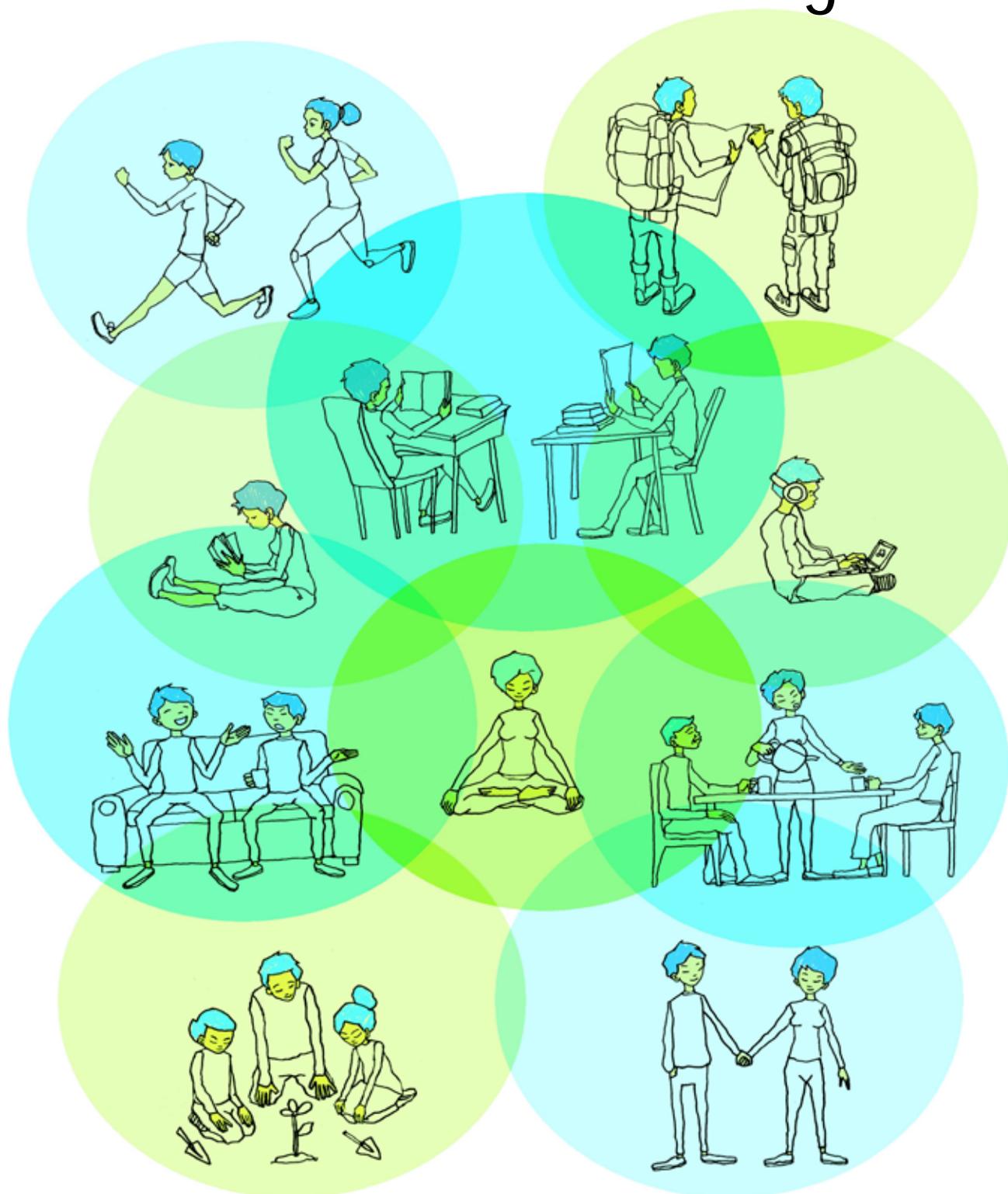


Lifewide Learning & Education in Universities and Colleges



Edited by
Norman Jackson & Jenny Willis
<http://www.learninglives.co.uk/>

CHAPTER C1

'Lifewide Curriculum': An Experiential Workshop to Introduce Students to Transformational Learning

Judie Taylor and Ruth Barnsley

SUMMARY

It is important that the 21st century higher education curriculum prepares students for the complexity of a changing world, and also offers space for them to reflect on the nature of their own lifewide curriculum and their self concept as learners. This chapter describes such a space; an experiential workshop in which students were invited to explore the notion of the 'lifewide curriculum'. They did this through metaphor by drawing images and / or selecting and placing objects such as beads, figures and buttons in relation to each other to create a 'small world' (Lahad 2006). From their images and 'small worlds' individual definitions of the 'lifewide curriculum' were constructed, which were then discussed in small groups of 5 or 6 in order to arrive at an agreed group definition. This was followed by a large group discussion and feedback with the whole group. One student (RB) who participated in the workshop reflects upon her experience and the transformational impact the workshop had upon her own approach to and understanding of her role within the learning process. The tutor who facilitated the workshop (JT), outlines the context and reflects on the outcomes of the workshop.

