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CAPABILITY AND THE PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE MENTOR

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INTRODUCTION

Learners in professional practice programmes at Otago Polytechnic are required to write "Reviews of Learning," retrospective reflective accounts of the technologies and strategies individuals have acquired in their workplaces and over their work trajectories (that is, careers).

Two mentors in these programmes contributed their own narratives that operate to show how they came to acquire the capabilities they currently demonstrate and share in their capacities of facilitators, mentors, and lifelong learners. We believe that all mentors on such programmes need continually to self-monitor and to reflect on how they came to be the mentors they are today, so contribute these narratives to the broader endeavour of professional practice teaching and learning. Unfurling the whakapapa of how we came to be who we are today is an act of sharing but also of modelling the leadership we hope to foster in our learners. In the spirit of narrative non-fiction, we share two educator stories here. We also contribute to broader conversations on what professional practice is understood to be, and how capability lies at the nexus of practice and research within work-based learning in Aotearoa New Zealand in 2022.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

The issues of what professional practice is and why it is increasingly crucial to forward-looking vocational educational strategies will remain key ones for some years. As work-based learning continues to find its niche within Aotearoa New Zealand's vocational education ecosystem, a focus on the possibilities inherent in professional practice is inevitable. As professional practice gains a solid foothold in postgraduate spaces, including Master's and Doctorate degrees, the issue of who might be qualified to work as an educator and mentor within this space comes to the fore.

Conventionally, as a national and institutional quality mechanism, educators are required to possess at least the degree or qualification they teach. However, beyond the mechanics, there lies a set of traits, or ways of being in a particular context, which come from the educators' own professional practice journeys. Since experiential and transformational learning lie at the heart of professional practice, it is appropriate that the educators themselves utilise the strategy of critical reflection to understand how their own traits evolved over time and through experience. This study crystallises the journeys of two late career professional practitioners as they reflect on the question, "what made me the professional practice educator I am today?"

ACADEMIC REFERENCES

Before unfurling the stories, we wish to point out that the previous paragraph contains no academic references (though clearly Schön, 1983 and Mezirow, 1991, are core). This is because, for many learners embarking on professional practice journeys, the source of their enquiry lies in their own experiences and perceptions as

experts within workplaces and areas of endeavour. The need for further research does not come from reading recent literature within a field and identifying a gap, an under-researched phenomenon, but, rather, from an insider's sense of the need for urgent or valuable enquiry that aligns their own learning journeys with those of their organisation or community and even with perceived needs at local or national levels. Professional practice enquiry emerges more from a hunch about something needing doing than finding a niche that no other researcher in the ecosystem has yet occupied (Andrew, 2015). The impetus for the research is quite different from that in conventional tertiary research. Professional practitioners often bring to their projects a sense of real world knowing through authentic being, a knowing which may not be armed with references in brackets to support the claim.

It is part of the educator-mentor's work to populate the new journey of knowing-more-deeply with the context of current scholarship. The purpose of this is less to identify conventional gaps than to ensure that the practitioner-enquirer's research is grounded in the current thinking and practice currently generated by similar practitioners. The literature search may, then, involve more professionally-oriented discourse, such as reports and policies, than peer-reviewed academic articles. Any such articles in books, conference proceedings and journals are, of course, important to the search; but so too are texts and artefacts from the field, including non-peer-reviewed state-of-the-art or reflective pieces in newsletters, periodicals or journals of professional organisations. These are artefacts of practice, not of academe, but they bring with them a sense of lived-in rigour rather than densely researched rigour. It is the rigour of life, not of the ivory tower.

MY JOURNEY: PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE MENTOR I

As I look over the introduction above, part of me wants to spit. The lack of references to existing studies to support the claims deeply offends that part of me that came from and has had various feet in the ivory tower just mentioned. This reflection comes from knowing the impacts and traumas that stages in my life journey have exerted and holding them under the microscope to seek fresh meaning. For four years, to adopt the metaphor of Gee (1991) and Lave and Wenger (1991), I was 'apprentice' to a 'discourse'; the discourse of conventional academic doctoral-level textuality. In plain English, I was a doctoral student in Humanities and Social Sciences within a non-professional practice discipline. As I look back, I realise that the techniques and processes of being scholarly are still with me today, although the subject matter of the work itself may lack immediate relevance to my current journey. The topic was a vehicle for becoming and being scholarly, and I retain the mantle of the scholar today. What this means is that I am able to bring to the professional practice learners' journey that ability to contextualise, rationalise and foreground the enquiry of the learner. By 'foreground,' a term I acquired in a post-structuralist rabbit hole, I mean to gain an understanding of the environment within which the enquiry is to be understood, and the historical, economic, cultural and political factors that belong to that environment. The ability to describe and analyse the context and background of a professional practice enquiry is a key trait of the mentor in this area.

