

Service Learning Workshop

EREA 2015

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The theory and practice of effective Service Learning.



Working with young people – what's going on?

A.

- Identity journey – search
- Moral identity
- Social identity
- Civic identity – makers of history.
- The good boy, the good girl must at one question reject, test out, move away from the belief system so they can return to it – naming and claiming what they need to as their own.

B.

- Family influence and predisposition towards service
- Semantic Memory; expectation and images, cognitive-affective templates that will focus attention on pertinent aspects of the experience. Eg 'Homeless bum' – 'queue-jumper' – 'guest' – 'innate dignity'.

C.

- **Immediate Experience held in the Episodic Memory**

Shock / guilt, Normalisation, Cultural Sensitivity, Individual attribution [it is their fault] – Structural attribution [victims of the social circumstance / poverty cycle], Trigger events, grappling, personalisation, Divided Self, Resolution.

D.

- ✓ **Reflection upon experience, testing out of concepts, dance between the Semantic memory and the Episodic memory – discussion, journaling, photo-language, cause and effect.**
- ✓ **Cyclical – continual interplay and dance between concepts and experience.**



Informing the concepts – presenting 'coat-hangers' [mental illness, cycle of violence, innate dignity of the person, cause – effect, culture shock, key concepts such as guest, presence, compassion etc.].



Full or partial confirmation, Disconfirmation, Conduit effect, Accordion Effect.

Learning Occurs

Meaning Making

Surface level of meaning: “I went to East Timor and it was really hot, I got a bug from something I ate.”

Deeper level of meaning: “I travelled to East Timor on an Immersion group and that local people were really welcoming and accepting of us. I felt honoured to be among them.

Tacit level of meaning: “I had three weeks in East Timor; the people were so welcoming and accepting. I could not believe how simple their lives were and yet they were so generous in their sharing. Though they were poor – they had great joy.”

Existential Change: “I was privileged to spend time in East Timor. It was an honour to be so welcomed into people’s lives. I saw so much poverty and yet so much joy. As I reflected on the people’s poverty and yet their generosity in the midst of it – I was reminded of my own inner poverty – and the poverty of spirit back here in Australia – and felt they could teach us much about life.”

How to travel down the spiral.

Reflection upon Experience

The active presence of mentors.

Direct Relationships with the people – with the ‘other’

Wrapped in a meaningful ideology.



Understanding key concepts eg. Guest and presence!



Theology of Guest.

Gone – the spirituality of the Crusader; sent – to plant the Church, to build a school, to convert ... coming from the outside, from apart, with something to give to you – “I’ve got what you need!”

But

I am invited into their lives; homes to be guests in. An attitude

So we need;

- Eyes open to see things we have not seen before.
- To see ourselves as guests invited by ‘the other’, to stay with them and discover in their personalities, in their homes, in their work, in their lives, the **Presence of God** in ways that we could not have discovered in ourselves, in our homes, in our work and in our lives.
- Perhaps – it is in the Guest situation that we will put words on experiences they have already had but never had the words for; perhaps that is our gift that we bring as their Guest!

The Guest:

- Is called and invited, comes and is welcomed.
- Blesses their host and rest and abides in their home – the Emmaus story.
- Rule of St. Benedict, “all guests are to be received as Christ for Christ has received you. To all - due reverence be shown, especially strangers, all humility, all humanity is to be shown to a Guest.”
- A guest comes with respect for the host. Respect in Latin; *respechere* – to take a second look, to look again; really see them.
- This look requires an inner silence; a willingness to discover something new, to uncover, to see things that most people do not see.
- A guest comes hospitably – not with hostility!
- A guest comes slowly – learning patiently from the host.

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- A guest stays insecurely [not wanting to stay – because we are NOT them]. No matter how much we are accepted and become part of the whole show we always came from somewhere else – the world of adulthood and faith, or the male world, or the ‘whole’ world etc.
- When we come to ‘a stranger’ [an enemy] as a guest and are present to them – when they are ‘disarmed’ – by our presence – they may become a ‘host’; deep human respect.
- Healing never happens in someone unless the one who would be the healer becomes a Guest in the heart and in the home of the one who wants to be healed.
- The Guest comes quietly; not to take over or to threaten or denounce or criticize or dictate or dominate

The guest is someone who brings their presence into someone else’s home.



Theology of Presence.

Presence; I am with you, I am not above you, I am not even for you
 – I am with you. To be a Christ sent to others is to be a guest
 presence in their world – we are called to ‘step down’ and become a
 guest.

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Theology of Presence.

*Presence;
A choice
Sacred Ground
Deep listening – beyond words
Respectful touch
OK with silence
Wait at the door knock gently
Eyes that truly see – past labels*

*Ears that hear the deep cry.
Words that EN-COURAGE
True freedom
Aware of OUR ego
It is NOT about me.
Whose needs are getting met here?
Present in such a way that the crap detector
will not go off!*



*I will not die an unlived life.
I will not live in fear of falling or catching fire.
I choose to inhabit my days,
to allow my living to open me,
to make me less afraid,
more accessible,
to loosen my heart until it becomes a wing, a torch, a promise.
I choose to risk my significance
to live so that which came
to me as seeds, goes to the next as blossom
and that which came to me as blossom goes on as fruit.*

Dawn Markova

Theology of Presence

^ Deliberate **choice** by Jesus to 'enter into' the lives of others – into the sacred space. Holy Ground.