BIOGRAPHIES



Judie Taylor is a Dramatherapist, Coach and Clinical Supervisor, currently working as a Senior Lecturer at the University of Derby. She has always seen parallels between her practice as a Dramatherapist and her approach as a tutor; an emphasis on relationship and the learning partnership, a focus on the 'whole person', a facilitative learning environment and the potential of creativity and metaphor in the learning process. In 1993 she was part of the team that developed the BA (Hons) Creative Expressive Therapies and it was at the beginning of her tenure as programme leader in 1999 that her passion for personal development planning was ignited. This led to her championing Personal Development Planning (PDP) within the curriculum at Derby and the development of dedicated PDP and peer coaching modules, designed to enable students to realise their full potential, not only in terms of employability but also as life long and reflective learners.





Ruth Barnsley is a student on the BA (Hons) Creative Expressive Therapies - Art Pathway Course. She has long held a passion for the use of creativity and the arts within both education and personal development. She has a keen interest in SEN learning and attended the Derby University Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Conference in 2013. During her time on the Creative Expressive Therapies course, her passion for helping people has grown substantially. She is currently interested in researching the positive effects of the arts and creativity, within phenomenological concepts, upon education. She has volunteered at Arts for Recovery in the Community and is currently volunteering at Inspirative Arts (a Creative Expressive company founded by two previous Creative Expressive Therapies students).

INTRODUCTION

The complexities of the 21st century require an educational climate that helps learners understand and engage with the process of learning; to 'take responsibility for their own learning and ... (be) motivated by their own learning ambitions' (Brockbank and McGill 2006:26). Pegg echoes this statement with regard to Higher Education and regards autonomy and taking responsibility in learning as key factors in enhancing student employability (Pegg et al 2012:46). However this approach to education may not reflect the experience of learners entering Higher Education. It is therefore important that the 21st century curriculum includes opportunities to prepare students for the complexity of a changing world and provide spaces for students to reflect on the nature of their own curriculum and their self concept as learners. Jackson (2011) coined the term lifewide curriculum that more imaginatively engaged with the idea that learners create their own curriculum through all their spaces and places they inhabit in their life simultaneously. He argues that the adoption of a lifewide curriculum in higher education is more likely to assist learners in preparing themselves for the complexity of their future lives.

The challenge [is] how to design a curriculum that enables learners to integrate their life experiences into their learning and developmental process to prepare themselves for the complexity and uncertainty of their future lives....[A lifewide curriculum] focuses attention on the importance of developing capability, dispositions, knowledge, qualities and confidence for acting in the continuous stream of situations that make up learners' lives ... and it shows them that higher education values the choices they are making about how they are choosing to live their lives. In framing the curriculum in this way we are championing the idea that capability is 'essentially one of freedom - the range of options a person has in deciding what kind of life to lead' (Dreze and Sen 1995:11). In revealing his lifewide curriculum a learner is choosing to reveal the life he has chosen to lead: he is revealing how he is authoring his life. (Jackson 2011b:113)

This chapter describes a facilitated space for students to reflect on the nature of their own lifewide curriculum and their self concept as learners. It took the form of an experiential workshop offered to students in the first semester of study of the BA (Hons) Creative Expressive Therapies at the University of Derby. In the workshop students were invited to explore the notion of the 'lifewide curriculum'. They did this through metaphor by drawing



images and / or selecting and placing objects such as beads, figures and buttons in relation to each other to create a 'small world' (Lahad 2006). From their images and 'small worlds' individual definitions of the 'lifewide curriculum' were constructed, which were then discussed in small groups of 5 or 6 in order to arrive at an agreed group definition. This was followed by a large group discussion and feedback with the whole group. One of the students involved in the workshop (RB) reflects upon her experience and the transformational impact it had upon her own approach to and understanding of her role within the learning process.