I often wonder where my natural curiosity comes from, and why I am naturally curious about others' journeys and enquiries also. I find myself easily hooked into the flow of others' enquiries before you can say "Csikszentmihalyi" (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). These are also the flows of the learning journeys of learners. I know that this is partly in the blood, as it were, as my earliest memories of myself are as a novice naturalist, scrapbooker and writer. I would collect flowers of the field, press them, display them, and create a narrative around them that was both naturalist and naturalistic. By 'naturalist' I mean that, as a child, I wanted to be David Attenborough. By 'naturalistic,' I mean understanding the whakapapa and very being of an object by deep and close research using whatever research materials I, as an apprentice bricoleur, could uncover and discover. I came to understand those objects, those pressed flowers, as artefacts of research, with a history, a present purpose, and an essential role in the ecosystem. I now realise a crucial trait of the mentor: terminal curiosity.

As a scrapbooker in the days before computers, and even before we had a television, I gathered together junior bricolages of clippings on any phenomenon that interested me (in the manner of Rogers, 2012). I wrote about the life stories of famous people, especially those recently deceased; about films I had seen and their actors and creators; about species of the world – particularly birds – that inspired my imagination. I also collected ephemera on places that fascinated me: postcards from Istanbul; cigarette cards on ancient Egypt; photographs from early Aotearoa New Zealand, particularly those featuring Māori faces. I would always construct narratives – ways of making sense of the eclectic collections of objects and artefacts – to accompany my scrapbooking. It was not merely an exercise in being a magpie, but in making sense of the world. Without realising it, I had the beginnings of a phenomenologist. Human consciousness and experience and their intentionality in generating lived experience remain a key grounding for my work as a mentor. I exemplified Brunerian identity-led discovery learning (Bruner, 1961). I knew even as a child that I could generate and co-create artefacts representing knowledge via varying combinations of perception, imagination, thought, emotion, desire, volition, and action. The mentor facilitates others' capabilities to generate such artefacts of their own.

Writing was, and still is, central to how I enact my professional practice. Today I start my day, as a kind of karakia, with a piece of reflective writing that clears away the clutters of dreams and worries and creates a clear space for thinking about the day ahead. The act of reflective writing positions me in readiness for the flow of work, mentoring included, lying ahead. As a child, I wrote plentifully and received headmaster's awards for everything I wrote, so I only wrote more; until I realised I was monopolising the awards space. The cultural capital of the headmaster's award partly motivated me, but the desire to write welled from deeper inside. In short, writing was both therapy and method (Richardson, 1990). Today I regard Laurel Richardson and Elizabeth St Pierre's concept of writing as a method as central to creative and reflective critical writing in professional practice (Richardson & St Pierre, 2005). Following Richardson (1990), writing was part of my habitus, the meeting place of my socially ingrained and hence habitual skills and ways of being in the world and my natural disposition. I realised young that power could be created culturally and symbolically and that I thought and behaved in a particular way because of the goals of cultural and to a lesser extent social capital. In short, I was a baby Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1986). Today I understand the current practices of my learners as resulting from both socially ingrained processes and from an unconscious and ever-changing but guiding propensity to action.

Professional practice research examines an individual's learning accessed, usually but never necessarily, as writing, via a process of reflecting on action (Schön, 1983), particularly on what Tripp (1993) called 'critical incidents'; moments of reflective sense-making that spurred or inspired learning in the professional practice contexts and communities both Gee (1991) and Lave and Wenger (1991) anatomised. However, as the paragraphs above demonstrate, it is also important to realise where one's propensities, talents, inclinations, orientations and desires for action come from in the fabric of lived experience. In an analogous way, in the Te Ao Māori method of whakapapa kōrero, the telling of one's origin story in relation to one's tīpuna or ancestors is crucial to understanding the individual today. Surely how we learn at work, together with the strategies and techniques we develop over time to cope and to grow, stems from better understanding formatives stage of living. It seems to me that we can only participate in transformative learning if we first understand the formative learnings that led to the individual we are today. This is why the idea of coping with disequilibrium, so central to John Dewey's theory of education, applies to professional practice contexts. How we learn in encountering difference, strangeness, conflict and otherness within workplace contexts as adults connects surely to our developmental being (Dewey, 1944).

