CHAPTER 7

TOWARDS A COACHING PEDAGOGY OF PRESENCING: THE DEVELOPMENT OF REQUISITE SITUATED PRACTICE

'People know what they do; frequently they know why they do what
they do; but what they don't know is what what they do, does'
Foucault (Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1983, p 187)

Now I've reached the final chapter of the thesis, I believe I am able to a greater extent to respond more positively to Foucault's challenge above: yes, I do know what what I do, does! I've just in the latter part of Chapter 6, provided evidence that my three exemplar students have during the course of their online higher degree programme, been able to develop their scholarly and leaderly situated practices. And in so doing I've also provided evidence that they have been helped in this by the online coaching that I've been providing. Accordingly I see that my main task in this chapter is to identify and bring together the various elements, dimensions, and dynamics of the coaching pedagogic 'black box' I've been developing and using with my students over the past seven years, and to show how it has contributed towards an effective learning and development process and the practical results achieved. And as part of this, in line with the title of my thesis, I need also to demonstrate how *presencing empathetic responsiveness to requisite situated practice (PERTRSP)* has become an original and vital standard of judgement, energising, guiding and bringing coherence to my educative practice.

I'm going to address the central questions about what I now regard as a 'coaching pedagogy of presencing', in five main sections. In these, using the language of natural inclusion, I aim to articulate the various differentiated 'parts' *and* show how they are all also dynamically and reciprocally linked with each other. The five sections are:

1. the what, how, and when of 'presencing empathetic responsiveness to requisite situated practice', outlining how this inclusional and ontological form of coaching intervention helps me and my students appreciate, mobilise, and use enhanced awareness of self, other, and context to offer 'requisite' leadership in the form of 'empathetic responsiveness', in the different situations we face.
2. the development of a 'responsive repertoire' which has offered both a stance as well as a resource of conversational 'moves' for such presencing work.
3. the formation, maintenance, and energising of a 'development container' in which students have been able to engage in critical and creative inquiries.
4. the kinds of short, medium, and longer term 'online indicators' which I've found useful to guide my use of these pedagogic tools.
5. the influencing of the overarching educational social formation in which the MA programme is constituted, and in which I and my students have worked together to achieve both academic and practical outcomes.

You will note that sections 1, 3, and 5 are about three closely linked levels of *context* which both act together to influence, and are influenced by, the educational interactions my students and engage in: the *educational social formation* provides the slow moving 'macro' higher education context for the more responsive 'meso' or middle level

development container, which then mediates the 'micro' context for the detailed *PERTRSP* interactions which govern much of the 'subsidiary' work we do together.

After bringing together all the elements of the pedagogy in this section, I will then show how this pedagogical process helps students work with the 'barriers' to developing their situated practice set up by the online delivery vehicle and higher education ethos that I identified in the Introduction. And I'll then conclude the thesis with a brief 'in hindsight' critique of my approach and look ahead at what I see as key resources for future action research work of this kind. And so with this introduction, let me now make a start on the main work of this chapter – my working pedagogy.

In the Introduction to this thesis, I identified six reasons why this programme at first glance seemed unlikely to succeed in helping students develop a situated practice like leadership: the 'distance' between provider and receiver, the rigidity and packaged nature of delivery, asynchronicity, educational power-relations, the learning transfer gap, and theory-practice discontinuity. In the following six chapters, my inquiries have suggested that something paradoxical might be happening as, despite this outlook, my students and I have been finding ways of sidestepping or leapfrogging these obstacles to learning, enabling them to improve their scholarship and enhance their leadership capacities to make a worthwhile contribution in an increasingly uncertain world. And what has been emerging as central to these educational interactions and the pedagogy which has framed them, is the process I began to call 'presencing developmental possibilities'. I now see this as a living example of Wittgenstein's concept of a 'language-game' where I am engaged in an ongoing ontological process of orientating myself to 'knowing how to go on' with my students, so that they more fully reap the benefits of their two years in the programme, not only as scholars but as leaders of self, others, and the social formations in which they work and live.

However, despite this apparent success in helping my students improve their scholarly and leaderly practices, I need to stay calm and carefully martial my arguments if I'm to persuade the Academy that this represents an educational breakthrough of sorts. As Joseph Raelin, an enthusiast of work-based educational pedagogy, wryfully admits in a recent review of what he calls 'spoon-feeding' practices in management education, 'the pressures to conform to standardized classroom teaching are highly resistant based on deep-seated and long-standing consensual beliefs and traditions. The principal alternative of employing practice-based and critical approaches has been diluted in favor of the promotion of reductionist and mythological active learning strategies which, though useful, are unlikely to lead to the acquisition of prudential wisdom' (Raelin, 2009, p 401).

The reality of this position was brought home to me strongly when the current Director of the MA programme, asked to comment on whether or not I had influenced the 'educational social formation' of the MA, suggested that though I was sincere and committed in my efforts, I was just 'tilting at windmills'. By this I think he meant attacking imaginary enemies e.g. the 'disciplinary regime' within universities, and/or fighting unwinnable or futile battles through seeking a more practice-based form of education in academic institutions. And this comes after some three years of quite close collaboration between us on improving the programme! I'm pleased to confirm that following further interchanges, he has since softened his position somewhat as you will see later on in an appendix to this chapter. However, with this experience still fresh in

my mind, I devote the bulk of this chapter to mounting what I hope will be a persuasive argument about the value of the approach I've developed. Let me now start with the pedagogic 'blackbox'…

AN ONLINE COACHING PEDAGOGY OF PRESENCING

In the diagram below I gather together and relate what I have grown to see as the main elements that together constitute my online coaching pedagogy. I've talked about most of these in Chapter 1 where I described important steps along my development journey. And again in Chapter 3, where I showed how all of these activities-cum-artifacts, helped me transform my coaching practice from being in many ways a complete 'novice' in the world of academic education, to someone who could claim to be at least an experienced 'intermediate'. And then finally in Chapters 4, 5, and 6, where I went into a lot more detail on three of these elements that I've chosen to 'mark' what I see as different stages or aspects of the learning and development process.

So you'll already be familiar with all of these terms and how I understand and use them in this thesis. What I aim to do in this chapter is to revisit and show you how I see them working in concert, as an 'ecology of ideas' (Bateson, 1972), to produce two main effects which I've identified above: using the findings of educational research to help students improve their practice; and, using a self-study version of educational research to create an original standard of judgment which I hope will serve, as quoted in the Introduction, to 'improve education and serve the public good' (Ball and Tyson, 2011).

Below I offer an impressionistic sketch of the key elements in my pedagogical framework. I'll now work my way through these showing how each has been developed, what role(s) they play, and how they come together in this dynamic and emergent educational influencing process. I will begin first with 'presencing developmental possibilities' - which I've now refined to PERTRSP **-** which forms the central embodied 'tool/artifact' around which my pedagogical approach is organized.
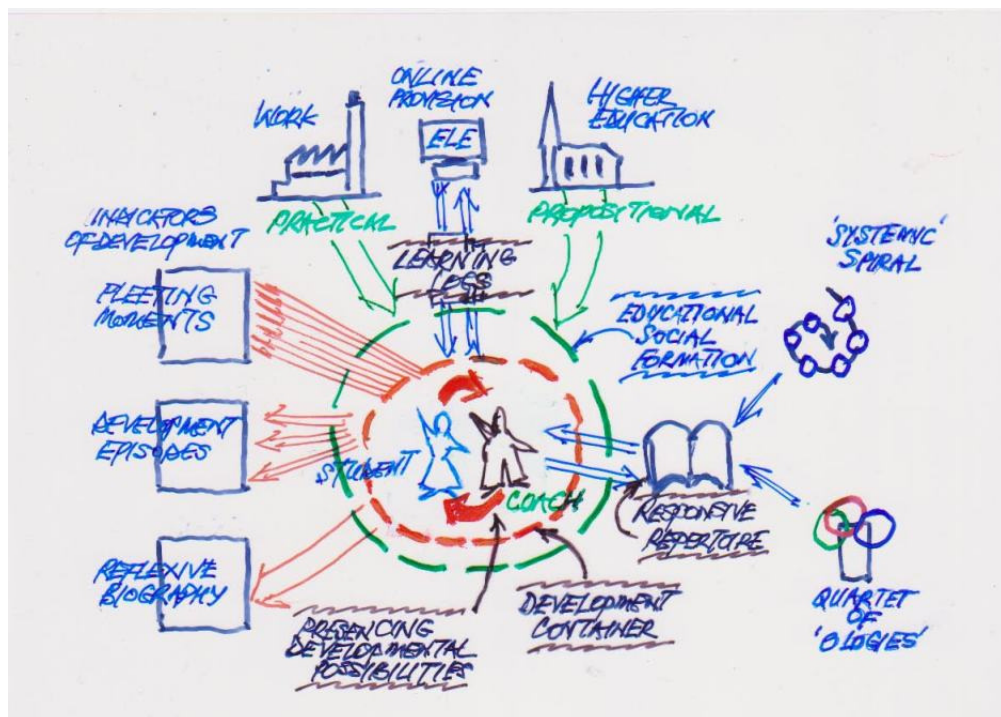
AN ONLINE COACHING PEDAGOGY OF PRESENCING

Presencing empathetic responsiveness to requisite situated practice
As I say of 'presencing' when it's first revealed in the video clip in Chapter 3, 'I offer students something *now* that I think they would find useful in the future'. It might be an affirmation and extra reading (Ian), a question, reflection, or challenge (Colleen), or an action proposal (John) that I offer in the moment, anticipating that their experience when they read and respond at some future time, will provide them with a resource they will find useful. In this sense it's a little like Milton Erickson's 'conversational' hypnotic interventions, where he provided his clients with an experience, a resource, which would give them access to what they needed, to resolve a difficulty (Erickson and Rossi, 1979).

What has become clearer over time is that this artifact operates at three levels. First of all, I've been presencing developmental opportunities for myself over very many years, as you'll have noted in Chapters 1 and 3: if I'm interested in something I immediately set in motion some developmental activities. I then realised that I was also doing this in the educational relationships between myself and my students i.e. I was presencing an 'empathetic responsiveness' to what my students seemed to require to develop their scholarly and leaderly practices: see here, for example, Colleen's comments about me 'knowing exactly what I need'. And then finally, and this has been the main focus in the thesis, in my intuitive responses to my students in logs and essays, both empathetic and provocative, I've been inviting them to presence in their *own* relationships, an empathetic responsiveness to the leadership practices that seemed appropriate, needed, and requisite in the situations they're facing. So there has been an unfolding recursive process at work here, where there has been a 'focal' emphasis on improving the quality of responsiveness to the leadership practices required in first, second, and third person development situations.

In the Introduction, I confessed that my understanding of this ontological skill had been subjected to a range of minor after-shocks following one of my final supervisions with Jack Whitehead, when notions of 'contextual empathy' and 'contextualising' – though already appearing in a wide range of places within several of my chapters – surfaced again but in a newer higher level and more sophisticated form. As Alan Rayner might say, in this I've not made a 'new connection' but I've 'revealed' to myself what I've always known (see comments in Chapter 1, Excerpt 18)! In the days that followed I became aware of further implications and possibilities and these have helped me to more fully articulate what this form of presencing is really about for me and how I believe it works. I now think of 'presencing developmental possibilities' (PDP) as a basic and *generic* term which can take different forms: so though it does tell you *something* about what's happening, you need to go further to enhance the impact. And so as mentioned in the Introduction, I now see it more clearly in the higher level form of *presencing empathetic responsiveness to requisite situated practice (PERTRSP).* Let me draw together the various threads to explain how I got to this understanding of what has been an emergent phenomenon, looking in particular at how responsiveness and empathy can be enhanced while sustaining an optimum level of epistemological and ontological doubt.

1. Presencing – developing empathy through 'dwelling in the subsidiaries'
This emergent activity is not something that can be tackled directly or in a mechanical way like adopting a tactic of e.g. 'asking open questions'. Instead this kind of 'presencing' is the 'focal' outcome that becomes visible by working more directly, but in an intuitive and emergent fashion, on lower level activities like e.g. asking probing

questions, challenging premature judgements, suggesting further reading, encouraging more experimentation, seeking evidence of influence and so on – in what Polanyi called 'dwelling in the subsidiaries' (Polanyi, 1983) This is certainly how I became aware of the 'what what I do, *does*' aspect of the largely tacit and dynamic workings of many different kinds of activities that together constitute this meta activity. What are some of the distinctive aspects of this process?

- **what is it that's being 'presenced'?:** in Scharmer's use of the term, he describes 'presencing' as a blend of the words 'presence' and 'sensing'. In his Theory U he suggests that the way in which we attend to a situation determines how a situation unfolds and so 'presencing' refers to the ability to sense and bring into the present one's highest future potential; which in group situations he describes as being about 'letting come' a 'future wanting to emerge' (Senge et al, 2004). As Patricia Shaw says, his language here is 'strikingly mystical' (Shaw, 2002). In my own use, I am focusing more on improvements in personal practice - on helping students engage in developmental activity *while* doing what they ought or want to be doing to achieve preferred outcomes in a particular situation. So the first dimension that is being presenced is an interest in using an everyday opportunity to work on their development *now* rather than plan to do something in the future.