Background

The BA Hons Creative Expressive Therapies was established in 1993. It remains a unique undergraduate programme based upon Jennings's (1992) (Dramatherapist and Anthropologist) Creative Expressive model, with a focus on the 'healthy' aspects of the person rather than on a deficit or disease model and a belief that everyone has the potential to be creative. There is a belief which underpins the programme that the arts can aid the expression and communication of thoughts and feelings in both a complementary and alternative way to the spoken word. Enabling such expression can help to develop increased levels of personal self esteem, confidence and well-being as well as a better understanding between individuals (Rogers 2000). The degree aims to develop students as reflective practitioners who have an understanding of the therapeutic and expressive potential of creativity within health, education and community settings. Destinations after graduating include areas such as primary and special education, human resources, community arts, arts in health, social enterprise, coaching and various arts therapies. Students on the programme have a range of arts based backgrounds including visual art, drama, dance and music along with a strong sense of social responsibility and interest in applying their artistry in working with and enabling others.

It is probably not surprising that the teaching and learning methods of the degree parallel the 'subject culture' (Cousin 2006:1) of the therapeutic arts; with arts based workshops, interactive group work, experiential learning and studio practice complementing the less frequent traditional lectures. While the curriculum may focus on areas such as human development, therapeutic principles of practice, creativity and play, artistic development, perspectives of healing and arts based research, much of it is 'delivered' in such a way that students are actively engaged in the learning process, creating meaning through reflection, so they develop as a whole person at both a personal and professional level. Students are also encouraged to link their learning on the degree to learning 'beyond' the curriculum in dedicated Personal Development Planning (PDP) modules. This aligns well with the notion of 'lifewide education' where the learner is 'viewed as designer and implementer of their own integrated and meaningful life experience' (Jackson 2014: 20), both within and external to their studies. The module also enables students to begin to position themselves in readiness for graduation from the programme.

The workshop took place in the first semester of a Level 4 first year module entitled *Working Creatively with People*, with approximately 45 students. In the first semester of the module students participate in and reflect upon arts based workshops (such as drama, environmental sculpture, music) which are facilitated by a tutor. In the second semester students devise and facilitate creative arts workshops in smaller groups for their peer group; when not facilitating they are participants. This may seem like Jackson's 'immersive' approach (Jackson 2011: 199) when students are only in the second semester of their study,



so it is important that the tutor creates a supportive, facilitative and holding environment (Winnicott 1965) for students to feel 'safe enough to dare', (Maslow, 1972 cited in Knowles 2005: 49) to devise and facilitate their own workshops to enable new learning. Students reflect on their own facilitation and that of their peers and constructive feedback is given by the tutor to promote learning from the experience. This module forms the basis for second and third year modules when students respectively facilitate 'in-house' creative workshops for students with a learning disability from local special schools and while they are on work placements.

The issue of student transition to HE

Having taught in HE for some time, I have a sense that there is an increasing disparity between student and tutor expectations; a point recently highlighted by Kandiko (2013: 11) who commented that when making the transition to HE, 'It was common that students felt lost, unsure of what was expected of them'. From my point of view, increasingly it seems students coming into the degree want to know the 'right answer', believe the tutor has the right answers and seem less able to trust their own judgements, unless validated by a tutor. In the context of the Creative Expressive Therapies programme where students are asked to take so much responsibility for their learning, this may mean an even more difficult transition for them to make.

THE WORKSHOP

Knowing students would need to develop more confidence and belief in their own judgements in readiness for their workshop facilitation in the second semester, I decided it may be helpful to offer the opportunity for students to 'stand back' and reflect upon their expectations of the university curriculum and their role as learners. Having an ongoing interest in PDP and in the development of the concept of the 'lifewide curriculum' (Jackson 2011b) I decided to use this as a starting point. I was curious to see how the students would play with this idea and wanted to find a creative and safe way to encourage them to reflect on their understanding of higher education and their existing 'academic self concept' (Cozolino 2013: 155); to question their 'taken for granted' frame of reference (Robinson 2001, Carroll 2010: 8) that teacher knows best.

I offered students the choice of exploring the term 'lifewide curriculum' through drawing an image or using objects to create a 'small world' (Lahad 2006, see Figure 1). Students had become accustomed to engaging with the arts as a process, in a way which echoes Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) concept of 'flow', but to relieve pressure, I reminded them that there was no expectation of a beautiful end product, there was no emphasis on artistic talent and there was no right or wrong way to achieve this. Objects and drawings were being used as metaphors where 'one object is spoken of in terms of another' and as a means of 'understanding the unfamiliar' (Jones 2007: 255). Such projective techniques are familiar within Dramatherapy where they are used to help access material which is not readily accessible by the conscious mind (Jones 2007). Visual, auditory and kinaesthetic senses are activated in drawing and the manipulation of small objects so there is less emphasis on cognitions, thoughts and logic. Rather than 'draw(ing) ideas from over familiar and well used regions of the brain at the expense of more creative levels' (Brook 1998 cited in Smith and Bird 2013: 5), we were using an embodied approach.