An assessment known as the 'Review of Learning' is fundamental to professional practice in such programmes as those belonging to the College of Work Based Learning at Otago Polytechnic. This assessment is a self-reckoning of the work-based learnings individuals report they have acquired on their work journeys, which as in my case here, are not separable from the autoethnography of the broader current self, always in flux, as is the case with lifelong long learners and reflective practitioners. This draws heavily on identity theories, particularly Polkinghorne's (1991) argument for the non-separability of narrative and self-concept. Assessments

of this nature ground the work of professional practice in a cultural archaeology of identity; a sense of where the learner-researcher today emerged, and why they are ready to embark on a future enquiry. The exercise is one in envisaging a frame of practice that is an embodiment of the strategies and techniques acquired via practice-led, work-based critical moment analysis and autoethnographic enquiry. This species of enquiry takes the story of the individual, the autobiography, and validates it as knowledge by making contributions to broader learning cultures, including the workplace and allied organisations, and the area of endeavour to which the project belongs. This identity exercise is the springboard to a research proposal, known in this framework and context as a Learning Agreement.

What we used to safely call a 'career' as a planned life trajectory in the shape of a ladder in work contexts turned out to be a series of serendipities, self-disruptions, risk-takings and grabbed half-visible opportunities. There is no upward staircase, because there are also snakes in this game of life, and you go down snakes. There is no career for life — unless you are a dentist — but there is a DNA-shaped but unruly squiggly line that we write as we go along. If you wanted to grow up and be a something-or-other, you may grow up and find there is no market for your dream; indeed, that role might no longer exist in the society you inherit.

This is another reason why professional practice is important: it helps us to deconstruct the capitalist idea of an ambition-based career and turn it into a sequence of lived opportunities where one learns from one's mistakes and empty hopes as much as from one's triumphs and coups. It is critical in the sense that Freire (1998) and hooks (2003) are, casting education as an engine for community and hope. A learner who trains to be a dentist, a targeted form of training allied with professional practice, in a tertiary learning context, may forever be a dentist and secure in a lifetime career culminating in an owned practice. But what happens if you tire of cavities and halitosis and the next time someone opens their mouth you want to scream? The ontological turn is a truth which is part of everyone's lived experience of the world of work. Professional practice is about future-proofing lifelong learners by making them aware of the techniques and strategies they develop during their careers to cope with ontological turns and improve life. It enables individuals, however secure in their current position, to encounter unknown futures and to cushion the inevitability of change with resilience and trust in one's own capabilities. The world of career ladders is, in the 2020s, a game of snakes and ladders.

The world I graduated into was not the world of the aspirations I had when my higher education started. I imagine I am not unique in seeing what I had imagined as a future recede into redundancy and impossibility. Today's ambition is tomorrow's broken dream. Learning for an unknown future (Barnett, 2004), I learned from experience, is the necessary way of education in the neo-liberalised world, and this means a focus on capabilities not disciplines. The mother of all budgets, the Great Financial Crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic and 2020, "the year that destroyed the career ladder" (Preskey, 2020) consolidated this worldview, a worldview that marks the 'educator-as-professional practitioner.' However, I operated in seven dual-sector higher education contexts, generally emerging into leadership roles, over a 30-year period, in both Asia and Australasia. Whenever I felt I was falling asleep on my feet or whenever I sensed the workplace was another sinking ship, I reinvented myself. By far the most important trait, or set of traits, I acquired was the capability for independence, autonomy and agency, and I would argue that today any Master or Doctoral journey is integrated towards researcher autonomy and, preferably, also agency (Bitzer & van den Burgh, 2014). Agency, the power to act, is well complemented by autonomy, the capability to do so independently, to self-govern (Toohey & Norton, 2003). I realised that the goal of the true educator was not to make oneself indispensable to learners but to make oneself redundant. The moment the teacher is no longer needed, other than as a legacy or memory, then their work is done. The fledged bird can fly on their own wings.