- **increasing receptiveness/empathy:** within this opportunity that's being presenced, I am intent that they pay attention to and appreciate important aspects of the *context*. And so presencing here is about experiencing a greater sense of *receptiveness* or *empathy* towards the situations in which they are or may be performing. So there is a deeper listening and sensing to what might be wanted or being 'called forth' by this situation and the people in it, before there is a move to action. In my use of the term 'requisite' I'm suggesting that they ought not just to respond to what *is* happening – the current situated practice – but to what *ought* to be happening: how should the situated practice *change* and how can they help this happen? In other words I'm asking them to think about what kind of *leadership* practice now seems appropriate – what I've called 'requisite' - and how they can contribute towards this new 'going on' with others.

- **changing situated responses:** but it's important that this development opportunity is more than just an empathetic reflection, a thinking about others and what might be done, or planning of some kind: there needs to be a move to action, an enactment and embodiment. And so presencing is also about increasing *responsiveness,* with this responsiveness not being about individual intent and action – what *I* do - but action in terms of a *practice* i.e. an activity that is an expression of the relatedness between person(s) and situation on a moment-to-moment basis. And so it's responsiveness to *situated practice*, *requisite* situated practice.

- **revealing continuities:** further, how might this 'presencing' process increase empathetic responsiveness? Here I turn to the ideas of Rayner with his concept of 'natural inclusion' (Rayner, 2010a) for inspiration. In this view 'subject' and 'object' are not seen as discrete phenomena separated by an empty 'excluded middle', but 'reciprocally linked' in receptive flow-form space. This allows me to think that 'presencing empathetic responsiveness' initiates a process which effectively 'dissolves' the 'excluded middle' (or using Rayner's latest Twitter

influenced languaging: 'reveals the continuities – space cannot be cut'). And it does this through an omni-directional *contextualising* process which enables a person (or 'complex dynamic self') to sense and appreciate what's happening and being 'called forth' in a local situation (or 'local neighbourhoods'); and then respond in ways which also take account of the values/capabilities of this 'complex dynamic self' and leadership practices required in that situation[25].

So presencing here involves contextualising skills which enable greater empathy towards leadership practice needed in local situations, greater awareness of the values and capabilities of the contextualiser to engage in these requisite practices, and a greater responsiveness to actually do so, and with passion and curiosity about the consequences of one actions. A similar perspective is offered by Spinoza et al who in their book on entrepreneurship (1997, as reviewed in Shotter, 1998) use similar languaging like 'retrieve sensitivity to' that allow people to include 'new practices into old practices' which expand your 'ability to appreciate and engage in the ontological skill of disclosing new ways of being' (1998, p 279). Both of these ideas feel much like Wittgenstein's metaphor of language-games which enable people to 'know how to go on', with 'retrieving sensitivities' much like 'presencing empathetic responsiveness', and which enable people to 'disclose new ways of being', or 'respond to requisite situated practice', by embodying new ontological practices of 'going on'.

I've already pointed out that because this is a 'focal' outcome, it's not something I can go to directly and straightforwardly – it has many tacit sources and emerges over time. But to end this section, I offer a *simplified* illustration of the kind of effect the move from the PDP to the PERTRSP version of 'presencing' can and has had on my responses. For example one of my Middle East based students identified that in his organisation the task of 'strategy development' is being treated as a planned, 'top management' only activity. As a result he feels many staff are not really thinking about the meaning of important aspects of the strategy like e.g. 'offering excellent customer service'. Here's how my typical initial response to such issues has changed:

- PDP: 'why don't you try now to get people to start thinking about the everyday implications of the strategy, while you talk with them about the day's work?'

- PERTRSP: 'given that the current practice amongst staff is to try to meet *all* demands of *all* customers, what could you do now to find out what is supporting these patterns of behaviour, and how might you in future respond to them in your daily meetings, in ways which will fit into the different practices you think are needed, in order to encourage their engagement?'

Though this too simplifies the process, a good practical example of this process 'in action' in the textual record, appears in Chapter 4 on pp 110-116 where I analyse a

---

[25] in the new discipline of 'transdisciplinarity studies', Lupasco's associated logic of subject and object being linked by means of a 'third space' (the included middle) located at a higher level of reality, encourages a similar kind of thinking. Nicolescu says: 'The included middle logic is a tool for an integrative process: it allows us to cross two different levels of reality or of perception and to effectively integrate, not only in thinking but also in our own being, the coherence of the Universe. The use of the included third is a transformative process. But, at that moment, the included third ceases to be an abstract, logical tool: it becomes a living reality touching all the dimensions of our being. This fact is particularly important in education and learning. (Nicolescu, 2011, p 31)

learning log interaction with my student John. Although this incident took place in 2006 nearly five years before I arrived at my new framing of PERTRSP, I think it shows me paying attention to the idea of a 'requisite situated practice' in his interactions with his staff, inviting him to find a way of 'responding empathetically' while taking account of his own resources as well as those of others, and in a style that is appropriate to a practice that would better achieve the goals they are seeking.

2. Presencing – seeking practical and requisite outcomes

Let me now take this discussion to a more practical level, moving away from the conceptual framing to the 'doing' that leads to development activity that initiates changes in embodied behaviour and improvements in local situated practice. I comment on my practice from four angles:

- **Bricolage - working 'from-to':** in my experience, students typically seem to want to learn about leadership by *absorbing* a wide range of academic ideas and tools *about* leaders and leadership – the so-called 'warehouse' or 'building' model of knowledge (Heidegger, 1971). I initially respond to this attitude to learning by taking whatever they offer me - stimulated by e.g. the online resources, their own experiences, my questioning, and so on – and use this as a kick-off point to evoke and provide a receptive and responsive contribution very much in the role of bricoleur, working with what I've to hand (Levi-Strauss, 1996). While acknowledging where they are coming from, my responses seek to encourage, broaden, deepen, provide resources, provoke action, and so on, in order to stimulate and extend their engagement to their own development of capability, performance, and practice. I intend this development to be of an embodied nature going beyond just knowing *about* to a knowing *of*, and then in time to a knowing *from* (Shotter, 2008). I believe I do this by bringing into the 'present moment' (that is in 'conversation' in online learning log terms), reasons for and/or a framing of ideas for how they might progress this interest/issue and bring it into new practice. In this I seek to create in our immediate 'languaging' of the issue, ideas and terms that anticipate possible paths and motivations for going ahead. So like Polanyi, I am also working very much with his basic 'from-to' metaphor i.e. *from* whatever 'subsidiary' issues/materials we have to hand *to* improvements in the 'focal' situated practice.

- **Panopticon-like responsiveness:** to be experienced as offering this kind of 'live' in-the-moment support in the distance learning world, I have *to be present* to what they are offering me, or, given it's all happening in a virtual world, *felt* to be present by the student. So very much like the prisoner's experience of the Panopticon (Foucault, 1977), students need to feel I'm paying close attention and appreciating their situation all of the time even though it's not actually possible for me to do this. If this quality isn't present, the time delays between student log and coach response (and vice versa) would carry little energy or influencing force. How do I go about doing this? Above all I have to be *alive and responsive* to any clues they may offer as to their own local interests or dilemmas that are identified or in the subtext of what they're writing, as well as to what is in the ELE material and what they are making of it. This means being reasonably timely in my responses, paying attention to what has gone before, and what might lie ahead, and keeping my field of vision wide open. Perhaps more importantly when I respond, I need to show that I really am interested and involved in what they're thinking and doing - providing a stream of questions,

challenges, ideas, and personal appreciations through my comments in the logs and essays - and not just going through the motions in a non-engaged way.

- **Intensive 'fishing' activities:** I generally do this by showing an intense interest in their work - as Jim, one of my students, remarked: 'I am amazed at the sheer intensity and attention to detail of the responses to my work'. My ideas are offered very much in 'fishing' mode i.e. casting ideas out based on intuition, empathy, and resonance, and all the time looking for glimmers of interest: is anything I'm offering ringing any bells? What's important about this process is that it's not a wholly rational and explicit intellectual process where I work through formulas of some kind. Instead I liken it to a tacit activity where through an 'intuitive inferencing' process, I spontaneously cast out a range of 'baited hooks' and then scan the logs/essays for signs of interest which I can then start 'playing' with. Ian's metaphor of 'rallies in a tennis game' (see section in Chapter 6 regarding his reflexive biography for more on this) also conjures up this image. If I suspect that something is, then I attempt to amplify this by offering praise, further relevant materials, and encouragement to take the idea further. In this way this 'fishing' process acts very much as an heuristic helping me find ways through the complex meaning –making 'jungles' that my students are living and working in.

- **Focusing on changes in practice:** As part of this 'fishing' activity, I also encourage them to try things out for themselves, create their own practical 'fishing' experiments, and learn from the feedback: what influences are they having on others in their context and in the social formation of the organization in which they work. If any of the ideas are to lead to anything practical, they need to be tried out and experienced in real everyday situations – 'jumping into the water' as Mintzberg has suggested (Mintzberg, 1975, on p 26 in HBR, 1998) - so that through an indwelling process, embodied knowing about the dynamic fit between tool and context can be generated. So the wide open 'fishing' activity gradually gives way to a more focused inquiry into what's being done to use the knowledge, and exploring the boundaries of application.

- **A values driven process:** As I mention above, students typically expect to absorb explicit knowledge from the university to add to their own again largely explicit knowing. I don't believe this is sufficient to support the kind of critical engagement and embodied development they need, to improve their practice and performance. I want instead to provoke them into gaining a more personal and embodied kind of knowing. I do this through encouraging them to critically engage with their own and others ideas, through trying out and experimenting with these in context, through reflective and reflexive work on their experiences (Cunliffe, 2002), and by refining their knowing, skills, and confidence for delivery in context. As I discussed in more detail in the section in Chapter 3 titled 'identifying the values grounding my pedagogy', the main driver for this seems to be a deeply felt desire to raise awareness of what and how those people who I'm serving as coach, friend, and colleague, can make the most of their talents and transform these into successful interaction, practice, and outcomes with others. This is also linked in some ways to my desire to a find ways of legitimising personal knowing - very much in the Foucauldian sense of eliciting and valuing 'subordinated knowledges'. And though my own personal focus is on individuals and the groups they are part of, this is driven by a desire to foster and support a kind of wider freedom and justice for all.

3. Presencing - maintaining epistemological and ontological doubt

As quoted earlier, Barnett has said students need to have the opportunity to *make* their reflexive biography, as 'distinct from having one's biography made for one by the manifold forces that dominate this "supercomplex" world' (Barnett, 2000, p 158). This need he posits is well served if they can do their learning and performing in similar conditions, so that in the former situation, there is a regular need to act into uncertainty where they are subject to similar levels of both epistemological and ontological doubt. In the online programme, the coaching required to support this kind of more open ended, contested, uncertain, and dynamic intertwined 'learning while practising' *and* 'practising while learning' - both at the same, and for yet another *first*, time (Garfinkel, 1967) – needs to be thought of as taking place within a pedagogy which for example: consistently provokes alternative perceptions and feelings to develop a capacity for multi-perspectival framings; helps 'presence' or make visible and present the many developmental possibilities latent in their everyday lives for inquiring into these; and encourages experimentation and reflection on feedback in practical situations. In the face of ontological challenges such as 'how can I become and practice what is being called forth in this situation?', as well as dealing more sensitively and responsively with the demands of more routine forms of problem solving, the 'focal' act of 'presencing developmental possibilities' I believe provides students with the kind of side-by-side support they need to feel their way forward as they learn how to develop their practices of re-orienting and 'going on'…*by doing just that!*

Of course, it's tempting when they make progress to then give praise freely. But, as in Walt Disney's three part formula for success – dreamer/realist/critic (Dilts, 1995) – it's important also to be quite rigorous and demanding as to the accuracy of claimed outcomes and how they think about what they've done. After all this is not just about improving practice but also becoming a better scholar who is able to attain a better than average masters degree. So often I caution 'premature closure' and ask students to hold back on rapid judgement, stay uncertain, and allow further time for ideas to take shape, and the meaning of feedback to become evident. This is very much what I believe Barnett was meaning when he stressed the need for students to do their learning under conditions of epistemological and ontological uncertainty (Barnett, 2000) – so I keep challenging them to see things from many points of view.

In fact, following Garfinkel's 'yet another first time' dictum, I now stress that while they tuck new learning into their quiver, they need always to stay open to the reality of what is in front of them in the *present* moment. And while I'm interested in helping them improve the quality of their learning and development, I'm also very keen that they also appreciate the double level nature of the process i.e. learning yes, but also learning about how they learn, particularly how they go about the Wittgensteinian framing task of knowing how to go on together with others. So I often offer supplementary materials that address this meta task, and encourage them to go further into the framing and modelling aspects of what they're doing, and the social and collaborative dimensions involved in 'knowing of the third kind' (Shotter, 2008). So there is always an implied contextual framing being delivered as I speak into the space between us, that is expectant of a certain trajectory of thought…but this is of course also open to shifts! So I'm hoping that students will be learning at an ontological level about what it is to become and be-in-the-world as particular 'dividuals' (Lipuma, 1998) in the many varied local situations they live in, as well as in the more usual sense of having an individual identity.