Figure 1 One student's 'small world' using both objects and drawing to explore the 'lifewide curriculum'.



Explanation of image:

The lighthouse represents my goals in education and the waves in the sea represent the challenges I face. My determination is expressed in the sailor, who despite the highs and lows of the waves, rides the tide. Through the life wide curriculum workshop I was able to consider how all my past educational experiences and life experiences had collectively changed my approach to education. I was able to take those past experiences and use them as motivation to succeed in higher education. (Workshop participant BA Hons Creative Expressive Therapies)

Initially students were unsure of how to start as they had not heard the term 'lifewide curriculum' before, looking to me for guidance as to what the term meant. However, I encouraged them to remain curious and to have a go at exploring possible meanings with the objects and drawings and then to use this as a stimulus to create a definition in words. The definitions then formed the basis of a large group discussion and through 'generative dialogue' (Carroll 2013: 11) students explored their ideas about learning, PDP, volunteering and so on. It was important throughout the workshop to emphasise the importance of respecting each others' viewpoints and to value contributions through listening well. As a tutor I needed to model this also and be 'attuned' to students (Cozolino 2012: 52) so that their confidence in expressing themselves and in developing their own ideas would grow. As an experienced facilitator I knew from the energy in the room and from student feedback that the workshop had gone well and that through discussion the students were 'co-creating new realities together', with many revising their understanding of the nature of the curriculum, learning and the interface with extra curricular activities and experience.

Later that day one student, Ruth, emailed me to describe the transformational effect the workshop had had on her understanding of both her role as a learner and her engagement

with the course. She was so enthusiastic about it that I asked if she would like to join me when I facilitated a workshop based on the 'lifewide curriculum' at a Learning, Teaching and Assessment conference a few months later at Derby. I planned to lead a similar workshop for university colleagues and Ruth was to contribute by sharing her experience and reflections. However due to a bereavement I was unable to attend the conference and Ruth (with support from my colleagues should she need it) offered to facilitate the workshop on my behalf, followed by a presentation based on her reflections. She facilitated the workshop for fifteen university tutors and feedback was excellent. In the next section Ruth describes her journey and the effects the workshop has had on her learning and development.

RUTH'S STORY

Introduction

I had a light bulb moment in the Lifewide curriculum (LWC) workshop where I realised that I had previously had a limited definition of learning and a rather restricted and linear view of myself as a learner. The workshop transformed my understanding of both me as a learner and of the ways that tutors were teaching on the BA (Hons) Creative Expressive Therapies. This had a big impact on the rest of my engagement with the course. I will describe some of the changes that I experienced with regard to two particular modules: Interpersonal Development, Working Towards the Future and my approach to my art work.

My educational background

During high-school and college, education was something that took place in the classroom. I have always had a passion and love for numbers and I approached education with this mathematical style of thinking: 2+2 always equals 4 no matter the situation. If you learn what your teacher tells you, you will pass the exam. Even though I always gained very good grades, I never saw any connection between my education and my life; for me education was entirely predictable. When I look back, there was little opportunity for me to question things, and my perception of the teachers' role was purely to help me pass my exams perfectly. There is an understanding within education that the higher the grade, the better and I continued this concept to such an extent that if I did not get 100%, then I felt I had failed.

At college my experience was slightly different. We looked into various theories, could question them choosing to agree or disagree, yet we could only find an argument wrong if we found someone who proved it wrong and came up with a new idea. I was never asked to question the world myself. All I was asked to do was learn how other people questioned the world and decide who I agreed with. I wanted to do well in my exams and my unique thoughts and ideas were not part of the syllabus, they were not marked and to me all that mattered was to get a good grade. The top universities required the top grades; there was nothing that led me to question whether good grades were the only important part of education.

My expectations of University

When I arrived on the Creative Expressive Therapies course, I came expecting my education to carry on in the way that I was familiar with: linear information, tutors informing me of



precisely what was needed to get the top grades. The course itself was completely different from the lectures I had imagined. We participated in creative workshops, were expected to learn through participation, experience and discussion and to discover the information ourselves, rather than being shown it. I had expected university to be more difficult than my A Levels, but to me that meant the information would just be more complex. I did not understand the need to go out and do my own research, I thought that knowing the information we were taught in lectures would be sufficient, as it was in my previous educational life. At the time, my definition of being an independent learner was to merely complete the set tasks we were given on time. I believed there should be a checklist of what was needed and if I could tick all the boxes, then I would get top marks. When approaching coursework I continued with this idea, looking at the learning outcomes and fulfilling each one separately. I did not understand the need to create my own links, or apply my own thoughts to my work.

