' (Learning evaluation by R. aged 10)

'No one can persuade another to change. Each of us guards a gate of change that can only be opened from the inside. We cannot open the gate of another, either by argument, or by emotional appeal' Marilyn Ferguson poet in 7 Habits of Successful People – Covey

resonate with me. I hold to the belief that all learners have the capacity for extraordinary achievement and I have sought to develop my practice as an educational psychologist to reflect my growing understanding of what I mean by extraordinary achievement and how I can contribute to the educational environment in which it can flourish.

I am presently understanding and researching my practice as a senior educational psychologist:

'… working within the education system with the educational intent of engaging with others to generate and research their own living educational psychological theories, so we might each influence our own learning, the learning of others and the social formations in which we live and work'

I am currently understanding educational psychology as:-

'comprising a living body of knowledge, skills, understandings and values concerning how, why, when, where and what humans learn, expressed and researched with an educational intent through the generation of living educational theories and practice.'

My meaning of 'educational intent' is communicated through phrases such as:-

'I want to enable children and young people to build an understanding of what they want to commit time and effort to during their lifetimes that will enable them to live satisfying and productive lives without imposing my own values and needs.'

'I want to extend the variety of educational contexts in which children can learn about their own living values that they hold as their standards of what is or is not a satisfying and productive life and enabling them to increasingly understand their own embodied living educational theories so they can take control over themselves and the destinies they want to create in a world they want to live in.'

'I want them to learn skills, understandings and values which will enable them to do this with increasing independence.'

I am therefore exploring what I could most easily summarise as an inclusional pedagogy. I am concerned that the focus of most educators is on how to get children to learn what is preordained. It is made pleasant, enjoyable and fun. There are efforts to try to make the pupil feel they are creating something but the success or otherwise of educational practice is judged by how far and fast along a predetermined path a child has progressed. Progress is marked inappropriately on an ordinal ratio scale with evidence of skill and concept acquisition sampling severed from the complexity of understanding and 'deep learning'. This contrasts with the standards educators seem to hold as important when they say things like 'I think I have really done a good job 'he really enjoys books' or 'she is happier in how she is getting

on with other children' or 'he was so engrossed in what he was doing I didn't like to interrupt'. This has been vividly illustrated for me as I receive an email from Claire Formby, a very creative and dedicated educator, where she writes in her draft living theory research enquiry:

I had to ask for help because I felt that I was not coping and the children were unhappy. Looking back, I think I had become a little stale in my teaching, I was not a reflective practitioner and much of my teaching was about me and how I liked to teach. The first change I had to make was to put the children and their needs at the centre of my teaching.

I take courage from this teacher and the other professional educators with whom I work to continue to challenge my own theories and practices to create new knowledge, skills and understandings which can enable me improve my practice as an educational psychologist. I am not trying to deny the usefulness of psychological theories in education but I am questioning how I use them as an educational psychologist; as distinct from a psychologist in education.

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Returning to the four ideas:

Inclusionality.   Do you think that you understand our meaning of inclusionality as a relationally dynamic awareness of space and boundaries, that are connective, reflexive and co-creative?

 i~we relationships. Is our idea of i~we relationships useful in communicating meanings of a relationally dynamic responsive relationship within which the integrity of each individual is not violated and within which 'we' is used to communicate a sustained connectivity with the other?

 A new epistemology. Have we demonstrated that living standards of judgement can be generated from inclusional enquiries?

Representation. Have we convinced you of the need for multi-media forms of expression and communication that adequately represent our explanations for our own learning in our inclusional enquiries?

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