The career journey built an integrated but eclectic individual with recognised capabilities in team management and professional development, curriculum design and management, research mapping and execution, pedagogical and heutagogical communication, and the ability to use ten long words in one single sentence in oral and written discourse. The capability of making the complex, even the wicked, seem palatable and practicable to others is

a key tenet of the mentor. The ten long words may be necessary as the journey wends and winds, but simply listening to the learner and their needs is a trait for building trust with individuals and in communities. To listen – this is the foremost propensity of the mentor.

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE MENTOR 2: A PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT JOURNEY

Formative stages

My initial concept of learning only became apparent to me from about my teenage years. The reasons for this was that I was not associating my learning with my everyday practice or results. The awareness started when I was in my early stages of grammar education in the United Kingdom (UK). The reason it became apparent to me then was because my academic exam results became significant to me. Due to my early life in New Zealand, I was some months behind my British counterparts when I returned there at the age of IO. As a result, I was not initially successful in obtaining an academic grammar place in secondary education. After completing a successful year in a more vocationally focused school, I was offered the opportunity of transferring to a grammar school education. Due to the challenge this new opportunity provided, I worked very hard at my homework and revision study to justify my place there. To my surprise I came top of the class at the end of the first term, and this provided me with the motivation to remain there as long as I could. Looking back at this now, I realise that I had obtained a significant foundation of general knowledge from my extensive reading at my primary stage together with an exceptionally good memory. However, the place for learning was firmly in the recall and utility of event, place, time measurement and meaning provided by an academic framework rather than comprehension of life, nature and mysteries.

I also recognise that I was a curious person; and I was interested in many different areas both academic and practical. Whilst practical hobbies in bicycle mechanics and radio construction were there, I was not aware of their wider significance at this stage other than that my success in them was due to my careful assembly and disassembly practice. This was because my focus on my main rewards and recognition by others was coming from my academic education. Fast forward a few years to my secondary qualifications and I was starting to find that my study in more complicated subjects like physics and maths was no longer providing me with the same results as earlier. At the same time, no one could provide any answer as to what I would do if I did not achieve the necessary grades for university entrance. I could not afford to fall behind again.

I therefore decided to apply for a technical apprenticeship with a large electronics company, Marconi, on the other side of the country. In the first couple of years, I did sufficiently well at my academic and practical studies at a technician level that I was then offered a transfer to a professional technical apprenticeship that included a sandwich degree in Applied Physics. This new challenge proved tough because my expectations of my fluency were not matched by my academic practice. Just remembering things at this level was not good enough and despite significant practical experience within research and development laboratories, my self-confidence as a graduate engineer felt insufficient to me. My reflection on this today was that my level of technological capability linking theory with practice was not as I expected it to be. I will come back to this topic later as it was a significant emotional roadblock for me and reduced my self-confidence.

Thus, I remained as a junior development engineer for less than a couple of years before I changed careers. I had realised that I had an interest in human development and was able to gain a position as a training officer in a Marconi systems company responsible for apprentices of the kind that I had been. I succeeded well as within half a dozen years I led the human resource development department with 20 staff and 500 apprentices within a company of 2500 staff. However, I still felt that this success was less about me than simply being in the right place at the right time and therefore I started searching for a new challenge.

This took me a while before I was successful in obtaining a project manager role with the Manpower Services Commission (MSC), a quango funded by the UK government to develop national training initiatives. This was where I felt my professional career really took off. I was given the responsibility of establishing about 10 projects, with a total budget of around £5 million, in technical fields to develop open learning materials and support for the mid-career technical development of professionals who could not study away from work. The relationships I developed with colleagues and with project participants at the cutting edge of a new field of educational technology created a passion and rewards that I had not met in any career beforehand. Within a couple of years, I was promoted to a higher grade where I was made responsible for developing a new national programme of vocational qualifications based on standards of performance. Again, I led a team of around 20 staff to work with around 20 industry and business sectors within the UK. We established a reference group from the industry sector, who were supported by consultants, to develop role standards for the main work roles that existed. The most significant of these was the establishment of the Training and Development Lead body where I created the usual standards group but also formed a qualification group of employers and major awarding bodies to develop related qualifications. This group of employers in industry and business were critical to the successful adoption and management of this new system.