Lifewide curriculum workshop

In the workshop, I chose to create an image of a lifewide curriculum. I drew myself in the centre of the world with red arrows pointing towards me to symbolise the different lessons I could learn from other people/anything external to myself and orange arrows pointing away from me symbolising the lessons I could give to others/what others could learn from me. The world symbolised the idea of learning not being confined and being able to take place at anywhere at any time. The stars around the outside represented positive lessons that 'illuminated' the paths / choices throughout life.

Figure 2 My representation of what a lifewide curriculum meant to me



Whilst creating this image and forming my personal definition I began thinking of how my own life experiences had become learning experiences. When the facilitator asked us to share our images and combine our definitions within a small group, my group produced the images and interpretations shown in Figure 3. Our definition was:

The process of life wide curriculum is the opportunity of choice in which one can grow, exchange communication and develop self throughout life. The significant incidents structure the process.

Figure 3 Group representation and interpretation of a lifewide curriculum



It was whilst sharing our individual definitions that it suddenly became obvious to me that I needed to change my ideas about my learning. I realised I needed to stop thinking about my learning and knowledge as individual little mental boxes and start thinking of it more as a never ending piece of woven fabric. Each individual bit of knowledge I learn then becomes one of the threads within the fabric, intertwining itself and connected to all the other bits of knowledge. I realised that learning isn't linear and completely structured, but actually it is a life-long, non-linear process. As well as this, I realised that my tutors were there to facilitate my learning, not to spoon feed knowledge to me. It seemed obvious to me at this point that the way I had been viewing learning and knowledge all these years had actually been limiting my knowledge base rather than fully enhancing it.

In later reflections on the workshop I found the idea of single and double loop learning (Argyris and Schön 1974) explained my change in perception of learning as follows.

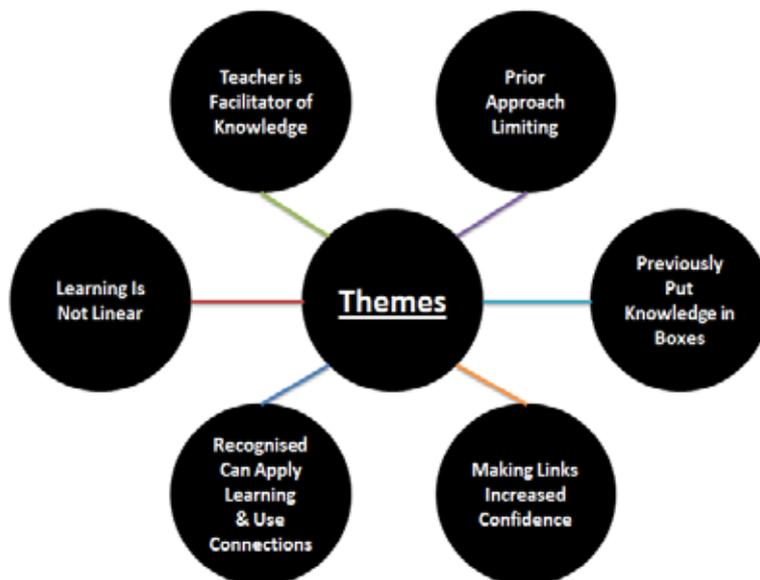
Single loop learning involves reflection on a given task to achieve immediate improvement whilst leaving underlying values unchanged. Previously, I had merely learnt data and facts that helped me achieve immediate improvement in terms of my grades, but never led me to challenge my underlying values. However, during the LWC workshop I moved into the realm of double loop learning. The way I viewed learning was challenged and began to evolve from the simplistic attitude I had before. Not only did I understand the 'facts' of the situation, I actually began to learn a lesson that also impacted upon me personally.

Figure 4 Single (left) and double (right) loop learning Argyris and Schön (1974). Figure adapted from: Brockbank and McGill (2006)



The workshop really created a light bulb moment for me, and when reflecting afterwards I pulled out these six key themes which related to my change in perspective:

Figure 5 My perspective change on my learning



The effects on my learning

These themes underpin my changed approach to other learning in the degree. The workshop inspired me to engage fully with my lectures, to think about how what I was learning in the classroom might actually have an effect and impact upon my life. At the time I was undertaking a Stage 2 module as well called Working Towards the Future (WTTF), which focuses upon developing a Personal Development Plan. Before I had done the Life Wide Curriculum workshop, I had been completing the little tasks we were asked to do, but I never connected with them, I just looked at them as academic goals that needed to be met, I never thought that they were things that might actually affect my personal life. I think I had become so focussed upon getting good grades that I had forgotten what I now see to be the true purpose of education: to learn and gain a greater understanding of life.