To end this section with something more vivid and expressive than straight text, in Appendix 1 I've included video excerpts, written commentary, and an e mail exchange for your further information. The two edited video clips come from an hour-long wide ranging review with one of my 07-09 students, Jim, held some 6 months after he had completed his MA. In it are comments on a range of interesting aspects of the programme and the nature and influence of the coaching process, which illustrate and support many of the claims I've been making in this section, including:

- 'it's the coaching relationship that makes the difference…the learning logs are the most useful aspect as students know they are going to be responded to' - it's what energises the process
- [in the draft dissertation] 'it's the feedback that made the difference…your amendments took every spare minute for three weeks to work through! But very grateful…that gave me the steer more than anything, that I needed'
- 'it's the level of detail and attention to assignments that's had the greatest impact…it anchors the experience of learning around an interactive experience' and this relationship 'steadies the buffers in terms of the quality of reflection…'
- [regarding the 'development container]…'very helpful in shifting my mindset…paradigm thinking' – coach provides a different slant…about *personal* practice…very deep…quite personal'.
- can online learning log/essay experience approach conversation and dialogue with fleeting moments of influence – 'very definitely!'
- can regular written/online interchanges create a 'development container' which enhances learning - 'that is the crux of it!'
- 'smartened up a lot academically' due to the detailed feedback on the essays

Perhaps just as importantly, the audio-visual record shows the kind of living energy, presence, humour, and good feeling that infuses an educational relationship characterized by this kind of conversational coaching and which enables the range of positive outcomes that were achieved.

These two video clips appear in Volume 2 in the Appendix 1 to this chapter, on p. 240.
24. *Jim's review of MA part 1*
25. *Jim's review of MA part 2*

* * *

As you can see from the earlier diagram, the organic 'engine' which supports this presencing 'artifact' is composed of three main elements: the *learning log/essay interactions* which, as well as describing problems and raising questions, provides textual signs of learning and development; my improvisatory responses to these student writings spontaneously and intuitively selected and creatively fashioned from what I've called my *responsive repertoire* - to emphasise that it is responsive and dialogical rather than mechanistic and formulaic; and the *development container* which is constituted, energized, and sustained by the regular cycles of action and research taking place between the first two elements, and which provides the conditions which encourage a climate of inquiry between students and myself. I've provided many examples of how the first of these 'cogs' operate in earlier chapters, so here let me focus on how the latter two 'cogs' of the presencing 'engine' use the 'fuel' provided by the learning logs and

essays, to work their educational influences (please forgive the intrusive 'machine' metaphor!).

Developing and using an empathetically 'responsive repertoire'
In this section I will talk about the emergent structure of my coaching interventions, how they can be seen as empathetic 'responses' generated through values-driven improvisation, and understood as inviting participation in new language-games. As I mentioned in the previous section, I take whatever students offer me in their logs and essays, and very much in the role of 'bricoleur', use these to evoke a receptive and responsive contribution. I decided to start analysing the textual record contained in the logs and essays and my responses, some four years after I'd begun coaching, to see if I could identify some patterns of educational influence and relationship in our work together, beyond occasional glimpses that were obvious in some log and essay entries.

As stated in Chapter 3, I did this initially with just one student's complete set of logs over a period of 18 months together with my responses, amounting to some 80,000 words in all! As a result of this 'first pass' I tried to create an inductive framing of what the various responses suggested I was wanting to do, and my strategy for doing these. I summarised these thoughts – the detailed interventions I'd been making – and this summary appears in Appendix 6 to Chapter 3, hoping that this would help me derive a more communicable narrative about what I was doing. Having since done some further work of this nature I can see that there is much, much more that could be done along these lines, which could lead to yet another seemingly very comprehensive repertoire of potential actions for online coaches, as has been attempted by others e.g. Denis et al, 2004. But creating a rather deterministic framework in what I regard as essentially a much more flowing, dialogic, creative, and timely process, was not really what I wanted to achieve, and so I haven't pursued this any further, and it remains on the back burner. The 'first pass' itself turned out to be enough to give me a sense of, and a general shape for, the sort of systemic responsiveness I was and am interested in, which could be further developed over time *but* primarily in response to the diverse and changing needs of my students.

1. An outline structure of empathetic pedagogic responses
From this initial analysis of learning log responses, it appears that I have developed a broad range of approaches to the 'encourage, broaden, deepen, provide resources, provoke action' activities that are involved in presencing work, deepening and extending students' engagement with their own development while also creating a learning climate which frames and supports these behaviours. The initial synthesis I've developed is suggestive rather than definitive (if the latter were actually possible!) as it is not based on a comprehensive and exhaustive analysis. But the set of activities that has emerged indicate that I seem to work from a coaching stance that, while embodying a basic receptiveness and responsiveness, makes creative use of other interventions, like being provocative, demanding rigour, and providing a wide range of supplementary resources. In performing this stance, I appear to use a varied repertoire of behaviours which are in a sense 'called forth' (Maturana and Varela, 1992) by what the student is offering, and my intuitive sense of what might be relevant and timely. These seem to include the following four broad, generic responses on a reasonably regular basis, varying of course with the person, the issue, the phase, and the learning and/or development issue I'm wanting to foreground:

- **Influencing expectations:** recognising, supporting, affirming student's explicit and tacit knowledge and establishing the rules of a development oriented 'language-game'. I do this by e.g. taking steps to 'level' power relations in a knowledge field, empathising and affirming other's views/feelings, and casting doubt on too ready an acceptance of academic concepts.

- **Challenging perceptions:** questioning conventional understandings, challenging self imposed boundaries and encouraging both reflexive and creative thinking. I do this by e.g. using humour to provocatively challenge behaviours and interpretations, reframing understandings and conclusions, and cautioning 'premature closure' – 'slow down/stay open'.

- **Extending personal knowing:** provoking new perspectives through questioning and reframing, and adding new ideas and resources relevant to the issues being raised. I do this by e.g. seeding the 'negative capability' field (Keats, 1817) through 'fishing' work, broadening and/or deepening the inquiry, and providing a range of additional resources in timely fashion.

- **Presencing knowing-in-action**: encouraging moves to action new knowledge and assess influence and outcomes. I do this e.g. by encouraging the taking of action/applying insights, seeking reflexive action and the re-valuing of tacit knowledge, and asking for evidence of influencing and being influenced.

2. Values-driven improvisation of interventions

In practice I believe I use this loosely framed set of questions *not* as a template or 'scorecard' which I have in front of me as I read the essays, but as a background frame of reference, intuitively picking these out of the 'quiver' and tailoring them to suit, if and when I'm stimulated by something in the text itself, or embedded in the sub-text. My general intention is to help each individual get the most learning out of the MA experience, which includes becoming a good scholar, achieving a good pass, *and* improving leadership practice. Whereas the emphasis in marking essays needs to be more on the *summative* aspects i.e. 'what ought I do to get a better grade', the emphasis in the learning logs is more on the *formative* aspects – 'how might I learn to become a better leader/accomplish leadership more effectively'. As indicated above, my main strategy is one of presencing empathetic responsiveness in these virtual interactions. By this I mean using whatever aspects of experience they present in their logs, to spark off and encourage them firstly to extend and deepen their learning, and secondly to take practical steps to embed this learning in their everyday practice. A third aspect - which obviously crosses over into the essays - is to help them reflect, articulate, and express this process and the knowing that accompanies it, in their formal writing. Social constructionism, systemic thinking, power-relations, and emergence appear regularly among key guiding concepts. I approach the role as one involving the student and I in a *mutual* meaning making enterprise, helping contribute towards a 'third kind of knowing' (Shotter, 2008).

Obviously this repertoire has been particularly influenced by the 'spiral' of multiple perspectives that I talked about in Chapter 3, which helps me offer a 'systemic responsiveness' to student offerings. These educational interventions might well have a multi-level form which speaks to matters of 'intention, identity, strategy, capability, behaviour, and outcomes' (Dilts, 1993) and thus, in addition to the 'double loop' learning associated with framing activities (Argyris and Schon, 1978), potentially

creates opportunities for 'triple loop' reflections which take students more deeply into questions of values and identity (Torbert and Associates, 2004). So here I'm implying that if students want to change their capability to offer leadership in a more fluid, dynamic and context related manner, they probably need to alter the way they perceive these different levels of outcomes and their relations with each other – and seek to improve the quality of alignment between them to really improve their practice. The overall intent behind this responsiveness is accordingly to presence developmental possibilities which students can exploit to improve and potentially transform their scholarship and leadership practice. This is clearly guided and energised by the philosophical quartet of 'ologies', also explored in some detail in Chapter 3, which integrates the constellation of values, beliefs and presuppositions that taps into the living energy I bring to my work. As I covered these in some detail before, I won't offer further explanation here.

3. An invitation to engage in a new language-game?

Because of the essentially *virtual* status of the communication process, getting this to work effectively is always a huge challenge because of the lack of true face-to-face dialogue in the present moment. Nevertheless the programme has achieved good scholastic results and practice based outcomes. With this in mind, another way of looking at my 'responsive repertoire' and the educational relationship that it stimulates (I talk about this as a 'development container' next), might be to see it very much as an invitation to *construct together the nature, rules, and resourcing of a new language-game* (Wittgenstein, 1958). This new meta-game of games is one that stimulates and supports a much higher level of empathy and developmental consciousness in the student-coach relationship which can rise above the virtuality hurdle. So for example coach responses that seek to 'level the playing field', invite students to fashion their own 'personal' MA experience, use propositional knowledge as a 'provocation' to conventional wisdom, encourage greater 'reflexivity', 'reframe' blocking assumptions, and so on, can encourage students to 'go on' in a more developmentally aware manner.

This is in a sense a form of modelling of a kind of leadership that is open to being influenced, and influencing the other and the wider social formation, where I seek to orient myself to the unique 'always occurring for the first time' episodes (Garfinkel, 1967) of the learning log, essay, and work background in which students perform. So in trying to resolve these orientational difficulties for myself in my 'rooting' work with students (perhaps now also to be regarded as 'routing' i.e. how to go on?), I'm offering a lead of sorts for students with their own orientational work. And so in this way, we are both engaged in ontological, as well as associated epistemological activity, together. I find some support for this in a form of coaching called 'ontological' which is based on work done by Winograd and Flores (1986) stimulated by ideas from people like Heidegger, Gadamer, Maturana, Wittgenstein, and Merleau-Ponty (Sieler, 2003). The focus here is also on triggering shifts in 'ways of being' through working with language, emotions, and 'physiology' to develop perceptions that were previously unavailable. Despite the interesting history and focus on ways of being, a closer reading suggests that this may be rather more coach-centred (I am an 'x' coach and this is what *I* do) and less inclusional and responsive than the approach I'm seeking to follow. Still I like the term 'ontological' and feel it can also be applied to my approach where language, emotions, and embodiment are central.

*   *   *

In an earlier paragraph I highlighted the influence my use of this responsive repertoire has on the *educational relationships* I enjoy with my students. I also used the term 'developmental container' to direct attention to what I believe this relationship is primarily about, and it is to what this might be that I turn my attention to next.

Co-creating a 'development container'

This element of my pedagogy has in many ways proved the most difficult to grasp, as well as the one offering the greatest opportunity for gaining insights into the mystery of the development process. To capture some of the richness of this phenomenon, I make use in the text below of the metaphor of a 'chrystal' to comment on six aspects or 'facets' of this powerful virtual learning space, which though invisible, conveys a real felt presence to those participating (Shotter, 2003, p 442).

The basic challenge I've faced in analysing and interpreting how the responsive repertoire works, in particular the kind and level of educational influencing I might exercise using it, is that in the textual record of logs and essays, there is very little direct evidence of the impact and meaning of these everyday and ongoing responses from the coach, to what the student is offering. It's not something we ask for in a formal way. Further, the asynchronous nature of most of the interaction, the unceasing movement each week onto yet new ideas and models, and the implicit focus of log and essay questions on explicating academic theories, works against this happening as a natural feature of student/coach interaction. Typically students will read the coach's responses to their original entry, one or two weeks later after they've already encountered and responded to further ideas – and so it takes a very determined and conscientious student to keep going back to offer feedback to the coach. It has happened from time to time with just a few students but is not something that can be counted on.

So the question is: if, apart from the 'fleeting moments' of influence I've already referred to, there aren't many obvious links between the specifics the student offers and coach responds to, what if anything do the multiple interventions offered by the coach actually achieve? Are they just 'mutterings after the fact' into the ether of the virtual world, or are they contributing to something that might be 'invisible' in the weekly cycle of logs, but nevetherless critical or at least important in the overall pedagogic process? Over the past few years I have come to believe that over time these multiple responses, though often not hitting the mark in an obvious and immediate way, do in fact make a significant contribution at the level that I've referred to as 'relationship building' and 'climate influencing'. And the challenge for me here has been to find a way of capturing and describing this largely invisible process, so I can subject it to questioning and challenge and hopefully be able to draw some justifiable conclusions as to its existence, its efficacy in development terms, and how coaches may go about establishing it with their students.

I have worked at this issue at two levels – macro and micro – and in a hermeneutical manner (Rorty, 1979). At the 'macro' level I've been imagining what the *educational 'target'* of these interventions might be, and then compared these ideas with the 'micro' findings from the logs/essays; and at the 'micro' level, I've been going through the 'blow by blow' interactions within the logs to identify the regular response patterns which I seemed to use – my 'responsive repertoire' - and compared these to my 'macro' imaginings. Having already just discussed my experience of using the 'responsive

repertoire', what follows now is my general working hypothesis based on the sense I've derived from relating it to what I've variously called the educational 'target', learning relationship, and now the 'development container'.