At the same time, I was also successful in undertaking a distance-learning Master of Business Administration with Warwick University. This time, I was not so worried about the academic outcome for three reasons. Firstly, I was confident in my practice and performance unlike earlier; secondly I could see ways to immediately apply my new learning within my work responsibilities; and thirdly I was now confident I could integrate my academic and work experience within in my professional practice. At this point in my career, I became fully aware of my professional competence which combined theory and practice as well as having the emotional confidence from prior work success to succeed in all that I did. I now realised that not only was I technically competent, I was also a good manager and leader of people. I was undertaking initiatives that had national significance and I was able to inspire others to engage with a vision I had created. This encouraged me to move onto my next career in management and strategic education consultancy. Initially, I worked with one consultancy supporting work of the kind I had previously done in MSC, but later the work led me back to New Zealand, firstly for work related to performance management in large strategic companies like New Zealand Telecom and Watercare, and then with industry training organisations who were developing similar vocational qualifications for their sectors. In the case of the latter, I spent around four years creating vocational qualifications for the electronic industry sector ranging from shop floor levels through to professional role levels. This involved organising industry-wide consultation, synthesising the results in fully developed standards of practice, and then producing an appropriate qualification framework. Subsequently, this led to more work with an industry entrepreneur who was seeking to develop computer-based learning for the primary and secondary school sectors.

It was here that I became fully conscious of my own practice and how I achieved the results I produced. This included my ability to engage and involve other people and the frequent use of my creativity and problem-solving capability. I could also see how to use my talents in different fields and disciplines. My subsequent career in tertiary education and the completion of my PhD became a natural extension from this position.

The present day

My sense today is that I am able to use all of my conscious and unconscious faculties to deliver excellent and significant results to my students, my clients and any organisations I am associated with. My current identity is an integration of my practice (both knowledge and skills combined) together with significant creative interpersonal and communication skills to produce successful outcomes which is underpinned by my emotional confidence and motivation. This is achieved through a combination of an ability to see a big picture and to work through coherent processes to deliver that picture. My PhD results (Harrison, 202I) identified a framework of developmental practice which I see as central in all future education developmental processes. The reason why is because the rate of change of development in society is such today that we must provide every person with the capability

to continually develop throughout a lifetime of careers. Of equal significance in a person's development is the emotional context in which they find themselves, and that learning occurs and flourishes when people feel valued, confident and motivated by whatever it is that they are doing and which provides intrinsic value for them for all their lives. During my PhD studies, my realisation of an integrated, holistic, development framework was achieved by my ability to link together all of my career experiences, successes, challenges and emotional rewards and to see them creating breakthroughs within the facilitation support I was providing to my adult students.

I find 'identity' a good description of the totality of individual knowledge, skills and behaviours that we use in our professional practice. Moreover, it is not only the objects and perceptions of which we are conscious, but also the unconscious, intuitive, creative and emotional dimensions that we have developed throughout our lives that shape our trajectory of practice going forwards (Polkinghorne, 1991). There are arguments for and against the separation of tacit and propositional knowledge (Luntley, 2011) but tacit knowledge makes use of cyclical and iterative process cycles through time and develops expertise in an analogous way to product and service quality practices.

I am also of the view that professional practice should not need to play a Cinderella role to academic research practice and results. Much of our modern world comprehension has been gained though empirical observation and practice which leads to theoretical advancement post discovery and practical utilisation. In a world of wicked problems, there are no longer single definitive answers to any issue and it is the diversity of individual experience that provides the creative metaphors or analogies that can lead to significant breakthroughs in any field.

Reflecting on my journey

So how has this extensive journey of five careers and more than 50 years of diverse work experience provided me with the capability to be the professional mentor and facilitator I am today?

Firstly, my range of different careers has provided me with the pentimento of leadership, consultancy and professional practice to be a transdisciplinary practitioner (Padmanabhan, 2017). Secondly, the unifying framework of vocational and professional development I have identified from my PhD has shown me that the same underlying processes of practice and development are common to most fields of practice, and that the way in which I can support my students is to help them realise and build on a similar foundation for themselves. Thirdly, I use my curiosity and passion and successes from my own development to encourage others to pursue and fulfil their dreams too. I have also reached a stage in my life and career success where I am now comfortable with who I am and how I operate in the world, and this provides emotional confidence to my students who are still seeking that in their lives.