There was one task that I undertook during the WTTF module that really connected with what I had learnt in the LWC workshop. We were asked to change one thing for 30 days and it was suggested that it could be anything we liked. I decided to learn a new 'lesson' each day for 30 days and to keep a record of my lessons in a blog (<http://ruthys30daychallenge.tumblr.com/post/10895876275/30-day-plan>). In the reflection on this challenge I wrote:

When I first began the challenge I found it very hard to decide what to learn because as I discovered there is a wealth of knowledge that I am simply unaware of, which overwhelmed me slightly. Eventually I began realising that actually there were little lessons in my everyday life that I would have previously been unaware of, or never taken in.

On the last day of the challenge I wrote:

I thought after learning something each day; it was important for me to think about what learning actually is and how it is defined. It is not just confined to the boundaries of a classroom or a lecture theatre. Learning can take place at any time and at any point. Learning is not just about finding out the answer to the diameter of a triangle, or what temperature water boils. Learning is any knowledge gained or skill acquired, whether something as simple or mundane as how many sheets there are on a roll of toilet paper, to practical skills such as how to clean a burnt wok. Learning comes in many different forms and from many different places, and that I think is one of the most important lessons to remember from the past 30 days.

My blog and reflection were both written very close to when I took part in the LWC workshop, and I very much feel that the workshop altered the way I approached the task, almost as if it sparked me to connect in a deeper way to what I was doing. It enabled me to begin to use my thoughts and views to add a personal level of knowledge to my learning.

The WTTF module allowed me to merge the worlds of learning and of real life. This was really the catalyst for me to actually understand for myself that the real purpose of education is to enhance your life and so, I carried on trying to engage myself with the activities that were set, attempted to keep putting myself into my university work and at the same time bring some of my university work into myself.

In the following year I undertook a module called Interpersonal Development (IPD) where the aim was to consider group dynamics and the role of the arts within a group. We, as a group facilitated by the tutor, spent the first half of the session in a circle discussing the reading that had been set and the second half was dedicated to an arts workshop. We discussed theory about group dynamics, and through the experiential workshops I saw it come to life in the class room. Because I was engaged with the reading and the workshops, I was able to unpick what was happening in the group and I started to compare my role within the group to my role within society. I realised, there were many areas which held similarities. I read theory for the sessions and I was able to connect with it on a personal level. I could see where the writer was coming from and could see their thought processes in my own world and was allowed to challenge what they were saying.



One of the biggest impacts from IPD was my ability to reflect, which I believe came from my connection of the training group as a microcosm and the external world as a macrocosm. By reflecting on what was going on within the group, I began to make links and realisations about myself outside the group, and was able to begin to explore these insights in a far deeper level than I ever had before. Engaging with the theories helped me to accept that what I had perceived of as 'negative emotions' that I shouldn't feel sometimes actually need to be felt and are an important part of life. This understanding allowed me to open up, so that I could actually begin to deal with painful emotions instead of hiding from them. I found myself being so engaged within the module that I would find books that related to what I was discovering to gain an even deeper insight than from merely just sticking to the set texts. When it came to writing up my essay I found it just flowed; it was the best researched essay I had written. I had both reflected personally and compared it to theory, and most importantly, I had questioned these connections.

The effect on my personal development plan and careers experiences

At the end of the Working Towards the Future module, we were asked to create our own SMART goals and Personal Development Plans (PDP). When I was creating my PDP I think it was the first time I had truly stepped back and evaluated my life, to think about where I wanted to go and what I needed to do to get there as opposed to writing what I thought my tutors wanted to read. I had thought I wanted to be an Art Therapist, as I had a love and passion for both Art and Counselling and had chosen this course because it was the only undergraduate option any university offered that was close to Art Therapy. I had this vague idea of what I wanted to do, and the briefest of plans, but if you asked me how I was going to get there? Well, I think I expected that a job would just fall into my lap after I finished university.

Whilst creating my PDP I came to realise this was completely unrealistic. I had no working experience and had extremely limited experience in the field I wanted to work in. The main focus of my PDP became to gain some experience, both in the working world and within the field I wanted to go into in the future. Interestingly, when I submitted my coursework for this module it was the first time in my university life that I had received an A. It had never occurred to me before that tutors actually want you to engage with the module in this way, and that part of the learning process is meant to be that idea of being able to apply it to life.

I still maintain my PDP, reviewing it regularly. Due to health issues, I cannot undertake a regular job whilst being a student but found a way that works for me, doing short term / temporary jobs and volunteering during holidays.