Log interchanges tend to be 'asynchronous' i.e. my response is read many days after students have written their log, and often after they've responded to other log questions and quite probably other topics too. So perhaps a better framing of this process might be that I speak not only to *specific* entries as they come up but also at the same time, to a kind of virtual and dynamic 'learning space' in which students and I exist within an ongoing dialogue about leadership. My responsive 'peppering' of students with regular 'showers' of supportive and provocative 'arrows' can often seem to be out of time and, as in practice they don't have time to offer a response to most of them, frustrating, redundant and perhaps even irritating. Certainly that is what my student John said he often felt – 'I wanted to go back and respond but never had the time!' Despite this initial view it has gradually dawned on me as I've reviewed my practices with a sample of students, that these multiple 'arrows' that 'support, deepen, broaden, and provoke', do in fact perform a useful and even critical educational service. Instead of a 'blow by blow' interactive model of communication – 'they say this, I respond thus' – I began to realise that these 'arrows' in sum were having an important effect at a higher relational level. While it wasn't easy to put my finger on what this was, it did seem to be a more fruitful path to go down: though I was getting only a few immediate responses to my 'interventions', my students did seem to be fully engaged, curious about what leadership might mean for them, who they wanted to become in the context of creatively living worthwhile lives, and how they might use the MA experience to take steps to get there.

Since first coming to this view some years ago, I've been alert to any signs, ideas, and feedback that might help me further clarify and develop what I for the time being have termed a 'development container'. I've also discussed this idea with several of my students. As a result of this I've been able to develop a guiding metaphor that I believe satisfactorily provides a 'macro' frame for making sense of the 'showers' of 'micro' actions directed towards influencing the quality of student education and practice improvement. I see this metaphor very much in terms of a multi-facetted chrystal which enables a variety of viewpoints as to what can happen and does happen within the space of the 'development container'. My description uses this idea of 'facets' through which different possible views can be appreciated, as the organising principle for my thoughts.

1. FACET A - a space that enables a natural creative exploration of possibilities
This view is characterised by Keat's concept of 'negative capability' - an openness to the promptings of the creative imagination 'when a man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason.' (Keats, 1817). Here the mind, when free of the left hemisphere's demands for certainty, is seen as a vast source of potential creativity, a judgement that is now being backed up by the latest research on how mind and world influence each other (McGilchrist, 2010). A concept that for me has similar connotations is that of 'liminality', a psychological, neurological, or metaphysical subjective, conscious state of being on the 'threshold' of, or between two different, existential planes, a period of transition where normal limits to thought, self-understanding, and behavior are relaxed –and which can lead to new perspectives (Turner and Bruner, 1986). Although it comes across as less psychological, Rayner's concept of 'natural inclusion' (Rayner, 2010) also seems to me to share the ideas of flow through dynamic permeable boundaries, and possibilities for living a creative life. A final strand to this viewpoint comes from the Chinese idea of change being something that is concerned with 'the propensity/potential in the situation' to

evolve naturally, and to allow this process to play out rather than force on it external views (Julien, 2004).

2. FACET B - a space that values the potential for self organising

In this space people are expected to have a natural potential to 'know how to go on' with others and the world in which they live (Wittgenstein, 1958). Being able to self organise and take responsibility to lead oneself through life's challenges is seen as something everyone can aspire to: the emphasis here is on Foucault's view of power relations as allowing the positive shaping of identity, as against the more usual one of self monitoring against externally set norms (Foucault, 1972). An inspiring example of this comes from Ted Hughes while teaching poetry to young children – 'In these talks I assume that the latent talent for self expression in any child is immeasurable.' (Hughes, 1967, p 12). Milton Erickson's story about helping a lost horse find its way home 'I didn't know, the horse knew – all I did was keep his attention on the path', also provides a powerful metaphor for helping the other: people know at a deep level what they need/want – your job as facilitator is to help them stay on their 'path' by a very sensitive and light touch, 'following' from behind (Gordon and Meyers-Anderson, 1981, p 166). Finally from the pen of Japanese actor and author Yoshi Oida comes the story about the drama teacher who said he could teach anybody the symbolic gesture called 'looking at the moon' but added that he could only teach the movement up to the tip of your finger which points to the sky. From the tip of your finger to the moon 'is your own responsibility.' (Oida and Marshall, 1997) – thank you to Vreni, my Feldenkrais teacher for this example.

3. FACET C - a space that frees the 'body-mind' to learn

Though this view is not often noticed/commented upon in the academic world, I've found it an enormously powerful mode of learning and teaching. Most obviously in the popular approach to improving performance in a sport like tennis or golf, Gallwey's 'inner game' has helped thousands of people to improve their game, making use of what he called 'Self 2' – the natural ability of the body to tacitly/automatically notice and make small adjustments to meet improvement goals, through a synaesthesic process (Gallwey, 1974). Moshe Feldenkrais' development of his unique approach to healing the body called the Feldenkrais Method, was also based on a special kind of 'attention' during movement. For example he felt that the recapturing of a 'feeling of ease' after an injury takes time: 'The moment we do these movements for the gain of feeling better, we lose something of the inquiring mind. If I can let go of wanting to feel better and simply stay with wanting to observe whilst varying the movements around a central idea, I can understand more, and so will my body, and then the pain goes anyway….one day.' (Feldenkrais, 1977). I provide a simple video clip example of this powerful process in Appendix 2, p. 245 - *experiencing the continuous nature of the body* - showing how this can work, as my Feldenkrais teacher Vreni helps me become more aware of the folding fulcrum-like role of my pelvis, that 'reveals' the continuity between my upper and lower body. In so doing she reminds me of how good an illustration of the 'inclusionality' principle (Rayner, 2010) the Feldenkrais method provides, as here with the light touch of Vreni's hand, it reveals 'primitive reactions' which lead to new ontologically led language-games which help me know how to go on in a healthier way. Arnie Mindell's 'process psychology' approach to healing and change also uses the notion of a 'dreambody' where clients are encouraged to express themselves through their bodies, to reveal and heal not only deep seated psycho-somatic illness but important features of the 'self' (Mindell, 1982). Finally, my experiences of learning to draw and paint portraits using the 'right side of the brain' (Edwards, 1999) and singing legato (which I looked at in Chapter 3) lead to the same conclusions:

progress comes more quickly and surely when you keep the conscious left hemisphere analytical mind at bay or preoccupied with something else (McGilchrist, 2010).

4. FACET D - a space that encourages learning from the 'shadow'

Frank Farrelly's concept of 'provocative therapy' is an approach in which the therapist plays the devil's advocate, siding with the negative half of the client's ambivalence toward his/her life's goals, relationships, work and the structures within which he/she lives. The main 'weapon' is warm-hearted humor in all its varied forms: exaggeration, irony, self-deprecation, and so on, which 'call out' different behaviors like affirming self-worth, engaging in risk-taking; asserting/defending self in a realistic manner, and so on. The goal is to help clients learn necessary discriminations to respond adaptively (Farrelly, 1974). Focusing on similar goals, Australian Michael White's narrative therapy based on Foucault's concept of disciplinary power, helps clients through deconstructive questioning, to 'externalise the problem', finding alternative life stories which are 'exceptions' to the rule, to replace the dominant one that is restricting or harming them (White, 1989). He also encourages clients to create new social networks which can perform as 'witnesses' to consolidate such changes. Kegan and Lahey's more language focused approach also pays attention to what's often hidden within the ways we talk about things, and which tacitly block desired change, to help clients find new framings to reconcile these 'competing commitments' (Kegan and Lahey, 2002).

5. FACET E - a space that looks to the tacit for insights into knowing

In this space the focus is on the process of knowing. My primary example here comes from Michael Polanyi's concept of 'indwelling' which is about experiencing and living something unconsciously/tacitly without necessarily knowing beforehand where it will lead. So new values can't be consciously adopted and instead 'we submit to them by the very act of creating and adopting them' (Polanyi, 1983, p ix). Barnett's view that the university teacher is responsible for creating conditions of 'ontological uncertainty' in the learning space, I believe makes a similar point: to be able to perform effectively in a real world characterised by 'supercomplexity', students need to learn actively rather than passively receive knowledge (Barnett, 2000). In the context of creativity in art, Foucault's colleague Lyotard seems to be on the same page when he states that 'rules and categories are what the work of art itself is looking for. The artist and the writer, then, are working without rules in order to formulate the rules of what will have been done' (Lyotard, 1986, p 81).

These are all ideas that I've found particularly useful in forming my own understanding of what can be happening in the spaces within the 'development container' created by the virtual interaction between student and coach. But how do my students view this place of heightened developmental consciousness? Here are some views.

6. FACET F - a space that provides the challenges you're seeking

From my students I get the impression that there are many different kinds of reflection and reflexivity, and many different kinds of resources, they can seek and acquire in this space. For example here are individual responses from a sample of my students:

- Receiving coaching as 'a form of conditional *and* unconditional regard… it anchors the experience of learning around an interactive experience… This means that the relationship steadies the buffers in terms of the quality of reflection but still respects (or so I found it) the learner's nervousness that they may not be up to the job'. When asked to explain what he meant, he offered: 'Conditional regard in the sense that if something is poor/weak and could be

improved then that feedback is given; but there is also a strong sense of unconditional regard felt in the nature of this relationship - and I think, perhaps, this is held in the space that says metaphorically speaking even though this was poor/ weak and could be improved, I (the coach) will STILL give 100% attention to this.'

- Experiencing coaching as providing that important role of 'holding up the lens' and 'acting as the catalyst for reflection'.
- Referring to the coaching relationship in terms such as 'so challenging, so wise and gives me so much material to work on, that I feel continually supported and blessed… intuitive response to directing me to papers/issues that will challenge me further… response from my tutor to my work becomes the real assignment… challenging material and challenging responses…my tutor…is the fulcrum'.
- Experiencing the 'development container' as like being in a tennis match where 'my understanding changes as the rally proceeds' and I get 'a new way of doing, a new way of thinking, and new way of being'.
- Experiencing the coach 'as a catalyst for change who respectfully and constructively triggers shifts in the coachee's way of being, to enable him or her to develop perceptions and behaviours that were previously unavailable - so enhancing resourcefulness and enabling students to have greater awareness of the choices they have in any particular situation'.
- Feeling that the Skype relationship/online discussions are 'bizarre': 'I have known Keith for a year now and never met him but at the same time feel like I am popping into a friend's house for tea; and it is this comfortable atmosphere that creates a sense of security that sets the framework to challenge very deep and meaningful issues. I have become very conscious of my academic growth and the [extra] readings that are supported by our Skype sessions. I feel that sometimes the university webpage is like a backdrop to the more intricate work that is extracted from the video chat...In general the coaching has led to no longer feeling worthless under the umbrella of academic studies and I have experienced new subjects I could excel in. There are also new questions that arise and I am not sure who they belong to, like the idea flirting in my mind of studying a PhD, but it's new and interesting'.
- Experiencing the coaching as fostering a 'climate of inquiry' where the student feels that he and the coach are taking a journey together which, though it does not have a pre-defined goal, nevertheless is one which provokes options and offers choices which help the student take the next step [know how to go on] along his own development path. The video clip - *a climate of inquiry* - and commentary on a conversation with Paul in Appendix 3, p.247, illustrates how this has evolved, and shows in the great warmth and pleasure we share, the high level of empathetic resonance and responsiveness characteristic of our work together.

If there is a common theme here I believe it's to do with the intense and unceasing but supportive level of challenge that students experience when they are 'virtually' speaking 'in the development container'. Like Peter Senge's description of inquiry practices as developed by people like Bohm and Isaacs (Senge, 1990), this can be experienced as a place where assumptions can be 'suspended', new forms of dialogue can be explored, and new framings for how to go on in more efficacious ways, can be developed.

<div align="center">*   *   *</div>

The basic idea of thinking about 'influencing' as mediating/moderating the kind and depth of learning that takes place in a virtual time-space that the student-coach interactions construct over time, does seem to offer a useful way forward, and is supported by the ideas and 'findings' reported on here. Thinking of negative capability and other metaphors as constituting the frame, context, or contextual container, in which we make meaning, offers a guiding metaphor which re-introduces the mystery and uncertainty of living, and helps us peer into and make greater sense of things, and discover the effects 'of what what we do, does.' (Foucault in Dreyfus and Rabinow, 1982). What might these kinds of indicators be in my own role as online coach?

Noticing online indicators of development
As mentioned in Chapter 3, I now see 'leadership' as being very much about *framing/relating/orienting* in order to know 'how to go on' together with others (Wittgenstein, 1958) in situations which are always happening for yet another *first* time (Garfinkel, 1967). This move from seeing my role mainly as improving students abilities in *problem solving* came about when during the 'second phase' of developing my practice (Chapter 3), I started looking more closely at my online interactions with students as captured in the extensive and rich textual record of weekly learning logs and termly essays. As you will have read in that and the following three chapters, I realised that beyond the everyday problem solving level of work, there were other signs or 'glimpses' of learning in the texts, that I had engaged with, and could engage with, in assessing and supporting progress in a dynamic, in the moment and 'timely' basis.