^ In that space – choice – to be **totally present** – totally 'in' that space, totally FOR the other.

^ Respect filled **touch**.

^ Deep **listening** – beyond the words.

^ **Words** that came from deep within, not the 'ego' – words that encouraged; gave courage to.

^ Eyes that saw – beyond labels, beyond the surface to the person.

^ Sense of the sacredness of the other's story – regardless.

^ Not a door-mat.

^ 'Gut' sense; "I'm lovable, I'm special, I'm beautiful" beyond the narrative and the ego.

^ Presence is a journey – a life long journey.

^ In many ways, love centred sexual intimacy is the ultimate presence. God is love.

^ Presence calls us into the 'NOW'; the "present moment".

^ To LOVE in the now is to connect with the God within; 'Namaste' is a 'presence' prayer.

^ Our students' 'crap detector' may judge the brokenness in our culture, our personal failings in love etc but – if we are striving to be present – it will not find US and WE lacking in our solidarity, community and walking beside them to wholeness.

^ Live Jesus, in our hearts.

^ Be still and KNOW that I am God.



God grant me
the *Serenity*
to accept the
things I cannot
change, the
Courage
to change the
things I can
and the *Wisdom*
to know
the difference.

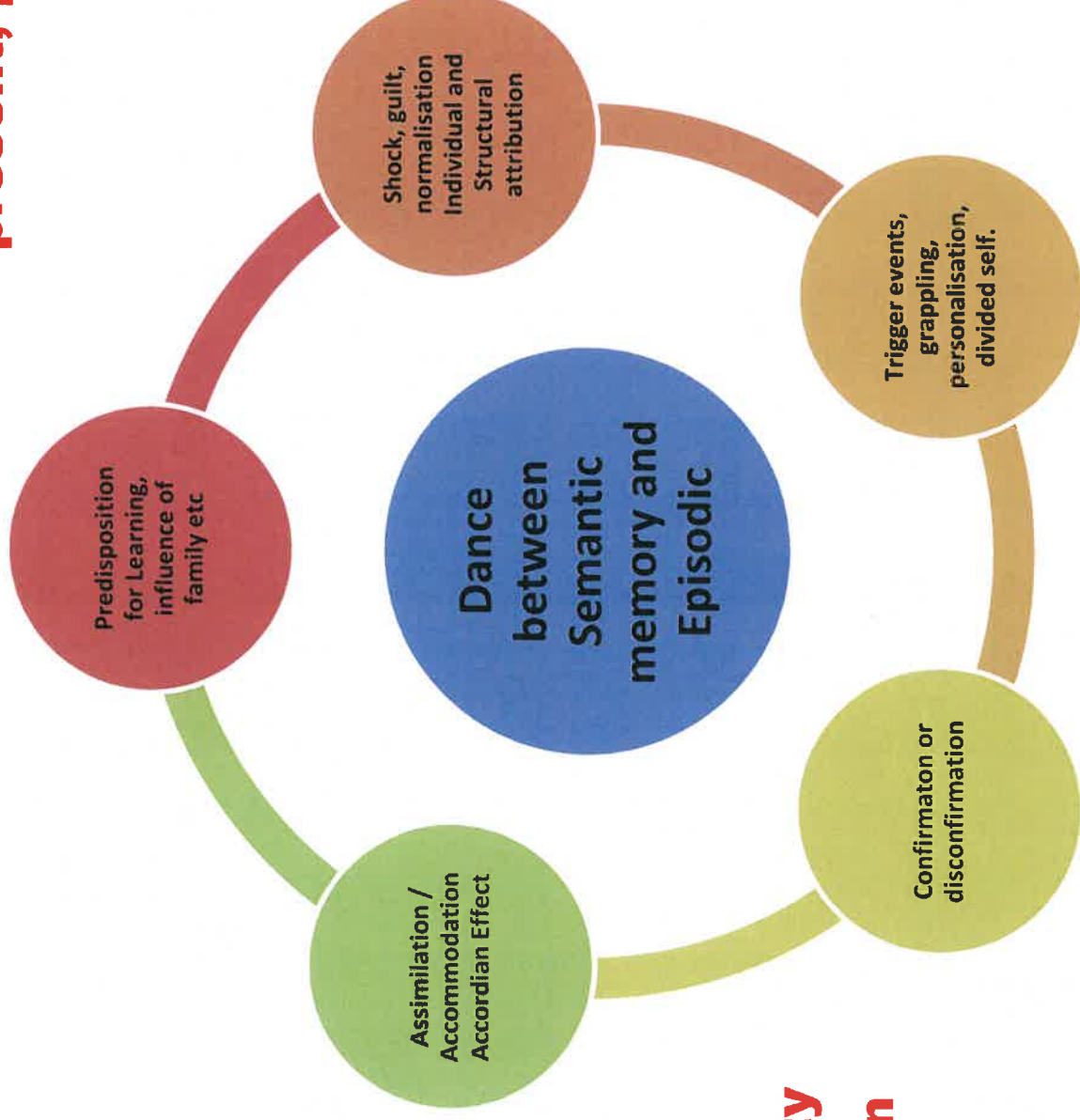
Guest – Presence – Compassion - Freedom

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Choice to be deeply present; presence.

Guest – Guest-ness

The other – the stranger.



Compassion – “to break bread with”.

Innate dignity of the person

Deep inner freedom.