Both the module and the PDP have had a major effect upon my life helping me to gain confidence in myself, gain experience, make myself more attractive to potential employers and to network and gain useful contacts in the industry.

The effect on my self acceptance and art work

When my disability (Myalgic Encephalomyelitis) started in my first year of GCSEs and I was unable to attend school or work as before, I never challenged my views that I should get perfect marks. I would not allow myself to accept that my disability affected me. I did not want to be seen as unwell, so I would do anything I could to hide it. When I began university I



started the course as a full time student, unable to allow myself to realise that it would be too much for me to handle.

One thing that is worth noting about M.E. is that when you push yourself to do too much, you actually aggravate the condition. By trying to be a full time student I put too much pressure on myself making my disability worse and resulting in me attending fewer lectures than a part - time student would. Ultimately, I had to accept that I could not physically, mentally or emotionally cope as a full time student but to quit the course would be to fail, so I eventually accepted the idea of being a part time student. This decision was largely based upon my wish not to fail rather than my acceptance of my condition.

After the LWC workshop however, I noticed my attitude began to change gradually. I had previously appeared to accept my disability; I did not deny its existence. However, I rarely voiced the needs or issues it created and would hide them as much as I physically and mentally could. After the workshop I began the process of actually acknowledging my disability, voicing my needs to lecturers and engaging with Derby University's Student Wellbeing Service

In my third year (of five), I took a Fine Art module entitled Image of Self. Inspired by the process that the LWC workshop had initially triggered, I decided to challenge myself completely and explore the way my disability affected me through my art work, looking at its impact upon my life.

Figure 6 Using metaphors within my artwork: a clay piece I created representing my body



I began to explore the idea of using metaphors within my artwork. Above is a clay piece I created, a representation of my body, with my symptoms written across it. I made the body to be broken to explore the way that I felt my M.E. had broken me. I explored the idea of making this 'hidden disability' visible for the world to see.

The project was an extremely challenging and emotional journey, but I felt that when the module had finished my journey had not. I decided to carry on this journey in my next Fine Art module where we were asked to create a body of artwork to portray a statement that relates to our journey on the course. I felt like the LWC workshop had been the catalyst for this and wanted to explore this further. I decided showing this through the journey of my acceptance of my disability was the best way I could portray its impact upon me. Previously, I had expected myself to be exactly the same as I was before my M.E. but the LWC workshop sparked an emotional journey that had led me to understand this is entirely unrealistic, partially because physically and mentally there are things that I could once do that I now cannot, but primarily because I have changed personally, emotionally and perceptually.

CONCLUSIONS

Ruth's perspective

The Lifewide Curriculum Workshop was a catalyst that sparked the beginning of a journey to discover both myself and to find myself within the higher educational learning process. The change within my thinking, within my work, and also within my life is astounding. This workshop facilitated the journey to me realising that I have a voice and opinions and these are both important and valuable. I am finding my voice within my own education, which in turn leads me to finding it within my own life. I am proud that I have facilitated a similar LWC workshop and presented at the LTA conference at Derby University, and that I was in the position to pass on my reflections about the impact the workshop had on me. This has given me courage, confidence and self-belief which are beyond words. The Lifewide Curriculum Workshop was the nudge I needed to show me the connection that is so easily overlooked: learning is a part of life and life is a part of learning.

Tutor reflections on the workshop

Since the workshop it has been a pleasure to witness Ruth's development, her growing confidence and her sense of her own authority. Ruth's changed perception of her learning and her education is reflected in a move from Bolton's 'hedged field' to that of a 'moorland' where Bolton suggests 'it is our questions which determine which way we will set out and therefore what we are likely to find along the way' (Bolton 2001: 33). Perspective change seems to have moved from being rather 'fixed' to one of 'growth' (Dweck 2006), with the recognition of her central role in her own development and learning.

Ruth's readiness to engage so meaningfully in the workshop has meant she has fully embraced the transformation from Baxter Magolda's 'authority dependence' to 'self-authorship' (cited in Jackson 2011: 133). But how did this happen? I would like to think that it was through the educational process that the workshop facilitated. For example, I imagine that Ruth's (and the other students') responses would have been less impressive if I had simply stood at the front of the class telling students about the importance of the 'lifewide curriculum', their need to take responsibility for their own learning and that they needed to get more confident as it would be them facilitating workshops in the next semester!