The three main signs of development that I felt I could identify and work with, and that indictated the kind of influence I might be exercising in this virtual world, covered different spans of time: *fleeting moments* covered those momentary flashes of recognition/insight which Wittgenstein referred to as a 'primitive reaction'; the *development episode* covered the longer period of time needed for someone to transform that insight into something that was starting to influence everyday perceptions and behaviour which, following Wittgenstein's earlier lead, I referred to as a new 'language-game'; and I used the term *reflexive biography* to act as a container for the longer and more significant developments that involved ontological skills and were exercising 'formative influences' on a student's values, belief, and sense of self, and that led to developments in their situated practices.   As I've already devoted a chapter to each of these ideas, here I will just summarise my findings in the context of the model of working pedagogy I'm outlining in this section.

1. Fleeting moments – *experiencing primitive reactions*
My primary claim in Chapter 4 is that the 'presencing of development possibilities' can be initiated and energised within momentary 'fleeting moments' of educational influencing brought about through the skilled, situated, and timely use of a range of verbal and text-based dialogical interventions. As argued in the text, 'these improvisatory interventions which are offered into the "space between" one response and another, are both anticipatory and suggestive'. I provided academic and practice based research to show that it's possible to use the written word to create 'psychological instruments' which can 'instruct' us in new ways of 'learning to direct [our] own mental processes' (Vygotsky, 1986, p 108), which can 'bring otherwise unarticulated aspects of our own activities into "rational-visibility" (Garfinkel, 1967), and thus render them amenable to critical discussion' (Shotter, 2008, p 61).

The three examples covered in the chapter showed that the interventions and the 'primitive reactions' (Wittgenstein, 1958) that take place in these 'fleeting moments', take a variety of forms and can be longer and complex – like my own 'presencing' example, the intervention on the importance of 'context', and 'stark choices'; or can be brief and even throwaway in nature – like 'ask for more and better'. As I concluded in that chapter, my practice of embedding my commentary/feedback within the relevant phrases of student's logs effectively transformed it into a *dialogue* of sorts leading to several possible responses. If not immediately in a learning log, they might turn up in an essay – as part of the 'development episode' level of the intervention; or even in the dissertation, forming part of a 'reflexive biography'. As I emphasised in those chapters, a key aspect of this process is to expect/hope/anticipate that one or more of the many suggestions/challenges I am making will strike a potent chord at some point, and to be receptive and responsive in supporting these.

These 'short wave' frequency indicators tell me whether I'm beginning to develop empathy with the student, help me understand what's on the student's emerging agenda, and how the student is experiencing the e learning environment, and stimulate my intuitive responsiveness.

2. Development episodes – *constructing language-games*
In Chapter 5 I build on the idea, following Wittgenstein, that 'primitive reactions' can be a precursor to the creation and evolution of new *language-games*. Here words get their meaning from *use* in the specific contexts in which a practice unfolds, showing that meaning is embedded in local fields of practice, where speaking is part of an activity or form of life. It is the particular language-game associated with the situated practice that provides the 'conversational contexting' to help the student know how to go on. So in my usage, new language-games are essentially orientational and conversational framings that enable students to know how to go on to develop new embodied capabilities through situated action. This dynamic and situated framing process is essentially a means through which people construct conversational contexts to make sense of the practice(s) in which they are involved, and to account to others for this sense making.

In my own example concerned with 'rooting', the initial 'instruction' came to me from my less than conscious mind, after a seminar in 2002: '*that's* what you're doing - searching for your roots in the future!' By 2006 this initial primitive reaction had undergone two further important changes: one was to place the rooting process in *relationship*; and the second was to locate the process in a *living present*. From this new 'developed and developing' viewpoint (Garfinkel, 1967), I was seeking to 'presence' myself in the very moment of educational interaction with others: the primitive reframe had become a more developed, embodied, and influential new language-game for me, through a process of largely tacit learning (Polanyi, 1983). The learning, developing, and performing work that I needed to transform the momentary reframing of an issue/perception in a face-to-face or virtual dialogue, into appropriate ontological (embodied) skills, had been achieved 'by the very act of creating and adopting them'. (ibid, p xi).

Accordingly the development of the kind of situated embodied knowing that I'm talking about here, is complex and not completely knowable in explicit terms: it is transformational in nature and cannot be absorbed through a 'training' process. Instead I now see it as involving the *creation of new artifacts*, a more fruitful way of looking at this kind of development process, and very much in line with the ideas of Polanyi

(1983) and Ilyenkov (1977) as well as others like Merleau-Ponty (1962) and Bourdieu (1991). To take one of Polanyi's best known examples, the blind man soon begins to regard the end of his body not as his hand but as the point of his white stick. This is not because of any real deliberate and conscious thought, but because this is how embodied change happens (Polanyi, 1983). In a similar way, more abstract frameworks like say, family therapy's 'systemic thinking' or my own 'rooting in the present' are able to extend our reach and influence well beyond our physical body, and allow us new and more complex experiences of being-in-the-world. So such artifacts, whether they be theoretical models or more practical/technical tools, are able to touch and transform our everyday practices in our social and material environments.

If we use practice theorist Helle-Valle's definition of a 'language-game' this becomes even clearer: 'practically formed communicative contexts that provide statements with meaning' (Helle-Valle, 2010, p 193), Clearly this can also be seen as a particular and very powerful form of social artifact which can serve both to change practices and, through how people account for themselves to themselves and to others, to provide evidence of such changes. All three cases and my own examples offered in Chapter 5 show that further 'indwelling' work is required for the momentary reframing of an issue/perception in a face-to-face or virtual dialogue, to stimulate the development of the ontological (embodied) skills needed for a more significant process of development and change. This longer emergent process enables students to more fully re-orient and embed the values and skills needed to deploy this different way of being and 'going on' more effectively with others. What they end up achieving is the creation of new artifacts which enable them to relate and engage in different practices and in their environments as different 'dividuals' (LiPuma in Helle-Valle, 2010).

I believe my examples in Chapter 5 provide good evidence of this phenomenon in action, and serve to provide a very useful mid term indicator of how the development process is evolving. This 'medium wave' frequency indicator works at a level that is above the everyday events, issues, and questions raised by students, and shows me whether any of my 'fleeting moment' interventions are ringing bells, and why, and what I might do to encourage the further indwelling work needed to develop detail and confidence in an emerging language-game.

3. Reflexive biographies – *developing ontological skills*
How might LiPuma's 'dividuals' become linked and dynamically integrated from time to time such that an 'individual' appears at the nexus of their different practices (Schatzki, 2001)? And further, as I ask in Chapter 6, if these other learning events can be happening in the short term, there must be a question as to what happens as a result of these many small changes when coaching continues over much longer periods of time, as in the two year MA. What I'm looking for in all this complex unfolding of primitive reactions and language-games, is for something of a higher and longer term nature, which I could use informally on an 'as I go along basis', to assess how my students' writings, and hence at least their potential capabilities or 'forms of life', are and could be developed during the programme.

Language-games can of course continue growing/altering over longer periods but as I extend the period of observation to years I prefer to think of the change process now more in *developmental* terms i.e. progressive change in the process of learning and adaptation, leading to higher levels of differentiation and organisation, as mentioned in Chapter 6. What kind of 'walking alongside' might be helpful as students confront

contestability and uncertainty in a 'mileau of dislocation' to form new embodied artifacts with which to make sense of the world? Might it be possible to use changes in these kinds of qualities as 'indicators of progress', not just in terms of academic accomplishment, but also in terms of leadership? In comparison to the 'fleeting moment' and 'development episode' materials, the more patchwork version of texts that I used to construct proxy reflexive biographies required greater engagement of the students in sense making, which I achieved in two instances. But even without this, the achievements identified in the case studies, clearly showed that formative changes influencing values and identity had taken place, and that the idea of a reflexive biography can be a useful indicator of a slower, deeper type of developmental progress leading to improvements in situated practice, and which can be assessed and supported over the longer term.

This 'long wave' frequency indicator has helped me understand what kinds of shifts in beliefs and values can be occurring over the longer term, and why; and how the student is going about influencing others in their context, working within the new language-games they've developed; and gives me ideas as to how I can support this deeper form of development.

As I conclude at the end of Chapter 4, '…we are not looking at a simple black and white, linear, "one shot" action, but a more complex, multi-levelled, and non-linear process that takes place over time…this initiation of change is also just a part of a larger creative and mediated process. In this the "provocative" presencing of developmental possibilities is going on all of the time, involving the immediate – 'fleeting moment'; the medium term – 'development episodes'; and the longer term – 'reflexive biography'. In other words the development process is not just about a magic moment every now and again: everything I'm doing is about preparing the ground, seeding the moment, supporting and extending the language-game, and helping students integrate and embed their learning about "how to go on with others" so that it becomes an ontological, identity influencing process.

These indicators certainly have helped me make sense of how students might be learning and developing, how my practice might be influencing these changes, and what I might do to improve my educational practice. But as mentioned earlier, I'd not yet finished with the textual record in the online system, and was still wondering how I could extract more value from these rich materials. The next section looks briefly at a different set of potential indicators of development which I've started calling 'criteria of progression'. Though this idea is still very much a work in progress in terms of researched validity, I realise I've been using these ideas for some time in a tacit way to guide my own efforts to improve the service I'm offering – and so worth at least mentioning in the context of exploring a personal working pedagogy.

4. 'Ontological' indicators of progression – *glimpses into the dynamics?*
As mentioned in Chapter 3, I got this idea at the annual exam board for the Centre where the newly appointed external examiner felt uncomfortable with the 'lack of progression' of student's *marks* over the 18 month period of study prior to the dissertation. As a result I began to think in more detail about the different *qualities/behaviours* I was hoping to encourage in students through use of my 'responsive repertoire': would any of these represent progression in valid ways, and could the language being used in logs and essays show this in some way? The standard academic criteria focus on scholarly aspects, and take little account of other qualities

that are important in a situated practice like leadership roles like e.g. emotional maturity, strategic insight, dealing with complexity and so on.

I decided to see if I could track the development of what I thought of as 'ontological skills' which enable students to operate effectively under modern conditions of 'supercomplexity', requiring them to grapple with epistemic and ontological uncertainty and dislocation (Barnett, 2000). As mentioned earlier, there is support for this view in work reported by Bullough and Pinnegar: 'The consideration of ontology, of one's being in and toward the world, should be a central feature of any discussion of the value of self-study research' (2004, p 319). Ontological skills that are more about *becoming* rather than knowing, can also be linked to Torbert's 'leadership maturity framework' with its seven levels of action-logic or sense making, where he and his colleagues make specific use of the analysis of writing style to locate and 'centre' a person within their model.(Torbert and Associates, 2004).

And I was also encouraged by the practice-based research work of Furlong and Onacea discussed in Chapter 3 regarding the 'capacity to act', a practical wisdom, 'which involves the development of tacit knowledge and the ethical, interactional and critical dimensions of practice and is characterised the 'enhancement of (ethically) authentic action rather than the accumulation of (theoretical) knowledge' (Furlong and Onacea, 2005, p. 14). Though I concluded that knowledge about the most important aspects of practice-based research, was hidden below the surface, embedded in 'the tacit dimension' (Polanyi, 1983), I began to believe that it would be possible to identify and use indicators like these to track progress in a student's thinking and action. And while it might be more effective to hold focused face to face and/or telephonic discussions to assess this, or to use a tailored version of e.g. the Questionmark online assessment tool, I also wanted something that was alive and embedded in the dialogue that I could use in the moment.

What if a careful reading of what students are writing each week in their logs and essays, in a kind of 'virtual dialogue' with the coach, could help re-orient a coach to where students are coming from, are, and where they are heading to in their ontological development? If this could be done, it would enable a more formative and timely version of responsiveness from the coach, and these other methods could then be used to run checks from time to time on the validity of such ongoing more intuitive assessments. As I comment briefly in the three reflexive biographies' in Chapter 6, these kinds of indicators do seem to have some purchase on what is happening developmentally in 'ontological' terms, so I believe it remains an interesting proposition but one that for the moment runs beyond this inquiry. So here I just offer in Appendix 8 in Chapter 3 a summary of the results of my analysis and thinking to date about a set of potential 'ontological skills' that I believe could be associated with a more *inclusional* 'know how to go on' approach to leadership involving being more *resilient, receptive, rigorous, relational, responsive,* and *reflexive* – a potential framework (of 6 R's) against which to assess the important characteristics of ontological development and how a coach might adjust his/her responsiveness to help students develop such capabilities.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

In this last three sections I've outlined how the three main organic 'cogs' work together to help create and support the primary 'presencing' process. But of course these three

activities and the emergent presencing activity, aren't happening in a vacuum. For instance, I've shown how the kinds of measures the university use to assess learning and progress in capability, can have marked effects on what is focused on. However, despite the rather academic 'studies' title of the MA, I've always worked as though the focus was on developing embodied practice as well, and so have never been satisfied with the formal marking scheme. The indicators I've been exploring in the thesis and summarised here, do demonstrate I think, that it's necessary to have broader and more varied criteria for a situated practice like leadership, and also that it's possible to discern these in a mainly online virtual programme. Of course using such indicators doesn't just effect how formal marks are determined but do also extend their influence into the wider educational system in which students work. And it is to this notion of an 'educational social formation' which influences and is influenced by coach-student activities, that I turn to next.