There are a few other dimensions which I feel support my role as a professional development mentor.

I am very aware of the Johari Window perception model (Luft & Ingham, 1955) and the area defined by "not knowing and not being aware of not knowing" and how this is continuously increasing. Secondly, I am also aware of the exponential rate of change occurring in our modern world and how paradigms that have been held dear for many years are no longer supported and being replaced in many fields and disciplines. As a result of my present success and confidence with recognising what remains stable in terms of practice processes, I am able to help develop confidence in others who have not understood these changes. Since I have borne witness to many fields of knowledge becoming redundant, I am also open to the new and am willing to learn from my students' understanding of their lives and perspective in the reciprocal, two-way spirit of Ako. I try to encourage as many staircasing conversations as possible to stimulate others' awareness and practice (Harrison & Mendoza, 2019). We are fortunate that the practices and processes of our learner centred provision enable us to provide an Oxford type of tutorial system with strong emphasis on individual guided development to build independence in learning and practice (Beck, 2007).

The importance of this to my colleagues and I working in this space is that it is helping others to build their confidence and independence for themselves and it will help them build and support others to find their pathways in life too.

TOWARD CONCLUSIONS

The study's contribution

This study served several purposes. Firstly, it demonstrated that professional practice pivots on identity evolved over time and place. The identity of the learner-researcher is accessed, retold, and critically scrutinised as autoethnographical enquiry. The creation of the professional practice genre, "Review of Learning," or a document of coming-to-awareness such as that written here, brings to consciousness the motivations and inspirations that make us the researcher-enquirer we are today. Such an exercise of coming-to-know the capabilities of the self is both empowering and revealing, and potentially transformative. It enables the techniques and strategies acquired in workplaces over time to be put on the slab and analysed. It privileges discovery knowing in the field over that species of knowing exemplified and reified by academic references.

Secondly, this study has indicated, in its emphasis on the mentors coming-to-know, some of the key traits of mentors in professional practice domains. To be a reflective listener is fundamental in the early stages of a candidature, and to build autonomy and agency are the longer term capabilities, at the far end of the research tunnel. Curiosity is crucial, as is the desire to be creative, generative, and enquiring, whether via writing or other modes and methods of enquiry and representation. To be aware of the theories and scholars that have been impactful in one's educational journey helps us to know the core of our educative being: the ideas that stick about the heart as opposed to those that fall away. The mechanical aspects, the knowable objects, results and impacts of scholarship, are easily learned, but familiarity with them comes with the experience of the researcher. To be aware that much changes in the postmodern world, and that what one sets out to achieve may not be what one ends up achieving, is a vital trait: coping resilience with swift change. The facilitation of capability – bringing to the fore the tacit aspects of an individual's knowing through reflective and critical conversations – is a rewarding two-way process.

James Harrison has enjoyed an extensive set of careers in industry, the civil service, and Higher Education both in New Zealand and the United Kingdom. This has included responsibility for the professional development of several hundred scientists, engineers and business professionals within a capital electronics company of GEC Marconi, being one of four civil servants leading the UK vocational qualification changes in the late twentieth century, deriving qualifications for the New Zealand electronic industry, and delivering senior academic roles in the New Zealand tertiary sector. He has supported many mature domestic and international students undertaking bachelor and master's work-based learning qualifications at Capable NZ. In 2021, he completed his PhD researching capability at Victoria University, Melbourne.

Martin Andrew operates as a creative mentor in postgraduate programmes, including Master and Doctorate degrees in Professional Practice. Prior to his four to five years supporting the College of Work Based Learning in Otago, New Zealand, he had sojourned away from his hometown of Ōtepoti/Dunedin with two honorary posts at Melbourne universities in Creative Industries and Transnational Education (TNE). His work and research have become increasingly focussed on doctorate education and supporting learners to reach their own personal best through critically reflective practice and writing. A transdisciplinarian, he emphasises that his past disciplines have included Education, Drama, Linguistics and Writing, Creative and otherwise. He holds honorary professorial positions in Australia, Vietnam and Indonesia.

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