However it was not like this! The room was set out with students seated around tables and able to interact in a 'climate that invited creative thinking' (Claxton et al 2006: 59). In recognising that the 'lived experience' (Cozolino 2012: 179) - with its synergy of the



cognitive, affective and interpersonal (Baxter Magolda cited in Jackson 2011, Brockbank and McGill 2006, Claxton 2012) - is central to learning, students engaged fully and with some energy. They were co-creating their learning. In gently 'challenging' their existing self narratives as learners I was inviting them to enter a 'liminal space' (Meyer and Land 2006, cited in Cousin 2006:4) where they could play with ideas and tolerate some uncertainty about their role as learners and their expectations of the curriculum. Metaphor, in the form of the 'small worlds' and images, served as a useful bridge in this process to facilitate 'mastery of a threshold concept ... and emergent understandings'. Meyer and Land (2006) cited in Cousin (2006:4). Students such as Ruth were able to emerge from this space having had a meaningful experience with new understanding of both her self identity and narrative as a learner as well as being able to more fully move through the transition to HE. Furthermore, it is reaffirming to see that many of the 'therapeutic' principles underpinning the degree which grew out of areas such as Occupational and Arts Therapy, are now reflected in some of the findings of neuroscience and the progressive educational literature!

As this workshop embraced many of the learning methods and beliefs which underpin the whole degree, it needs to be seen as a small part of the student's journey. Ruth has however, been able to articulate how the workshop gave her an initial 'nudge' which has in turn impacted on her learning in other modules and will stand her in good stead for meeting the demands of an ever changing world. From a personal point of view it has been a privilege to have been part of Ruth's journey and I am grateful for the opportunity to collaborate with her in writing this chapter.

REFERENCES

- Argyris, C. and Schön, D. (1974) *Theory in practice: Increasing professional effectiveness*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bolton, G., (2001) *Reflective Practice*, London, Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Brockbank, A., and McGill, I. (2006) *Facilitating Reflective Learning Through Mentoring and Coaching*, London : Kogan page.
- Carroll, M., (2010): Supervision: Critical Reflection for Transformational Learning (Part 2), in *The Clinical Supervisor*, 29:1, 1-19.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990) *Flow, The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, New York : Harper and Row.
- Claxton, G., Edwards, L., and Scale-Constantou, V. (2006) Cultivating Creative Mentalities: a Framework for Education *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, Elsevier, 1 57-61.
- Claxton, G., Chambers, M., Powell, G., Lucas, G. (2011) *The Learning Powered School*, Bristol, TLO Ltd.
- Claxton, G. (2012) Turning Thinking on Its Head: How Bodies Make up Their Minds, in *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, Elsevier. 7, 78-84.
- Cousin, G. (2006) An Introduction to Threshold Concepts *Planet no.17*, December 2006.
- Cozolino, L. J. (2012) *The Social Neuroscience of Education: Optimizing Attachment and Learning in the Classroom*, London : W.W. Norton.
- Dweck, C. (2006) *Mindset, The New Psychology of Success*, New York : Random House Publishing.
- Jackson, N.J. (2011a) An Imaginative Lifewide Curriculum, in Jackson, N. J. (ed) *Learning for a Complex World: A lifewide concept of learning, education and personal development*. Authorhouse 100-121.
- Jackson, N., (2011b) *Learning for a Complex World*, Bloomington, AuthorHouse.



- Jackson, N. J. (2014) The Concept of Learning Ecologies in N. J. Jackson and G. B. Cooper (eds) *Lifewide Learning, Education and Personal Development* E-Book. Chapter A5 available on-line at: <http://www.lifewideebook.co.uk/>.
- Jennings, S. (1992) *Dramatherapy with Families, Groups and Individuals: Waiting in the Wings*, London, JKP.
- Jones, P. (2007) *Drama as Therapy*, Vol 1, (Ed 2) London, Routledge.
- Kandiko, C. B. (2013) Student Expectations and Perceptions of Higher Education; available at <http://www.kcl.ac.uk/study/learningteaching/kli/research/student-experience/QAASummary.pdf> (accessed January 9th 2014).
- Knowles, M. S., Holton III, E.F., & Swanson, R.A. (2005) *The Adult Learner* 6th ed Oxford: Elsevier.
- Lahad, M. (2000) *Creative Supervision* London, JKP.
- Pegg, A., Waldock, J., Hendy-Isaac, S., Lawton, R. (2012) *Pedagogy for Employability* HEA.
- Robinson, K. (2004) *Out of Our Minds, Learning to be Creative* Capstone: Chichester.
- Rogers, N. (2000) *The Creative Connection* Ross-on-Wye : PCCS books.
- Smith, M., and Bird, D. (2013) Fairy Tales, Landscapes and Metaphor in Supervision, an Exploratory Study, in *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research: linking research with practice*, Routledge.
- Winnicott, D. W., (1965) *The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment: Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development*, London: Hogarth Press.