Influencing the educational social formation
First mentioned in Chapter 3, I'm coming back to this idea here in this last chapter because it is effectively what I might call the 'macro' context for the 'meso' context of my 'development container', which correspondingly forms the 'micro' context for 'presencing developmental possibilities'. And as such, it is something that I've discovered, exercises various influences on the effectiveness of the educational process, and so is an important dimension of the pedagogic structure of the programme. To put it in simple terms, it plays a significant role in how I/we assess and reach judgements as to the limits of discretionary space open to us, and the rightness of what we are doing as educators/teachers/coaches and what our students then do.

As I've already explored the main actions I've taken in this regard in Chapter 3, I will restrict myself here to reviewing the impact I believe they've had on how the programme is understood by academic staff, coaches, and students, and on important aspects of programme structure and process. As many of these initiatives were documented at the time in one form or another and these original background documents appear in the appendices to Chapter 3, I will just remind you of these when they are referred to. I will talk about the potential impact of these actions in three groupings covering philosophy, structure, and process.

1. Philosophy – *from an emphasis on 'studies' to 'practice'*
In my opening paragraph in a 2006 paper to Director Donna Ladkin on how we should treat 'research methods' in the MA (Appendix 3 in Chapter 3), I wrote: 'We both have ambitions to create a higher degree pedagogy and programme that aspires to the ideal of "close learning" and is therefore particularly suited to supporting inquiry and learning from practice. A necessary part of such an approach is to view students as 'practitioner-researchers': experienced people who become better at what they do, in this case leadership, through studying their own and others' practices, as much as by learning from the ideas of the Academy'. Some three years later in my 2009 paper to MA Director Scott Taylor on a re-design of Phase 1 of the programme (Appendix 9 in Chapter 3) I return to this idea and affirm 'that the basic purpose of the MA programme is the improvement of *leadership practice* through effectively creating a "reflexive theatre of learning" at or within the students' local contexts of performance through creating fruitful conditions for "close learning"'.

I think it's clear from this that counter to the 'studies' emphasis implicit in the title of the programme, and the predominant focus of the university on 'propositional' knowledge, I've been seeking to persuade the Centre to adopt a stronger *practice* orientation, with academic 'theory' seen more as a *provocation* to learning from practice than as the preferred way to look at and do things A quick skim through the 2009 paper on redesigning Phase 1 with this in mind, reveals a range of supporting illustration and evidence as to what I mean by this and how we might go about achieving it, including exposure to the three 'domains of *literature, self awareness,* and *practice.* While there has not been a wholesale acceptance of all the implications of this philosophy, there is plenty of evidence in the new format of Phase 1 and the nature of learning log and essay questions in this and subsequent phases, to show that this is now more acknowledged as a central aspect of the programme.

In addition to this proposed greater emphasis on practice and work based learning, I have also sought to bring a more *formative* emphasis to our approach to assessment against the summative approach that in the end is used to decide how students have done. The detailed arguments are contained within the paper I submitted to the Centre's 'teaching review group' in 2008 (see appendix 5 in Chapter 3), but to give you a flavour of the strategic nature of the argument I offered, here is a scene setting quote from that paper:

> '…Though the benefits of adopting formative methods are probably no longer in dispute, this is not an approach that can just be "tacked onto" existing systems and cultures. Instead we are talking about a "second order" level of change in that not only will teachers/facilitators of learning have to alter the way they look at their educational project and pedagogic philosophy; they will also have to adapt the roles they take up, develop the practical skills that are required to work in this way, and embed these naturally in their teaching/facilitation practices. And for this to be more than an isolated and short term change, these changed methods will also need to find support within the broader strategic, commercial, and educational disciplines being followed by the institution – in our case the new business school.'

I then went on to talk through a range of operational level 'devices' we use/could use to implement such an approach like questioning, feedback though marking, peer and self assessment, and formative use of summative tests identified by Black et al (2003) amongst others; and regarding the last mentioned, exposed to critical review one of my own devices which is offering 'more informal and fragmentary feedback in the body of the essay texts themselves. These take the form of questions, supportive comments, grumbles, offering further resources, challenges, suggesting experimentation and action, etc, and seem to focus more on what I see as their broader developmental agenda as leaders.'

Again, while this was discussed by the group, there's been no formal acknowledgement or obvious further development of this proposal by the academic staff in the Centre, though it has, through the earlier paper I wrote on grading essays which is infused with this idea, influenced several of the coaches who make use of it in their work with students. But being realistic about things, I believe the greatest effect has been to give me the discretionary space to allow me to adopt a much stronger formative focus in my own coaching style – both in the roles of development facilitator and examiner - without too much resistance from the Centre. This freedom has not only influenced the

development process but also enabled me to make a stronger case to academic examiners to appreciate the practice and performativity dimensions in dissertations, and grade these aspects more positively.

2. Structure - *towards a more integrated approach to 'teaching' and 'research'*
At the end of 18 months of directed study, students have 6 months in which to do a research based dissertation, with the last phase, Phase 7 being devoted to research methods. After a couple of years of coaching experience, I proposed in the 2006 paper to Donna Ladkin referred to above, that we treat research and research methods as an integral part of the programme, and not something tacked on at the very end just before students started their dissertations. My reasons for this were straightforward:

> 'Providing a large amount of detailed information on research philosophy and methods right at the end of the programme in Phase 7 doesn't seem to be an effective way of nurturing these thinking and doing skills which take some time to develop. As things stand, students have to learn to use the methods *as* they do the dissertation, which doesn't seem sensible if we are looking for quality work. It would be better if they were practicing these skills in some way throughout the 18 months before the in depth research. (Appendix 1 in Chapter 3)

Straightforward, perhaps obvious, but nonetheless going against mainstream thinking where subjects like 'research methods' are usually seen in bounded terms so they can be scheduled separately and taught by specialists. The detailed argument and initial proposals for implementing this approach appear in the paper in Appendix 3 in Chapter 3. Though the MA Director at that time reacted positively to the ideas, no action was taken on the proposal till two years later when I was asked by the current MA Director to re-design the Phase 1 module in 2008. In the new design first experienced by the 08-10 Cohort, the research mindset and its importance to learning about leadership, was featured very early on, together with an introduction to the uses and pitfalls of one such method i.e. interviewing. While this more integrated approach has had the full support of the MA Director, it's certainly not in any way yet a central plank of the programme: in the new structure of the MA we still end up with 'research methods' being offered right at the very end of the directed programme, this time cutting deeply into the usual time allowed for the dissertation – so really a worse position despite acceptance of the basic point. Such is the irony of organisational life!

As with my attempts to influence the philosophy of the programme, my intention to alter the structure of the programme to suit a more broadly-based educational process, has not yet been met by any real practical success at the level of the programme as a whole. Again the main beneficiary of this attempt to influence the social formation has been my own students, as I have been able to follow this line of thinking in how I've introduced the research mindset and relevant research methods as part of the tailoring I provide for individual students, in responding to what they're offering me in the learning logs. For example I often introduce ideas and tools from 'action research' fairly early on as I've found that students generally find such methods of inquiry of immediate use in their ongoing studies. And I also make a point from the very beginning to highlight potential areas/issues arising in their logs which could contribute towards potential topics for their dissertations.

3. Process - *creating a formative 'dialogue' about practice*

While philosophy and structure are 'high profile' aspects of the programme, and therefore potentially much harder to influence, the educational processes used within each coach/student relationship by their very nature operate below the critical 'panoptical' gaze of the Centre. This discretionary 'space' for local variation that has already been alluded to in the previous two sections, is even greater here. Though there is some central oversight particularly of the summative aspects of such processes, there is much greater freedom for the central educational relationship between coach and student to evolve in ways which suit the needs of each student. I will review briefly three of my interventions in this area – they have already been commented on in Chapter 3 - which I believe have exploited this space for the benefit of students, particularly in fostering a more dialogic and formative feel within the virtual coaching relationship.

- *Personalising the development experience*

  While my other attempts to influence thinking were targeted on the programme as a whole, this intervention was very clearly focused on improving the experience of individual students. Because there is less detailed surveillance and control by the Centre, each coach has the potential to vary the scope and kind of contribution they make as well as when and how they make these. This can allow coaches for example to offer more/less face-to-face/telephonic support, to change the mode of interaction to suit student preferences. They can also vary the timing of introducing certain topics/themes against the fixed schedule of the formal programme, offer a wide range of additional materials relating to individual students questions/interests, focus on particular angles/issues of study and/or work, use e mail exchanges to explore something in more depth, and so on. Through varying this 'mix' in response to student abilities and needs, it becomes possible to personally tailor the MA experience to each individual, to a significant degree. Other coaches do offer extra materials, but what I've found is critical here, is that this extra material is not just further input to an already dense syllabus but is 'called forth' by the particular issue and context the student is engaged with. For example as you'll have read in Chapter 4, my student Ian showed an immediate interest in the concept of 'context' and by introducing him to further relevant ideas in this area, I was able to help him progress rapidly along a path which was to significantly influence his development as a leader.

- *'Conversationalising' feedback practices*

  Having emphasized the importance of dialogue in meaning making, learning, and generating valid knowledge, particularly in Chapter 2, I struggled with the contradiction between intention and actuality with the online programme based mainly on writing and text. I was also finding it tricky and time consuming to write the usual end of essay summaries required, and discovered that students often found it difficult to understand what I meant in these – so a thoroughly unsatisfactory situation! What I found helped through experimentation was my offering of a kind of 'stream of consciousness' commentary as I read through the log or essay, of what was going through my mind as I read what the student had written. These were in the moment responses to e.g. what questions and ideas sprang to mind, how convincing was the logic, was there adequate support for claims, what other material might be helpful here, and so on? Using an idea I'd originally got from Judi Marshall, a professor at Bath, I started embedding these passing thoughts right in the student's text where they arose - in a different font colour/highlighted so easy to

recognise – so that their text provided the immediate local context for my remarks. I thought this would make it easier for students to make sense of what I was thinking/saying and this certainly seemed to be the case when I checked the idea out afterwards with several students. In several cases I discovered that students actually imagined me 'talking' with them when they read the comments – so despite being asynchronous, these were being experienced as more 'conversational' in impact! In working this way I also found it was much easier to frame this more episodic and pointed feedback as more dialogical and formative in nature than the monological end of essay summaries.

- ***'Liberalising' marking practices***
There is a formal set of criteria the university has established for marking graded work like formal essays, covering such things as structure, logic of argumentation, and style which we as a group of five coaches and Director did review on a couple of occasions when we looked at our marking practices and standards. Though these did help a little, I felt that the marking process was problematic: it was not adequately defined or well understood, and despite the received wisdom about the validity of marks and marking, I felt the marking standards and marks awarded were much more subjective and susceptible to individual whim than generally accepted. For example in one blind marking exercise with other coaches, our ratings for one essay varied from a near A to a fail! In addition, as you will suspect, I was also troubled by the lack of attention on the 'practice' aspects of the programme. To deal with the tensions I experienced when assessing and grading formal essays, I decided to develop a more detailed marking schema and offered this in a paper to the coaching group in 2007 (the full paper appears in Appendix 4 in Chapter 3). The approach has been debated to some extent within the coaching group and is being used by several as a guide to themselves and their students. Influenced by my learning about formative and summative feedback discussed earlier, I also resolved that while I would do my best to meet the summative requirements of formal essay grading, my emphasis would be on the more formative aspects in my feedback to students: while gaining a degree was a necessary requirement, I felt the programme was more about supporting the development of effective practice in the 'real' world.

*   *   *

In contrast to my attempts to influence the philosophy and structure of the programme, I believe my efforts at this less visible and more local level have been better rewarded. Again the main beneficiaries of these attempts to influence the social formation have been my own students, but other coaches have been encouraged to follow their own ideas in this regard to a greater extent than previously. So in summary I feel that through these various initiatives I can claim to have exercised some positive influence on the nature of the primarily academic educational climate we all work in, which has certainly given me more scope and encouragement to work in ways which have been more supportive of student development both scholastically and in terms of improving their leadership practice.

As endnotes to this section I offer two encouraging examples, one from my Director and one regarding a current student who is in his first year of the programme:
1. I alluded in the second paragraph to this chapter that my MA Director had poured cold water on my claim that I had influenced the social context of the MA - just 'tilting at windmills'! Subsequent discussion on this point reveals that

on the contrary, he very much supports my mission but is following an alternative more 'academic' strategy: 'I don't really think you're tilting at windmills with this work, thinking, and writing. I'm absolutely clear that the vast majority…of what goes on in universities is completely opposed to the way you think and practise…So I'm fully in support of what you're doing, writing, thinking, and saying – you're coming at it from a different angle to the one I think will be fruitful'. Furthermore he is persuaded that I meet Habermas' criteria of social validity (1984) e.g. ' I 'believe' that you are profoundly committed to a particular form of learning, which you in turn believe is marginal and/or neglected, and I 'think' that you are very uncomfortable with the implications of modernism as they are manifest in education…I trust you, I really enjoy working with you, and I suspect that you seek coherence between what you believe and what you do…If that's authenticity, then you've got it.' That's good enough for me! (see e mail correspondence in Appendix 4)

2. In Appendix 5 to this chapter I include my grading feedback to one of my students, a teacher and choreographer, who happens to suffer from dyslexia and who despite achieving distinctions in his dancing education, has never before got good grades in his academic work. In this feedback you will see that he's already reached a standard of work that is encouraging me to accelerate his studies. As a result of this, in the Skype discussion we had about his grading, we've agreed that he will engage in a special personal study of research methods which I will devise for him, alongside his other MA work. We've also framed a research topic which he's interested in – a self study of entrepreneurship – so he can immediately start using his research tools to generate research 'field notes' which he could eventually use in his dissertation. So it seems that 'I've got my way' with one student if not the Centre! And this will provide very useful information on the challenges and benefits of more systematically adopting this idea of spreading research methods across the programme in future years. So, as they say, there is more than one way of skinning a cat!

<center>*   *   *</center>

So this now concludes the argument I've been exploring in this thesis about my 'online coaching pedagogy of presencing', showing how the various elements come together to help me make the contribution to helping students develop their scholarly and leaderly practices. However, at the very outset of this final chapter I highlighted again the several barriers to learning that an online programme in higher education, devoted to a situated practice like leadership, is likely to suffer from. Now that I've outlined the key features of my working pedagogy, and the educational social formation in which it operates, I'd like to show how this has helped me and my students deal with these in ways which have exploited what Ladkin et al called the 'paradoxical possibilities' of the MA. (Ladkin et al, 2009).

EXPLOITING 'PARADOXICAL POSSIBILITIES'?
In the Introduction I identified six barriers to learning that distance methods are considered to suffer from. Based on the preliminary findings in an earlier piece of research carried out by Ladkin et al, and further inquiries made by myself over a much longer period, I realised that contrary to expectation, the performance of students on the MA in Leadership Studies did not appear to be suffering as much from these drawbacks

<center>211</center>

as might be expected – in fact quite often to the contrary. Instead, good and even startling results were being achieved. Ladkin et al referred to these situations as being 'paradoxical possibilities' in the sense that this should not have been happening but was, leaving us with the pedagogical question – how might this have come about? Now that I've laid out my argument over seven chapters and summarised the elements of a pedagogy which I believe successfully addresses these barriers, let me offer some possible explanations of this phenomenon. In this I treat each barrier and its 'remedy' on its own for clarity's sake but of course in real life there will undoubtedly be cross-over 'knock on' effects which serve to amplify certain aspects of the process.

Transforming 'distance' into an advantage: the Ladkin et al article claimed that with appropriate support from the coach it seemed that 'the web-based delivery of course materials…enables participants to experiment with new theoretical ideas almost immediately within their workplaces' (2009, p 194). Though this didn't apply to all students, this unexpected outcome has been influenced by the 'close learning' stance adopted by certain coaches including myself. In this approach we see the ideal form of learning as that occurring close to the workplace where it can be immediately applied and feedback attended to. This embryonic form of action inquiry effectively converts propositional knowledge into conceptual fuel for experimentation and inquiry into improved practice. This delivers the incalculable benefit of the almost automatic tacit contextualisation of these management/leadership 'tools', thus closing the 'transfer' gap that so limits the outcomes of conventional training initiatives.

Making a virtue of 'packaged' knowledge provision: the Ladkin et al article also claimed that 'the routine of receiving weekly "packages" of material to read and respond to, served in itself to demonstrate the contingent nature of 'truth' within the leadership field; and further that this process 'seemed able to combine both rigidity and flexibility in such a way that participants learned how to exercise choice and discernment about how they engaged with course materials and similarly encouraged their critical engagement.' (2009, p 194) While this seems a surprising outcome, students have reported over the years that the sheer weight of reading and exercises each week forced them to make choices about what they devoted time to, and in this they were helped by a flexible and generous attitude amongst coaching staff to overruns and missed deadlines, as well as active help in selecting those parts of the syllabus that were either central or of particular value to a particular student.

Overcoming the challenge of 'asynchronicity': students have the freedom to complete their log entries at any time and the mainly written responses from the coach and any subsequent interactions can occur at times from as little as a few hours to several weeks after the initial learning log has been submitted by the student. Yet it seems that when students read the materials and the coach then responds, these time and location gaps do not seem to cause the communication difficulties one might expect. Instead it seems that the student and coach are able to read these textual messages as though they were in some kind of living 'present' within an ongoing conversation between coach and student. Among the activities that encourage this are a more conversational style involving the embedding of coach feedback directly in students' texts, both in essays and logs, which in a sense calls forth a dialogic reading of the interchanges. The other and probably more important factor is the creation over time of a learning relationship or what I've called a 'development container' which appears to overcome the usual effects of asynchronous exchanges. One extreme case was a foreign-based student (who achieved a distinction grade in his dissertation) who was habitually so late with his learning logs that I generally ended up responding to them *after* the phase had ended.

Despite this he told me several times how valuable he found my responses and this was often evident in his essays.

'Levelling' the knowledge hierarchy: while there is still the all powerful presence of expert knowledge issuing from the university in the form of programme material, key academic articles and professorial comments, it appears that the seeming heavy hand of a distantly located expertise can be experienced by students as being offered on a more level playing field. In this, propositional knowledge can be experienced more as challenges to conventional wisdom and 'common sense' rather than words from on high. The more 'side by side' approach offered by the coach, where both look at the academic materials together, encourages a more questioning attitude towards the theories and models on offer rather than as knowing they should be subscribing to. Instead this expert material can be treated as a form of 'provocation' to how students are framing their experiences and unexamined common sense views, leading to more informed learning outcomes.

Closing the transfer gap between new cognition and performance: the university's focus on the (re)production of primarily propositional knowledge that constitutes the knowledge base of the MA programme, and the generally summative approach to the grading process, leads one to expect that the learning and knowing achieved by students would be largely of a cognitive nature. But the more complex and multi-level nature of learning and knowing that is demonstrated, often leading to the development of new ontological skills and leadership practices suggests otherwise. One factor that supports this more transformational kind of knowing is the persistent 'presencing of development possibilities' by coaches and their students where the focus is on embodying the ontological skills needed to influence others and their contexts of performance.

Reducing discontinuity between theory and practice: though the programme design and role of the coaches on the MA is to encourage students to seek connections between the domains of theory and practice, theoretical considerations dominate in the university, and the students as practitioners of leadership, are dominated at work by matters of immediate practicality, with little bridging work generally taking place. However, from a natural inclusion point of view (Rayner, 2010) this 'connectionist' perspective still takes for granted and perpetuates a false dichotomy between theory and practice. What seems to help students is when the coach instead seeks to reveal *what already exists* in the dynamic flow of different kinds of knowledge between what Rayner would call different 'local neighbourhoods'. This more even-handed and revelatory approach which also seeks a better balance between left and right hemisphere views of knowing (McGilchrist, 2010) creates a more liberalising atmosphere in which students are encouraged to pay attention to and value the various contradictory feelings and knowings they experience while grappling with the dilemmas of leadership as they progress through the programme.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

The pedagogical relationships developed over the past seven years, have enabled students to surmount these barriers and achieve worthwhile outcomes both in academic as well as practical terms. In so doing I believe these outcomes substantiate my overall claim: an inclusional and ontological form of coaching pedagogy which embodies 'presencing empathetic responsiveness to requisite situated practice' as the 'focal' goal

of a range of educational interactions operating at a 'subsidiary' level, enables students studying on an online higher degree programme, to improve both their scholarship and *practice*. But there is more that can be done, and in the next section I adopt a more self-critical mode of appreciation, in order to subject my personal pedagogy to a more rigorous and forward looking critique, but still one that asks readers to judge my work in terms of the framework of meaning that I've been developing throughout this work (Bryman and Bell, 2011).

FUTURE POTENTIAL OF THIS PEDAGOGY - KEY PERSPECTIVES

At the end of my scan of the relevant research fields circumscribing my own research in Chapter 2, I identified a range of areas which I hoped had and would, continue to inform and enliven my own ongoing research and the writing of this thesis. These related to issues like the importance of 'tacit knowledge', the possibility of 'conversational realities', and the educational benefits to be gained from work-based learning. At the conclusion of this work of writing I believe that these ideas have undoubtedly influenced my working pedagogy and how I understand and engage in it. But against an ideal 'what ought to be' version of my pedagogy which I now might be in a position to devise, there is more to be gained, in terms of structure, process and performance. And so now right at the end of my research story, it's to these aspects that I briefly turn so I can clarify and affirm implications raised in this inquiry regarding ways in which higher education might more fruitfully frame, resource, develop and assess programmes that focus on improving capability in situated practices. I've arranged these in seven themes which address the four 'ologies' reviewed in Chapter 3, which I'd like to put forward as design criteria to inform higher education programmes that seek to develop situated practices, particularly those that are offered online. I will look at each of these in turn, clarifying what I mean, and why and how I believe they should be exemplars for future action based research of this kind.

1. An axiology based on 'natural inclusion'

Given my antipathy towards what I see as unnecessary 'splitting' and arbitrary punctuations that permeate the academic domain, I look first for a macro frame which I can use as the background 'hustle and bustle' (Wittgenstein, 1958) in which the more contained activity that I wish to research, can be seen to take place. Until I came across Rayner's 'natural inclusion', I was looking to 'conversation' to provide this background frame as it plays such a central role in human activity, and provides the 'water' in which we human 'fish' make our way through life. But the primary focus tends to be on language. While this is a very exciting area, it can limit what we notice, over emphasising the metaphor of text, backgrounding influences from the physical body and natural/built environments, and ignoring the key role that energic relations play in our lives (Vasilyuk, 1991). For these reasons I think it would be more fruitful to adopt *natural inclusion* as the fundamental macro frame to attend to, treat, and devise more fluid, flowing, and 'revelatory' approaches to the multiple splits/divides permeating the researching, teaching, development, and performing of leadership in the 'field of practices' in which it's located. As a receptive, dynamic, relational understanding of space and boundaries which recognises space as a continuous, intangible presence and where 'our boundaries are energetic interfacings that make us distinct, as natural flow-forms, but not discrete' (Rayner, 2010, p 9), it offers a fluid, free flowing and dynamic 'axiological' background for this kind of work. I use the term 'axiological' here because for me this framework with it's focus on co-creation and collaborative relations, seems to me to hold dear the idea of 'human flourishing' even if only implicitly, as the

fundamental purpose of our working and living together, which many in the field of action research at least, feel strongly about (Heron and Reason, 1997).

As Chapter 3 will have shown, my own axiology has been very much bound up with values to do with e.g. 'creating new knowing', 'carrying the word', and 'presencing developmental possibilities', against a background where I've sought to downplay the conventional idea of the lone individual. Instead I've been looking more to ideas from systemic thinking and practice theory with 'individual' being something that occurs at the nexus of various relations. In this view I saw my role in a self-organising 'connectionist' or 'enactive' frame (Varela and Dupuy, 1992) offering interventions that I thought might cast useful new light by offering new 'connections' to help students and clients make good their intentions. Moving across to the 'natural inclusional' frame in 2010 felt very natural offering me instead the option of 'revealing continuity' as an outcome of my 'presencing' activity. And this is very much the overview I'd recommend for future studies of situated practices, as it offers both the practitioner and researcher the greatest scope for expressing and living out their values unencumbered by artificial boundaries – but of course with the added responsibility to account personally for not only the 'what' and the 'why' aspects, but also those to do with the 'what what they do, does'.

2. An ontology based on 'practice'
Given the fluidity and dynamism of the macro frame of *natural inclusion*, there is a need to find ways of temporarily 'punctuating' (Bateson, 1973) interactional flows so that we can focus on something less fluid, *but* in a way which doesn't immediately reduce us looking again at just the 'individual' trying to assess what 'skills' they may be using, as the product of our inquiry. Here I see 'practice' as providing an appropriate focus, and 'practice theory' the vocabulary, a 'way of talking', that could help us communicate with and learn from each other about the 'what' – the situated performance/practice - we are trying to research and improve. Many philosophical approaches like phenomenology, pragmatism, and the late Wittgenstein regard 'practice', in the sense of bodily interaction with environment mediated by artifacts, as primary in comparison with cognition and knowledge. There is no opposition between persons and 'world', so 'practice' is seen to offer a solution to the dualism of subject and object, mind and body, and so on (Miettenen et al, 2009). As Dewey remarked 'We are at root practical beings, beings engaged in exercise. This practice constitutes at first both self and the world of reality. There is no distinction' (1958, p 154). This approach also avoids the challenge of distinguishing between 'agency' and 'structure': through actions, structures are both reproduced and transformed. This is a line of thinking adopted by many such as G H Mead with his idea of conversation as a continuous process of gesture and response (G H Mead, 1934), Goffman in his work on 'frame analysis' (Goffman, 1974), Bourdieu with 'habitus' (1977), the CMM theorists Pearce and Cronen (1980), and the modern wave of 'practice theorists' like Schatzki (2001).

My first move to this kind of ontological framing came in 2004 when I started talking about having a 'becoming' ontology where I saw myself constituting myself in relations with others as I sought to help them develop. But it was only much later when I came across 'practice theory' proper in the work of Schatzki et al (2001), with its non-dualism, and Shotter's three level framing involving 'background', 'exchange' and 'instruction', that I realised that this would help me work with the basic orientating process initiated by Wittgenstein's inquiry about 'knowing how to go on' (Shotter,

2008). So I've come rather late into this way of thinking about ontology but can now appreciate how it offers a way of seeing and a way of talking about what I'm seeing, that militates against context-stripped knowing, allows understanding to go beyond the closed boundary around the lone individual, and makes it possible to see how Polanyi's idea of a 'hierarchy of ontology' can offer a never ending journey of increasing 'achievement'. (Takaki, 2010).

3. An epistemology based on 'conversational realities'

The 'punctuation' of *practice* encourages one to look not at the lone individual but how individuals interact with each other using 'instructions' in 'exchanges' of various kinds within the 'background' situation, in order both to resolve 'framing' questions of knowing how to go on, as well as 'solving' questions to do with problems (Schon, 1983). Given the macro context of natural inclusion these interactions can include the sensory influences and effects of all artifacts that transform the human experience, like the natural and built environment, technology, and energic and bodily relations, as well as that of languaging in all its modalities (Burkitt, 1999; Vygotsky, 1986). But how then to assess and agree what the 'truth' of any claims in such situations of practice might be? In contrast to the knowing *that* (theoretical) and knowing *how* (technical) basis usually adopted for validation work (Ryle, 1949), I feel more committed to a 'knowing-in-practice-that-is-held-in-common', what Shotter calls a 'third kind of knowing'. This is seen to be embodied in the conversational background to our lives, and which is what is agreed in dialogically structured interactions (Bahktin, 1981) between persons *in* that situation; a knowing *from,* an embodied form of practical-moral knowing (Bernstein, 1983), where people influence each other in their *being* (Shotter, 2008).

As you will have noticed I've made wide reference to this body of ideas so admirably synthesised by Shotter (ibid), and have in the various video clips offered in the text, sought to provide evidence of such a third kind of knowing between students and myself. But much of this has been done after the fact in a 'reflecting back' mode, and so while very useful for my research, has not in fact met the 'timely' criterion I seek i.e. offering something I could have used to improve my practice in the moment. So an obvious area to consider for future action would be to create conditions for such dialogues to take place on a more systematic and regular basis, and for video clips from these to be reviewed with students on a timely basis, so that the full sensory range of verbal and non-verbal communications could be noticed, appreciated, and exploited.

The next four points are all concerned with **methodology** and ways of making visible and making sense of the richness and uniqueness of momentary embodied experiences.

4. 'Living' educational theory: a methodology for researching *while* improving situated practice needs to provide practitioner-researchers with the capacity to notice, punctuate, and interpret the dynamic flow of momentary, relational, and embodied experiences that constitute our everyday reality. Further it needs to enable such researchers to understand the value-based lenses they are using to do this noticing, punctuating, interpreting, and so on, and to be able to account for their (the values) influence on any claims they make i.e. account for their own 'fingerprints' that are all over the 'evidence'! To me this means that we should be using an open and dynamic approach to 'action' and 'research' – like that offered by *living educational theory* (Whitehead, 2005) - which allows us to attend to and appreciate the values-based, living, embodied, and emergent nature of our own thinking and behaviour, and those

around us, as we take part in, and through 'joint action' (Shotter, 2008) mutually constitute the educational practices we are involved in.

As explored in Chapter 3, my own version of a critical auto-ethnographic approach to my action and research on the influence of that action, has felt to be very much a part of this 'living' take on lived experience, and has helped me become more confident in and committed to the living values I became aware of as they emerged in my practice with others. It has also helped me to become more attuned to the possibility of using 'living' indicators of development – referred to here as 'criteria of progression' – which could act as a primary basis for ongoing formative assessment that looks at knowing and development as an ontological rather than epistemological achievement. Again, looking to the future, I would encourage a greater use of ethnographic methods which help the observer to get in really close to the action/practice they're involved in/researching, while still having a means of deciphering and articulating their influence on what is happening, and how this deciphering is being further influenced by their own embodied values as expressed in that situation and time.

5. 'Tacit knowing': to give researchers the opportunity to notice and work with this 'dynamic flow of momentary, relational, and embodied experiences that constitute our everyday reality**',** we need to stay open, sensitive, and responsive to *all kinds of knowing* including knowledge that is tacit, marginalised or, like that involved in local contextualising and embodiment of tools/artifacts, hidden in the background 'hustle and bustle', and use these as resources for the inquiry. Given that much of this knowing is if not invisible then 'rationally invisible' (Garfinkel, 1967) we also need to make use of a wide variety of *multi-media* methods to both capture and make available for inquiry, and then to present, rich 'living' evidence of our understanding(s) of the educational influences exercised on our own knowing, the knowing of others, and the educational social formation in which we perform and practice. This will allow us to see and interpret the values-linked 'living energy' that enlivens knowing in relations, which though generally ignored (Vasilyuk, 1991), can in video clips be seen to be in continuous play as we seek to engage others in fruitful conversation.

Though I've long been fascinated by the tacit aspects of knowing, first coming to these via sport, it took me longer to become aware of the power of 'indwelling' (Polanyi, 1983) to help me form artifacts which extended my body more deeply into the world of experience e.g. systemic thinking, which allowed me to see and influence this world in new ways. While I was able to notice and support these processes in me I found it much harder to do so for others especially in the virtual world of online learning, until my first experiences of the use of video in 2008 with Jack Whitehead and one of my students. These opened my eyes to what is possible and the fruits of this new way of capturing, noticing and empathetically resonating to the energy currents and multi-sensory information flowing between people, can be seen throughout this thesis. It has completely altered the way I now think about 'data gathering', 'analysis', and 'presentation', and would form a key part of any future research I undertake.

6. A 'rounded' pedagogy
In his book The Master and his Emissary McGilchrist (2010) stresses the dangers our society faces in continuing to allow 'aloof' left hemisphere thinking to dominate how we relate to our world, and argues cogently for what he calls a more 'rounded' approach where the 'in touch' right hemisphere plays a stronger balancing role. To create

conditions for the 'rounded' approach to learning and development needed to improve performance and practice, something similar is needed: higher education's reliance on de-contextualised knowledge and teaching methods where the student 'builds' propositional knowledge, needs to be counter balanced through learning of a more situated and embodied nature gained through 'dwelling' (Heidegger, 1971), using practice or work-based educational methods. Raelin amongst others, comments favourably on the results being achieved by a number of exemplars of practice-based education, who employ what he calls the 'engaged pedagogies averred by an epistemology of practice' like a systems perspective, reflective practices, work-based projects and different forms of coaching and action learning support (Raelin, 2007, p 512). In the e learning field itself there have also been promising developments of a pedagogic nature, using what's called a 'blended' approach, where arms length online 'transmission' of knowledge is enriched and balanced with a range of other more interactive modes of engagement like e mail, online chat rooms, Skype, and telephone calls, as well as face to face meetings. Despite this, in neither of these does there seem to be any active exchange or circulation of knowing between the domains of scholarship and work.

Though there is no action learning/action research component, the 'leadership exchange' and 'coaching' parts of the Exeter programme, and Skype discussions with coaches, do provide students with opportunities for greater engagement. Further my experience as reported here, suggests that it is possible, through the use of appropriate coaching and formative assessment processes operating in the 'shadowlands' at the borders of what's permissible, to achieve many of the advantages that these exemplar programmes enjoy. It seems possible, using Foucault's term, to create 'local ontologies' in which significant development is possible. Ideas that I would now want pursued here include students being regarded as 'practitioner researchers' and being helped to use ethnographic action research as a primary learning process; and secondly, encouraging students not only to apply scholarly concepts at work and feed back their experiences, but also to contribute their own original local knowing and theorizing based on their *practice* at work, and seek to integrate these two knowing streams.

7. An emphasis on 'presencing'
The tendency in education as in other forms of life, is to focus on planning and preparatory work and to look to the future for signs of success, as indicated in graded essays and examinations. And very necessary too. But in doing so, attention drifts to the future and we can ignore the influence and effects of what we are doing in the present, on the present…and hence that future too. So I feel we need to do something to bring a 'here and now' urgency to energise and influence the unfolding and emergence of all aspects of these pedagogical and inquiring processes. Though I first came to the term 'presencing' in Scharmer's work, I've since found I'm far more comfortable with how it's used by 'complexity' theorists like Patricia Shaw who work with the idea of 'complex responsive systems' (Shaw, 2002). In contrast to Scharmer's 'fertile but timeless void' in which presencing mystically takes place, in this view we engage more directly with others in reconstructing in a 'living present' how we view the past and future, so that through how we talk and interact, we bring a preferred future into the present, in that moment. In this view we are not 'manifesting in awareness' what lies beneath (Shaw, 2002, p 157) but taking direct action in an everyday manner to bring about desired change which, if effective, can be experienced in that living present, and so can be accounted for in a contextualised 'oral' mode (Ong, 1982), or to use Shotter's term, in a 'third kind of knowing' (Shotter, 2008).

Given that my version of 'presencing' has turned out to be the central educative activity of the pedagogy explored in this thesis, I feel I've probably gone further here than in the other areas discussed above, in implementing the idea in my practice. As my own standards of judgement discussed in Chapter 3 have shown, the constant pressure to bring desired aspects of one's practice into an ongoing present, where ontological experimentation can be carried out 'in context', enacts 'close learning' and so reduces the 'transfer gap', allowing a desired future to unfold in the present. As discussed earlier in this chapter, I see my own 'presencing' (PERTRSP) very much as an emergent 'focal' process which, using Polanyi's 'from-to' functional structure, is achieved through 'indwelling the subsidiaries' – which themselves need also to be created and practiced so they can spontaneously contribute towards the emergent goal when required. In my case, developing these 'subsidiary resources' – which led Judi Marshall to comment that I was 'formidably resourced' - has followed a unique and often circuitous route and taken a very long time.

So it's not helpful just to say that 'presencing' is something practitioner-researchers should strive to include in their own work. What would be helpful here is to work backwards from the high level 'focal' activity of 'presencing empathetic responsiveness to requisite situated practice' to seek out the potential crucial 'subsidiary' components which seem to support the emergent 'focal' process – very much like the work I've done so far on my 'responsive repertoire' and 'criteria of progress' reported on here, but which in their current form represent just the beginning of the work required.

<p style="text-align:center">*   *   *</p>

Taken together I believe these seven aspects promise to offer what Ross Ashby called 'requisite variety' (Ashby, 1952) for action research work on higher education programme seeking to develop situated practices. Each successive 'level' represents a frame for the next level of sensing and meaning making, enabling 'know how to go on' work to the next level of detail, so that by the time we get down to the 'presencing' level we have created a sensing system which can penetrate deep down into the workings of a situated practice. In this sense they constitute the core of a 21st century approach to educative processes that aim to improve practice *and* research that improvement practice at the same time…and as Garfinkel would say 'and always for another *first* time'.

I believe that my application of these ideas, as elaborated on in these pages, does support my claim to 'originality' as made at the end of my Abstract on pages 5-6:
> 'The originality of the thesis lies in the synthesis of and creative linking between the development of this situated learning, the methodological inventiveness[x] of the pedagogy, key ideas on communication and learning from the literature, and the embodied values that have enabled me to become a better educator.'

And further, they also seem very much to answer the question I raised on p. 15 of the Introduction about the AERA mission statement: yes, this approach as summarised here and as performed, not perfectly but adequately, and reported on in this thesis, does meet both parts of the mission and so can be offered as an example of a process which not only *uses* the products of research for teaching purposes but *researches* that teaching

and coaching in order to use 'research to improve education and serve the public good' (AERA, 2011).

Finally, I end this story of my long journey with a final question to you the reader. You'll recall that at the end of the Introduction, I set out five criteria that I felt I needed to support in the thesis to legitimate my claim that coached online education can support the development of a situated practice like leadership. Here are the five criteria I set out:

- *conversation* understood as an anticipatory and improvisatory dialogical process, is the 'ultimate context in which knowledge is to be understood' (Rorty, 1980).
- 'gestural' language (Merleau-Ponty, 1962) and psychological 'instructions' (Vygotsky, 1986) offered in 'dialogically structured' interactions (Bahktin, 1986) can provoke 'primitive reactions' which through 'indwelling' (Polanyi, 1983) lead to new 'language-games' (Wittgenstein, 1958).
- engaging in new language-games that enable students to 'know how to go on' together with others, develops the tacit knowing and ontological skills that lead to improvements in scholarly and leaderly situated practice.
- similar development processes can take effect in online, written, and asynchronous online interactions when coach and student are able to co-create a 'culture of inquiry' that generates and values multiple ways of knowing and ontological experimentation.
- *presencing empathetic responsiveness to requisite social practice* is an inclusional and contextualising coaching tool that forms the centerpiece of an online coaching pedagogy that supports inquiries that lead to improvements in scholarship and situated practice.

In Hubert Dreyfus' seven stage model of 'skill acquisition' (Dreyfus, 2001), he points out that 'At every stage…beyond the first three, involvement and mattering are essential to the acquisition of skills…[and further that] in so far as we want to teach expertise in particular domains and practical wisdom in life…we finally run up against the most important question a philosopher can ask those who believe in the educational promise of the World Wide Web: can the bodily presence required for acquiring skills in various domains and for acquiring mastery of one's culture be delivered by means of the Internet?…[and he ends with a challenge] The promise of telepresence[26] holds out hope for a positive answer to this question…So our question becomes: how much presence can telepresence deliver?' (ibid, p 173).

In articulating and providing evidence in this thesis that meet these five criteria, I believe I can respond to Dreyfus' final question: quite a lot of 'presence' - especially when supported by regular Skype conversations – and certainly enough to help students improve and acquire new ontological skills and 'expertise' to perform more effectively in their situated practices. What do you think?

---

[26] that which enables human beings to be present at a distance in a way that captures all that is essential about bodily presence